Progressive FARMER

powered by DTN

MARCH | 2026

A FAMILY'S HARVEST

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

EST. 1977 NATIONAL WHEAT FOUNDATION

2025 NATIONAL WHEAT YIELD CONTEST WINNERS

- La Niña's Influence Wanes As Farmers Prepare To Plant
- Pioneer Celebrates 100 Years of Hybrid Innovation
- Cattlemen Use Profits To Prepare for Future

powered by DTN

MARCH | 2026

Progressive FARMER

The (Un)Hidden Risks of Corn Crop Injury

IT'S ALWAYS A RACE. Against time, against the weather and most importantly — against weeds.

To combat tough-to-control weeds like Palmer amaranth and waterhemp, many growers turn to corn herbicides that contain pyroxasulfone, a Group 15 herbicide. However, not all pyroxasulfone formulations contain a crop safener.

Some pyroxasulfone-containing corn herbicides may cause crop injury, leading to buggy whipping, shepherd's crook and stunted corn.

SAFENERS HELP PROTECT CORN FROM CROP INJURY

Growers choose herbicides with crop safeners to help ensure the herbicide is tough on weeds but gentle on corn. But herbicide safeners are not all the same, and some herbicides do not contain safeners.

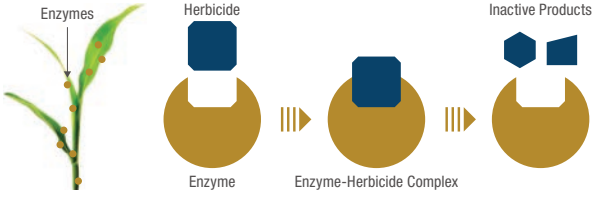
Corn Herbicide	MetaSafe™ Crop Safening Technology	No Crop Safener
Storen®	✓	
Zidua® Brands		✕
Anthem® Brands		✕
Maverick®		✕
Surtain®		✕

Without a crop safener, pyroxasulfone-containing herbicides may cause crop injury on any soil type.

METASAFE FORMULATION TECHNOLOGY

Storen® corn herbicide from Syngenta® is the first and only pyroxasulfone-containing corn herbicide that contains a crop safener. MetaSafe™ is a patented crop safening technology designed to safen pyroxasulfone for use in corn.

MetaSafe works by increasing the number of enzymes in the corn plant that break down pyroxasulfone, which reduces the potential for crop injury.



Corn plant enzymes break down herbicides. MetaSafe formulation technology makes the corn plant's enzymes super active in breaking down pyroxasulfone.

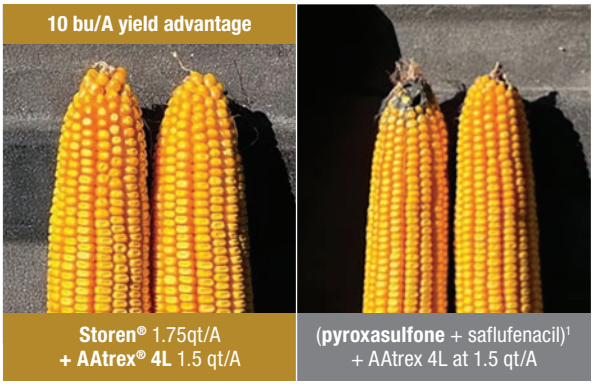


Photo: At harvest, 2024, Internal Trial: Cactus TX B.B.
AAtrex 4L is a Restricted Use Pesticide.

"We understood growers were looking for more robust preemergent residual corn herbicide formulations to help them manage ever-evolving weed species. When we saw an opportunity to bring pyroxasulfone to the corn market, we wanted to ensure the best potential outcome for the American corn grower, which meant finding a way for it to be used to maximize crop safety."

– Mark Kitt, corn herbicide technical product lead, Syngenta

RESIDUAL THAT WONT QUIT

Storen has four active ingredients – bicyclopyrone, mesotrione, *S*-metolachlor and pyroxasulfone – that work together, resulting in fewer weed escapes, less weed interference and reduced weed seed production. Storen delivers the longest-lasting residual weed control by providing consistently clean rows up to three weeks longer than other leading corn herbicides.**

Growers and retailers who have used Storen during its first two seasons on the market can attest to its performance. Over 1,100 people tried Storen and gave it a 4.5 out of 5 customer satisfaction rating.

"Storen is safe on my corn crop and works great,"

– Ronald Dozler, grower, Albion, NE

"I love that you can go pre or post with great crop safety," – Dan West, grower and retailer, Sherrill, IA

So, remember, when you're looking for a corn herbicide that is tough on weeds but safe on corn, you can manage your risk by choosing Storen corn herbicide with MetaSafe formulation technology.

*Syngenta market research, 2022. n=302.

**Storen length-of-control advantage based on 2022 Syngenta and university replicated trials comparing Storen to Resicore® and TriVolt®.

[1]The active ingredient rates applied were pyroxasulfone at 0.09 lb ai/A + saflufenacil at 0.06 lb ai/A. The formulated product used contained pyroxasulfone at 1.002 lb ai/gallon plus saflufenacil at 0.626 lb ai/gallon.

Reviewers received non-monetary compensation in the form of branded merchandise in exchange for their feedback.

All photos are either the property of Syngenta or are used with permission.

Performance assessments are based upon results or analysis of public information, field observations and/or internal Syngenta evaluations. Trials reflect treatment rates and mixing partners commonly recommended in the marketplace.


It’s not truly covered ’til it’s filthy. And insured.
Without UTV insurance from Progressive, you could be risking it all the moment you ride off your property. Our policies provide reliable protection and dedicated support so you can keep riding dirty, mile after filthy mile.
1-800-PROGRESSIVE / PROGRESSIVE.COM/UTV
PROGRESSIVE®
Quote in as little as 3 minutes
Progressive Casualty Insurance Co. & affiliates. Coverage subject to policy terms and conditions. Prices vary based on how you buy.

MARCH 2026

VOL. 141 / NO. 3

Serving Our Readers Since 1886

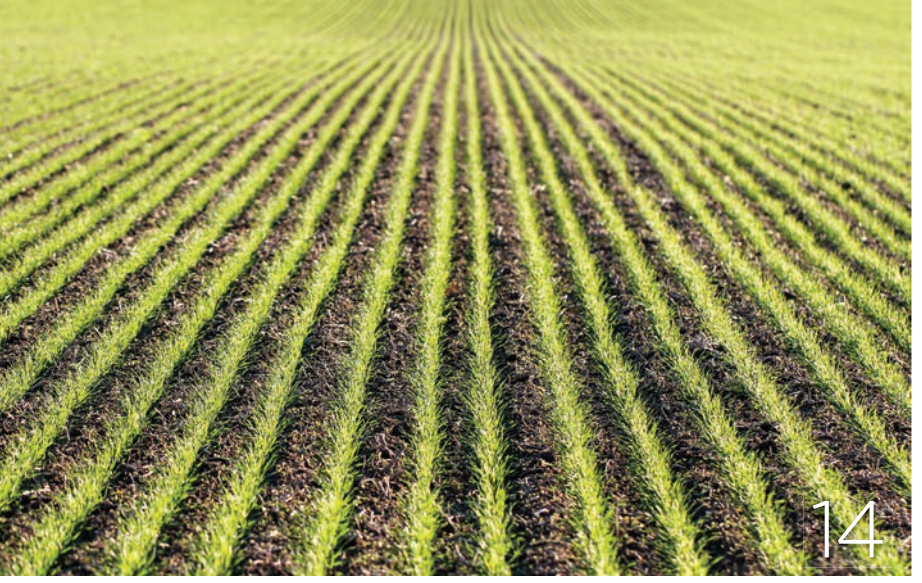
JASON JENKINS

ON THE COVER

Family celebrates wheat harvest before grandpa retires.

PHOTO BY JOEL REICHENBERGER

Wheat farmers produce winning yields with innovative production practices. 14



ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

Progressive FARMER
Powered By DTN

EDITOR IN CHIEF Katie Dehlinger

MAGAZINE PRODUCTION
ART DIRECTOR Brent Warren
PRODUCTION MANAGER/EDITORIAL Barry Falkner
SENIOR COPY EDITOR Tara Trenary

DIGITAL CONTENT
DTN/*PF* CONTENT MANAGER Anthony Greder
DTN/*PF* ASSOCIATE CONTENT MANAGER Elaine Shein
DTN DIGITAL MANAGER Chris Hill

DTN CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
AG METEOROLOGIST John Baranick
SENIOR LIVESTOCK EDITOR Jennifer Carrico
SENIOR AG POLICY EDITOR Chris Clayton
CROPS EDITOR Jason Jenkins
SENIOR MACHINERY EDITOR Dan Miller
LEAD ANALYST Rhett Montgomery
ENVIRONMENTAL EDITOR Todd Neeley
SOCIAL MEDIA AND YOUNG FARMERS EDITOR Susan Payne
SENIOR TECH EDITOR/*PF* PHOTO EDITOR Joel Reichenberger
FERTILIZER EDITOR Russ Quinn
SENIOR CROPS EDITOR Pamela Smith
LIVESTOCK ANALYST ShayLe Stewart

CONTRIBUTING COLUMNISTS
TAX COLUMNIST Rod Mauszycki
VETERINARIAN ADVISER Ken McMillan
EQUIPMENT SPECIALIST Steve Thompson
FAMILY BUSINESS ADVISER Lance Woodbury

SALES & ADVERTISING
PUBLISHER Jackie Cairnes (205) 335-3593 jackie.cairnes@dtn.com
SALES Mitch Hiett (217) 278-0794 mitch.hiett@dtn.com
SALES Doug Marnell (806) 790-0456 doug.marnell@dtn.com
SALES Steve Mellencamp (312) 485-0032 steve.mellencamp@dtn.com
SALES Jaymi Wegner (406) 321-0919 jaymi.wegner@dtn.com
PRODUCTION MANAGER Tony Green (205) 414-4733 tony.green@dtn.com

MEDIA OPERATIONS & DIGITAL STRATEGY LEAD Jackie Cairnes
ADVERTISING OPERATIONS SPECIALIST Megan Meager
ADVERTISING OPERATIONS SPECIALIST Kacie Reuss
ADVERTISING OPERATIONS SPECIALIST Adrienne Ramage

CIRCULATION DIRECTOR Veronica Denson
BUSINESS ANALYST Pam Passen
ADVERTISING SUPPORT MANAGER Becky Granzow

DTN CORPORATION
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER Patrick Schneidau
GENERAL MANAGER, AGRICULTURE Grey Montgomery
EDITOR IN CHIEF/DTN Greg Horstmeier
EDITOR IN CHIEF, EMERITUS Gregg Hillyer

EDITORIAL OFFICES
PO BOX 430033, Birmingham, AL 35243-0033
(205) 414-4700

SUBSCRIBER CUSTOMER SERVICE
PO BOX 5074, Boone, IA 50950-0074; 1(800)292-2340
www.dtnpf.com/marketing/custserv

MAILING LIST
We make a portion of our mailing list available to reputable firms. If you would prefer that we not include your name, please call or write us.

PRINTED IN THE USA

The Progressive Farmer, (ISSN 0033-0760), serving families who have a vital and shared interest in American agriculture and country living, is published monthly in January, February, March, April, May, August, September, October, November, December, and a combined June/July issue, which counts as two issues in an annual subscription. Additional double issues may be published, which count as two issues. "Copyright 2026. DTN/*The Progressive Farmer.* All rights reserved." *The Progressive Farmer*® is a trademark registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Additional trademarks are Country Voices®, Pork Profit®, We'd Like To Mention®, Countryplace®, Country Place®, The Rural Sportsman®, Cornerstones™, FarmLife™. Periodicals postage paid at Birmingham, AL, and at additional mailing offices (USPS 447-300). General Editorial Office, PO BOX 430033, Birmingham, AL 35243-0033. Subscription rates in the U.S.: $58.00 for three years, $44.00 for two years, $26.00 for one year. Outside the U.S.: $33 per year. Single copy $5.95.

Canada Post Publications Mail Agreement #40732015 GST #83187 6255 RT0001

TO CORRECT YOUR ADDRESS: Attach mailing address label from cover, along with your new address, including zip code. Send to *The Progressive Farmer*, PO BOX 5074, Boone, IA 50950-0074. Give six weeks' notice.

POSTMASTER: Send all UAA to CFS. (See DMM 707.4.12.5); NON-POSTAL AND MILITARY FACILITIES: *The Progressive Farmer*, PO BOX 5074, Boone, IA 50950-0074.

SUBSCRIBERS: If the Post Office alerts us that your magazine is undeliverable, we have no further obligation unless we receive a corrected address within two years.

MAILING LIST: We make a portion of our mailing list available to reputable firms. If you would prefer that we not include your name, please call or write us.

JACKPOT!

STABILIZE YOUR NITROGEN INVESTMENTS WITH THE INDUSTRY WINNERS

Why risk volatilization, denitrification and leaching when it comes to your nitrogen investment? Our proven portfolio of nitrogen stabilizer solutions protects your anhydrous ammonia, urea and UAN investment from loss to ensure that nitrogen is available for optimal plant uptake.

Choose ANVOL™ nitrogen stabilizer for extended protection above-ground, CENTURO™ nitrogen stabilizer for highly-effective below-ground protection or SUPERU™ premium fertilizer for dual above- and below-ground protection in a granular, ready-to-use fertilizer.

Contact your retailer or visit TheNitrogenWin.com to win big this season.

KOCH AGRONOMIC SERVICES

WE'D LIKE TO MENTION

Katie Dehlinger
Editor In Chief

➤ Email Katie Dehlinger,
katie.dehlinger@dtn.com

A Bright Spot for the Wheat Market

A man on an airplane once accused me of moving the wheat market with a tweet.

I'd just finished three days on the spring wheat crop tour, scouting fields by day and consuming my share of barley by night. All I wanted to do was close my eyes and take a nap, but all he wanted to do was quiz me.

Overall, that year's spring wheat crop was expected to be large, but I had posted a picture of a field that didn't fit that billing on Twitter, which is now called X. Around the same time, the market jumped 9 cents. As a vice president at a large grain company, he was convinced I'd soured a position on his books—an unforgivable crime.

I believe there was more behind that day's market action than my tweet, but I will always remember this encounter as an example of just how invested people—whether they are farmers, traders, end users or consumers—are in the crop's outcome. Real money and real livelihoods are on the line, and people can be very sensitive to information they perceive as hurtful to their position.

GETTY IMAGES

There's a lot of real money and red ink on the line for row-crop producers this year, regardless of the commodity. Producing top-tier yields, such as the National Wheat Yield Contest Bin Busters featured in this issue, takes intensive management and lots of inputs, which look unaffordable in today's price environment.

By now, you've all heard the saying that high prices cure high prices, and low prices cure low prices, but I contend that low prices don't do this work on their own. Another lesson I learned from my dozen crop tours is that markets are made by people. Someone must build a relationship before a ship sets sail. Then expanded demand can boost prices.

It's easy to overlook this yeoman's work when commodity prices are good, but the wheat industry is a prime example of how this hard work pays off over the long term. As of the end of January, U.S. wheat exports were up 17% from last year.

The U.S. already has five buyers with orders for 1 million metric tons or more on the books, including Japan, Mexico, Nigeria, the Philippines and South Korea. Indonesia and Taiwan are very close to breaking into the club, as well, with 996,000 metric tons and 873,000 metric tons worth of sales, respectively, as of the end of January.

"We continue to have a wide base of buyers that buy year in and year out, but competitive pricing brought in quite a few nontraditional markets," says U.S. Wheat Associates communication director Julia Debes, who I met on my first wheat tour in 2011. "We're planning to leverage that opportunity to showcase the quality of U.S. wheat to build a foundation for future sales, even when prices rebound back up."

U.S. wheat continues to move through export channels despite an abundance of global supply. Price-sensitive buyers have many origins to choose from, but with six distinct classes of wheat and transparent grain-inspection standards, the U.S. makes it easy for buyers to find just the right product for their needs.

Building the demand base creates long-term benefits, and I hope this trend continues. Wheat growers need the good news, especially with a challenging year ahead. ///

Katie Dehlinger

EDITOR IN CHIEF

fieldposts.buzzsprout.com

x.com/dtnpf

facebook.com/dtnprogressivefarmer

linkedin.com *The Progressive Farmer* Magazine

For customer service, please visit **www.dtnpf.com/marketing/custserv**, or call 800-292-2340.

Plan Ahead to Protect Yield Potential

> "Before anything else, **preparation is the key to success."**
>
> **– Alexander Graham Bell**

Though coined by the inventor of the telephone, this idea rings especially true in agriculture. Each growing season, success often depends on the planning done long before the planter rolls. One key area where preparation can make a difference is fungicide strategy.

Why Plan for Fungicides?

No season unfolds exactly as planned. Disease, heat, wind, drought and hail all pose real threats to corn and soybean yields. For many farmers, the default response has been to react to these agronomic challenges as they appear. While understandable, this reactive approach can result in inconsistent fungicide performance and uncertain return on investment.

"Fungal diseases in corn and soybeans have a latent period, meaning the disease is already inside the plant before symptoms are visible to the naked eye," says Kim Tutor, Technical Marketing Manager for Row Crop Fungicides with BASF. "That's part of the reason why it's important to be proactive rather than reactive with fungicide programs."

That's why preparing crops to withstand disease pressure and environmental stress before it takes hold can make the difference between simply managing challenges and staying ahead of them. A proactive fungicide program with Veltyma® fungicide helps protect yield potential and support plant health, no matter what the season brings.

Why Veltyma Fungicide?

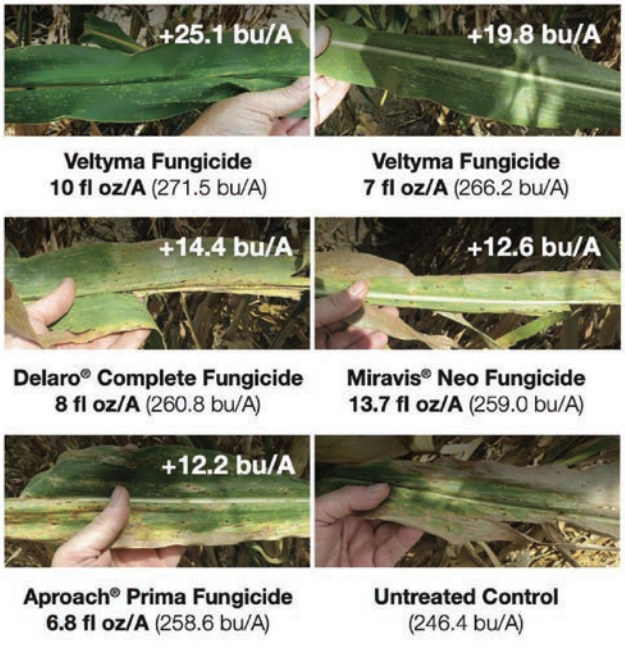
Veltyma fungicide brings consistent performance, helping protect your yield and ROI.

"Veltyma fungicide provides the consistency corn and soybean growers need year in and year out, regardless of the stress," says Tutor. "Our Revysol® active ingredient binds more effectively at fungal sites of action, driving stronger and longer-lasting disease control."

In corn, Veltyma fungicide reliably provides a +7.0 bushel per acre (bu/A) average yield increase over other fungicides.[1] It helps to protect against challenging diseases like southern rust, tar spot and gray leaf spot. Veltyma fungicide also helps prevent stalk cannibalization to keep corn standing stronger for longer, meaning you won't be leaving bushels in the field at harvest.

Soybean acres treated with Veltyma fungicide can see up to a +4.0 bu/A average yield increase over untreated acres[2], with protection against frogeye leaf spot and Cercospora blight. It also reduces ethylene accumulation and decreases canopy temperatures, which help drive more efficient photosynthesis. That means healthy, vigorous soybean plants and higher yield potential at the end of your season.

"Veltyma fungicide outperforms other fungicides eight times out of ten and beats the untreated acre nine times out of ten,[3]" says Tutor. **"If there's one word that describes its performance, it's consistency."**



2024 BASF-sponsored replicated, large plot trial. Madison County, IA. All fungicides applied at labeled rates at VT growth stage. Average yield for replicates 1, 3 and 4. Replicate 2 removed due to poor drainage and nitrogen loss. Yield advantages are in comparison to the untreated control. Photos taken 68 days after treatment (9/16/2024).

This season, get ahead of disease threats in your corn and soybeans. Contact your local retailer or BASF representative to build your proactive plan with Veltyma fungicide, and learn about the 2026 Real Results Yield Challenge.

See the Results for Yourself

The Real Results Yield Challenge is the largest nationwide comparison-plot program from BASF, encouraging farmers to put performance-driven fungicides, like Veltyma fungicide, to the test. Thousands of farmers participated in 2025 and saw the impact of performance-driven fungicides firsthand.

1 Results based on 2019-2023 RevX Fields On-Farm demonstrations against numerous other corn fungicides. For a full list of head-to-head comparisons visit RevXFields.com Veltyma fungicide applied at 7 fl oz/A. All fungicides applied at labeled rates to VT-R3 corn.

2 2022-2024 BASF-sponsored small-plot, replicated soybean trials. Locations: NE (4), IA (5), IL (4), IN (3), MI (1), MN (4), MO (1), OH (2), SD (1). Application rates were as follows: Delaro® Complete fungicide 8 fl oz/A, Miravis® Neo fungicide 13.7 fl oz/A and Veltyma fungicide 7 fl oz/A. All treatments applied with NIS 0.25% v/v at R3 soybean growth stage

3 2019-2024 RevXFields On-Farm Demonstrations. For more information visit RevXFields.com.

Veltyma® Fungicide

BASF
We create chemistry

How Farmers Can Give Back While Cutting Their Tax Bill

Although many farmers don't often consider gifting or charitable donations, they can be a good tax strategy. I've included a few tax benefits of charitable giving in other articles, but a deeper dive might be worthwhile with changes under the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA).

Let's start with what changed under OBBBA. Starting in 2026, if you don't itemize, you can still take up to a $1,000 (single) or $2,000 (married filing joint) deduction for cash contributions to charities. For those who itemize, charitable deductions will be subject to a 0.5% floor. That is, an amount equal to the first 0.5% of adjusted gross income would not be deductible, but anything over that amount would be. And, for those with high incomes, OBBBA caps the tax benefit for contributions at 35% (even if the taxpayer is in the 37% bracket). Although not a deduction, there is a tax credit of up to $1,700 for charitable contributions to scholarship-granting organizations for elementary and secondary education scholarships.

Now, let's talk about some of the benefits of charitable donations. The most frequent donation I see is the qualified charitable donation (QCD) from an IRA. This allows farmers who reach the age of 70½ to donate up to $111,000 (in 2026) directly to a charity. The benefit of a QCD is that you don't have to pay tax on the IRA distribution to the charity; however, you don't get to deduct the amount given to charity (that would be double-dipping). One limitation is that QCDs can't be made to a donor-advised fund or a private foundation.

With the rise in the stock market, many people have appreciated stock. You can donate stock and receive a charitable deduction equal to its fair market value. This makes donating stock much more appealing than selling the stock and donating the proceeds.

A great option for farmers is to gift commodities. Instead of selling commodities to an elevator or cooperative, the farmer can deliver the grain in the name of the charity. The charity gets the proceeds, and the farmer does not report the sale of the grain. There are a few benefits to commodity gifting. First, if the farmer does not gift enough to exceed the standard deduction, he or she can still receive a tax benefit. Second, gifting commodities removes them from income and, in turn, reduces self-employment tax. For farmers who give smaller amounts more frequently, commodity gifting may be the best method to donate to charities.

Finally, charitable remainder trusts (CRTs) provide a tremendous ability to transfer a large amount of money to charities. I have previously written about CRTs and the economic benefits for the donors, but in most cases, the remainder that goes to charities is rather large. And, if the donor contributes assets to the CRT with basis, that basis can be used as a charitable deduction. A CRT is not only a good exiting strategy but also a great way to give to charity.

As you can see, gifting and charitable donations can provide a tax benefit while fulfilling a charitable intent. If you have a tax bill and a charitable intent, look at some options with your tax professional. ///

Rod Mauszycki

Tax Columnist Rod Mauszycki, J.D., MBT, is a tax principal with CLA (CliftonLarsonAllen) in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

➤ Read Rod's "Ask the Taxman" column at **ABOUT.DTNPF.COM/TAX**

➤ You may email Rod at **taxman@dtn.com**

TOOLS FROM THE PAST

The Tin Man would love this tool.
What is it?

Answer:
This is a Kaye's machine oiler from Great Britain. The brass-and-metal item is commonly called a piecrust pump can oiler because of its decorative details.

WHAT'S TRENDING @ DTNPF.COM

➤ *A recent episode provides an overview of the CES, a global premier event in Las Vegas for consumer technology. Senior Machinery Editor Dan Miller sits down with host Sarah Mock to explain the latest high-tech tools from companies like John Deere, Kubota and Bobcat, as well as drone manufacturers.*

SCAN FOR PODCASTS

DTN field posts Progressive Farmer

HTTPS://FIELDPOSTS.BUZZSPROUT.COM

UPCOMING WEBINARS

To register, visit **www.dtn.com/events**

March 10: WASDE Report: Join DTN Lead Analyst Rhett Montgomery as he reviews the latest data on world supply and demand of commodities, and provides analysis on what it means for grain prices.

BLOGS & COLUMNS

FARM FAMILY BUSINESS

Advice on family communication and succession planning

➤ **Lance Woodbury**
Farm Business Adviser
lance.woodbury@pinionglobal.com

ASK THE TAXMAN

Expert advice on IRS rules and regulations

➤ **Rod Mauszycki**
Tax Columnist
taxman@dtn.com

RUSS' VINTAGE IRON

Nostalgic histories of yesteryear's farm equipment

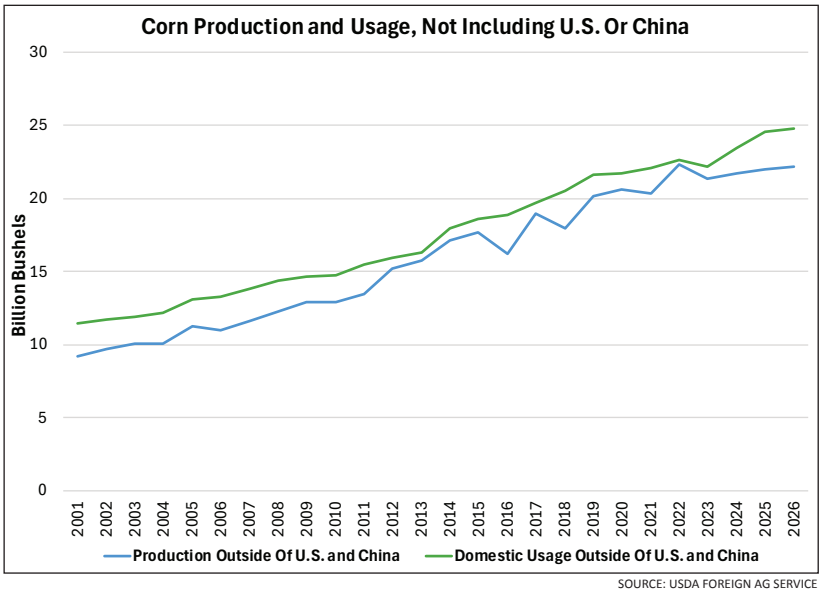
➤ **Russ Quinn**
Fertilizer Editor
@RussQuinnDTN

The Corn Market in 2026: A Tale of Two Balance Sheets

There is little denying at this point that the 2025 corn crop in the United States was a bin buster. We could scrutinize the exact accuracy of USDA estimates for hours, and the acreage drama alone will likely be talked about for years to come. But, the bottom line is that unless USDA missed by an unprecedented 1.68 billion bushels in the January "World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates" (WASDE) report, then the 2025 crop was indeed a record. National average basis levels being the second weakest of the past decade as of late January stand as hard evidence that the seven-year-high forecast for U.S. corn stockpiles of more than 2 billion bushels (bb) is fairly accurate, as well. However, broaden the corn market picture to include the world balance sheet, and the situation is wildly different.

While U.S. stocks stand estimated at a seven-year high, USDA's total world estimate in January was an 11-year low. And, what's even more noteworthy is the distribution of corn supplies around the globe, with the U.S. and China being the owners of over 80% of world reserves. Taking the U.S. and China inventories out of the equation, the remaining world ending stocks ratio relative to demand in those countries sits at 8.6%, the lowest since 2001. Essentially, world corn-production expansion outside of the U.S. and China (yes, that includes Brazil and Argentina) has not matched the growth of demand in the years following the COVID-19 pandemic. The jury is still out on where South American production will land in 2026. The January USDA forecast called for the second-largest combined crop on record for Brazil and Argentina, yet the production deficit (production minus domestic consumption) for countries other than the U.S. and China is expected to be roughly 2.6 bb, the largest in 10 years.

Considering the above statistics, it is easy to see why the appetite for U.S. corn around the globe continues to surge, with the U.S. anticipated to export more than 3 bb of corn for the first time in the 2025–26 marketing year. The U.S. enjoys a distinct advantage in that the world's largest corn importer, Mexico, is our neighbor. The diversity among world demand also presents opportunity to U.S. exporters. In 2024–25, the top six corn-importing countries accounted for 50% of the yearly volume, while the next 50% was composed of more than 100 countries and regions. This is a stark contrast to the share of exports among world suppliers, with Argentina, Brazil and the U.S. accounting for over 75% of world corn exports in 2024–25. With domestic demand in No. 2 exporter Brazil growing at an impressive clip, as well, the U.S. remains well-positioned, at least in the immediate future, to maintain a steady to rising share of the world corn trade. ///



SOURCE: USDA FOREIGN AG SERVICE

Rhett Montgomery
Lead Analyst
➤ Read Rhett's blog at **ABOUT.DTNPF.COM/MARKETS**

➤ You may email Rhett at **rhett.montgomery@dtn.com**

UpTerra®

BETTER WATER.
BETTER SOIL.
BETTER YIELD.

Up to 30% less applied water.

Increased yield on 30+ crop types.

45% more soil aggregation.

Learn More & Receive a quote

THIS IS WATER REIMAGINED.

upterra.co | 707-878-3772

Flex Your Farm Voice

BY Katie Pratt

In the mid-2010s, farmers and ranchers were called to defend their livelihoods in the court of public opinion. I stood on the front lines. Agriculture organizations spent many dollars and hours coaching their members on the hows and whys of sharing agriculture's story.

"Agvocates" were born. Blogs started. Musical parodies shot some farmers to stardom, and as an industry, we showed up on social media.

I spent three years on the road attending food-service conventions, science conferences and meetings of dieticians and nutritionists as the token farmer. With the guidance of some great people, I curated a semisuccessful blog and online presence. Sharing my farm story was part of my everyday.

Of all the hats we farmers wear, public relations manager is one of the most important. While having an online presence is certainly valuable, I've found the discussions held in our own backyards are just as effective at spreading the good word about agriculture.

For several years, the local Rotary and Kiwanis clubs have invited me in as a guest speaker. What started as a request to talk about farming in general has now become specific asks to address specific topics. I think the groups are paying attention when agriculture issues take to the headlines. I'm thankful I'm on the call list when they have questions.

COURTESY OF KATIE PRATT

Speaking up for agriculture need not come with a microphone and spotlight. Often, a random conversation is the time an acquaintance feels comfortable saying, "I don't understand why those corn fields look so short" (i.e., referencing detasseled seed corn). Being present in these moments, as the farmers we are, is critical. Answer the questions. Be the resource. Saying "I don't know" is OK.

Celebrate the diversity of our agriculture community. It's important we keep claiming our space as advocates for ag. ///

Katie Pratt writes and shares her love of agriculture and family with others from a north-central Illinois farm. Find her writing blog at **https://theillinoisfarmgirl.com**

Meet My Sheep

BY Tiffany Dowell Lashmet

Each year at the State Fair of Texas, my kids make a sign that reads: "Ask me about my sheep" or "Ask me about my steer." They position their chairs in the walkway and wait for fair visitors to come by. And, come by they do. One year, I lost count at 75 people about two hours into the first day.

It is fascinating to watch people from different worlds come together to have a conversation. Some are a little shy to start. Others jump right in. My kids report their most common questions include the names of the animals (a variety of answers, including Nugget, Funnel Cake and Cheeseball, to name a few), whether the kids ride them (no, because Mom would kill us) and if they bite (only if we are too slow feeding them their animal cracker snacks).

The conversations don't always go perfectly. For example, a sweet lady asked my kids what their sheep eat. My son replied, "Well, that one eats a can and a half (of feed), and that one eats a can and a quarter, and the Dorset is on a diet, so she just gets a can." The poor woman was surely looking for a simple response like "corn."

TIFFANY DOWELL LASHMET

I wonder how many of the world's problems might be solved if people with different backgrounds took a minute to talk, get to know each other, ask a few questions and see where the other person is coming from.

It makes me smile to know that for a few hundred people in Dallas, Texas—many of them from different backgrounds and races and beliefs—will think of my kids and their sheep when they hear something about farmers or ranchers.

Will that change the world? In a time that often seems full of division and polarization, it just might be a start. ///

Tiffany Dowell Lashmet juggles family, farming, writing, livestock and a career in ag law from the Texas Panhandle. Follow her on Instagram **@alwaysafarmkid**, on social platform X **@TiffDowell** and on her blog at **https://alwaysafarmkid.wordpress.com**

Introducing a real pre-emergent game changer.

Kick weeds, grasses and resistance out of your corn fields from the start. The first new active ingredient in corn in more than a decade, pre-emergent Intrava™ DX herbicide by UPL delivers broad-spectrum defense against broadleaf weeds and grasses, including atrazine-resistant Amaranth species and HPPD-resistant pigweed. Kill the toughest weeds and win the resistance management game with next-generation control.

Ask your local ag retailer about Intrava DX herbicide today.

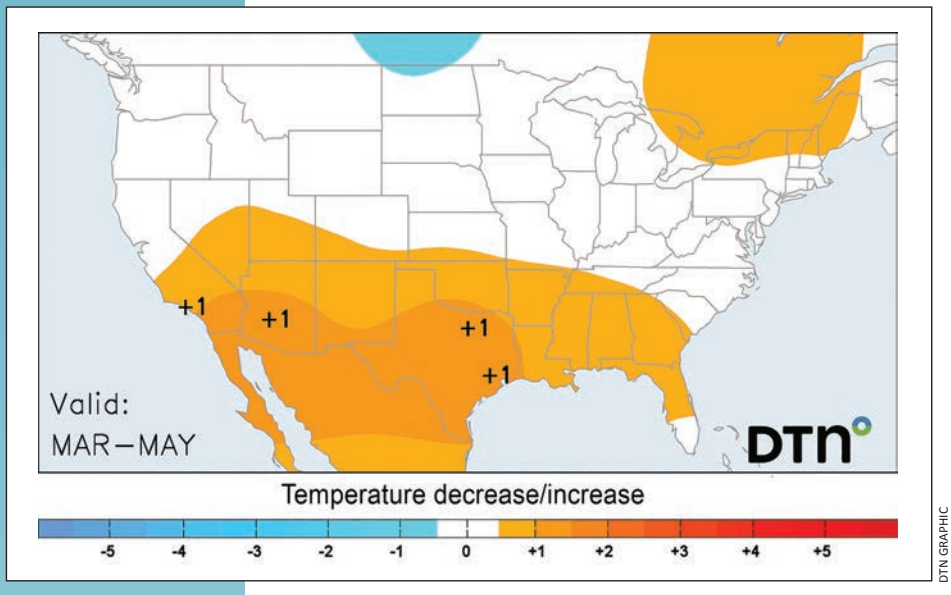
UPL

HERBICIDE Intrava™ DX

IntravaDXFieldGoals.com

Spring Season May Feel Effects Of La Niña's Waning

2026 is starting off the same way 2025 did. Coming off a brief and weak La Niña into neutral conditions is likely to bring a mix of weather conditions this spring. And, many forecasts have us getting into an El Niño sometime this summer. Some early remnants of La Niña's pattern of a warm and dry south and cool north are likely, but chaos may reign supreme as we get into the second half of the season. If the pattern is in any way like 2025, we could expect to see some periods of active weather and heavy rain, which may be good or bad, depending on the drought situation and the timing for planting.



DTN GRAPHIC

La Niña conditions early may lead to a traditional cooler north and warmer south this spring.

John Baranick
Ag Meteorologist

➤ Read John's blog at **ABOUT.DTNPF.COM/WEATHER**

➤ You may email John at **john.baranick@dtn.com**

And, the drought situation is really the key difference this year. Drought is much worse across parts of the southern Midwest, South and Southeast than last year, but much improved across the Southwest, northern half of the Plains and Upper Midwest. If the weather patterns are similar between the years, we will have different impacts to the 2026 planting season than we saw in 2025. So, weigh that heavily, as we expect some similar weather results to last year.

Pacific Northwest (Idaho, Oregon and Washington): Winter is usually an active period in the region, especially during La Niña. And, true, there were some active periods. But, drought expanded in some places during the winter and remained in others. The last vestiges of La Niña may help to improve drought and soil moisture in the front half of the season, but it's more of an unknown for the second half. Indications are that drier conditions will be more likely during the second half of spring, so good soil moisture may turn poor as the season wears on.

Southwest: The region had some periods of heavy precipitation that have reduced drought across a widespread area of the region during the winter, especially in California. However, it was also very warm, and the spring season starts with a major snowpack deficit. Unless an active period continues in spring, which is unlikely, drought development may be significant this spring and summer, turning an overall good situation into a poor one as temperatures rise.

Northern Plains: Variable temperatures during the winter and a less-than-favorable storm track have left much of the region without snow cover in early February. Though the pattern is expected to be more active through the early half of the spring season, the lack of a snowpack could cause some moisture concerns. If indeed the end of February and early spring are more favorable, perhaps this won't matter to soil moisture and instead will delay planting some. Either way, issues are likely to be in place this year. Lingering cold seems to be common in recent years, and that is in our forecast, as well, which may leave planting a bit later anyway.

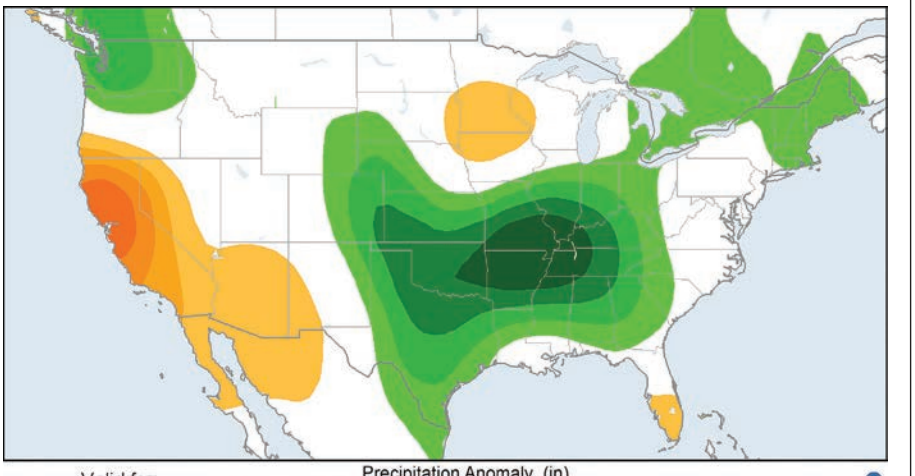
Central and Southern Plains: Bursts of arctic air that moved through this winter may have caused issues for winter wheat. And, despite some good precipitation events, including

Watch the Video

HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/MRYZWNKJ

heavy snow and ice in January, drought remains a major issue at the start of February. Soil moisture maps are not favorable either. Unless the early-spring season gets off with an active pattern, which may still happen, dryness and drought could spell trouble for winter wheat, forages and the beginning of planting season. However, a more active late-spring pattern is also expected, which may be helpful for many areas if it comes true, easing concerns that build up over the next few weeks.

Coastal Texas and Louisiana: The winter storm track has targeted areas well to the north of the region, leaving a lot of drought, especially in southern Texas. The first half of spring also looks to be rather dry. But, much like the Southern Plains, the pattern could be more active during the second half of the season and would come at a good time for developing spring crops.



DTN GRAPHIC

Midwest: It has been a harsh winter in the Midwest, with wild swings in temperature, some very cold arctic air bursts and variable precipitation patterns. As of early February, drought still covers some significant areas from Missouri to northwest Ohio. February is forecast to be a more active month that may bleed through the bulk of the spring season, as well. That is expected to reduce this drought but could also have the opposite effect, leaving areas too wet to plant and causing delays. Lingering cold over the northwest could also cause planting delays, but the later planting schedule may not be affected nearly as much.

Delta/Lower Mississippi Valley: The region saw just about everything this winter from huge ice and snowstorms to arctic cold, significant warm periods and, unfortunately, below-normal rainfall. Drought has continued to grow despite some larger precipitation events through early February. Even a more active weather pattern to close out winter and begin spring may not be enough to eliminate drought. And, an unusual event may occur where we have significant flooding during drought, leaving topsoils too wet to work and subsoils too dry to sustain plant growth. This will be a very interesting situation to follow this year.

Mid-Atlantic and Northeast: Perhaps this region saw the harshest weather this winter as it was more frequently cold than other parts of the country and rarely saw significant warmups. Frequent clippers caused heavy lake-effect snow away from the coast. The only favorable thing has been infrequent coastal storms. But, that has unfortunately left drought across large sections of the region. There is no clear signal this year on how the weather will go this spring. Chaotic patterns to the west that are likely to increase rainfall may not make it past the Appalachians and could leave the region drier. But, confidence in that forecast is fairly low.

Early La Niña conditions may also lead to an active storm track through the middle of the country this spring.

Southeast: A couple of big-time storms moved through the region this winter, causing more widespread ice and snow than normal, and bringing through a couple of long-duration cold events, as well. Despite all the activity, drought has been growing throughout much of the region. An active pattern to the northwest could help to bring in some occasionally heavy precipitation to the region. But, the frequency of that heavy rain may not be enough to significantly reduce drought. Chances are better later in the spring, though, which would be more beneficial once crops start to really take off. ///

Wheat Acreage Angst

Growers fight to hold ground as profit margins thin.

Wheat might be cast as a regular loser in the battle for acres, but it's held its ground over the last decade, with farmers planting between 44.5 million and 50 million acres each year. But, growers are facing increasingly hard planting decisions as tough price scenarios bump up against even tougher input prices.

"Growers understand the importance of small grains and what they do for their rotations," says Travis Messer, an agronomist who is involved in the multigenerational Messer Beaver Creek Ranch, near Richardton, North Dakota.

Striving for better wheat is a team effort for the Messer family, which includes (from left) Jadon, Travis, Mark, Jerry, Scott and Greg.

COURTESY OF MESSER BEAVER CREEK RANCH

Farmers are optimizing fertilizer and fungicide applications, applying seed treatments, adopting water management techniques and cover crops, sampling tissue and employing the data-driven playbook. Winners of this year's National Wheat Yield Contest averaged more than 147 bushels per acre (bpa), a demonstration of what's possible with intense management. In 2025, the Messer farm wheat yield contest entry of 101.15 bpa was a solid 150.25% above the Stark County average of 40.41 bpa.

"However, the future—of hard red spring wheat especially—hangs in the balance of profitability versus what's better long term. Today, inputs are simply too high to justify overapplication or doing things the way we always have done them," Messer says.

North Dakota State University Extension estimates farmers in that state will, on average, spend $100 per acre on fertilizer for the 2026 season to produce a spring wheat crop. The total cost of production, including land and machinery expense, is estimated at $6.55 per bushel. Spring wheat futures prices for July delivery hovered just above $6 per bushel in early February.

SHARED ECONOMIC STRAIN

The economics are similarly challenging for hard red and soft red winter wheat production.

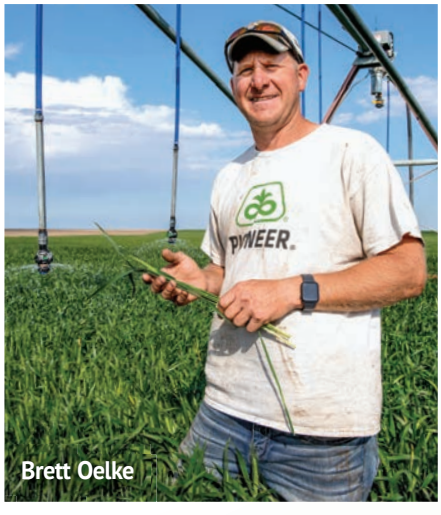
"Obviously, it's not fun being in this kind of a price environment—whether you are growing wheat, corn, soybeans. Everything is depressed," says Hoxie, Kansas, farmer Brett Oelke. "But, while it isn't fun times, I wouldn't say it is the worst of times either. We are finding ways to keep wheat woven into our program."

It comes down to making smart decisions, he says. For Oelke, that

Story By **Pamela Smith**, @PamSmithDTN and **Katie Dehlinger**, @KatieD_DTN

JOEL REICHENBERGER

means paying attention to things such as soil tests to show a fertility credit or keep him from dipping too deep into the savings.



Brett Oelke

JASON JENKINS

"Mostly, we are managing as intensively as we can while being practical. We want to make sure we don't overspend or underspend while still staying focused. If we can trim $20 to $30 per acre off our nitrogen cost without costing a bushel, that's money in the bank," he says.

A four-year drought and dropping water levels in the Ogallala Aquifer are ever-present reminders of why wheat is a mainstay in the rotation.

"We need the wheat residue for soil moisture conservation to grow subsequent corn crops," Oelke says. "We don't really have good cash-crop alternatives that generate that kind of crop residue in this part of western Kansas.

"We're also working closely with gluten and flour mills to add value when we can," adds Oelke, who also has numerous wheat yield contest wins to his credit.

SYSTEMS-LEVEL THINKING

Jochum Wiersma, University of Minnesota Extension small grains specialist, says the water-saving advantages of wheat correlate to other systems-based advantages.

When farmers create their cash-flows and projections for different cropping patterns, such as continuous corn versus a wheat/corn/soybean rotation, they need to look at yield history.

Economists and producers sometimes analyze returns per acre for individual crops without consideration for the rotational partners. There are, however, opportunity costs because of the crop rotation—continuous corn doesn't yield the same as corn following wheat. Those extra bushels of corn are attributable to the wheat crop and therefore can be included in the enterprise analysis of wheat rather than corn, Wiersma notes.

"That additional number of bushels is, in a sense, attributable to the rotational partner," he says, adding there are additional agronomic benefits, too, such as better management of herbicide-resistant weeds, diseases and pests.

"That doesn't necessarily make wheat look great, or all of a sudden better than corn ... but it makes it fairer, and we start recognizing systems thinking rather than individual enterprise thinking," Wiersma adds.

PROTEIN PRESSURE

Minnesota farmers have almost doubled their average spring wheat yields during the last 30 years. Wiersma attributes it to better genetics, management and acreage concentration in the highest-producing areas.

But, unlike corn and soybeans, the market doesn't just want bushels. Millers want spring wheat to contain 14% protein.

"We maximize grain yield before we get to that 14% protein level and almost have to overapply nitrogen to get to it," Wiersma explains.

As of late January, urea cost an average of $574 per ton, up 17% from last year, while anhydrous cost $856 per ton, 15% higher than in 2025, according to retail fertilizer price bids collected by DTN.

Messer says growers in southwest North Dakota need to produce more than 70 bpa for spring wheat to pencil out a profit, a big challenge with the region's soils and weather.

"I have encouraged many growers to focus their time and attention on trying to drive their nitrogen efficiency number down to 1.1 to 1.2 pounds of N applied per bushel. This would essentially be a 50 to 60% reduction in standard industry practice," he says. "This is the only way growers will have any chance of success making hard red spring wheat cash-flow for 2026."

He expects a reduction in spring wheat acres in North Dakota this spring if input prices stay where they are, and demand doesn't pick up.

"Growers simply cannot afford $150- to $200-per-acre losses on wheat and remain sustainable long term. They will simply switch to alternative crops," Messer says. ///

By **Jason Jenkins**, @JasonJenkinsDTN
and **Pamela Smith**, @PamSmithDTN

GRAIN GAINS

National Wheat Yield Contest celebrates 10 years of progress.

JASON JENKINS

For the past decade, wheat growers from coast to coast have put their grain-growing prowess to the test in the National Wheat Yield Contest. Organized by the National Wheat Foundation (NWF), the contest encourages farmers to strive for exceptional wheat yields, high quality and stronger profitability while trying new and innovative management strategies that drive productivity and marketability.

Anne Osborne, NWF executive director, says the 10th edition of the contest features 11 first-time winners—including farmers from states that previously had not produced national winners—while four farmers who earned the title of "Bin Buster" before did so again.

The yield average for the 24 national winners in the contest's four traditional categories was 147.01 bushels per acre (bpa), a nearly 2-bushel increase from 2024. Since the contest's inception in 2016, the record high yield in the contest has increased by 20%, from 192.85 to 231.37 bpa.

In 2025, NWF expanded its pilot category, Digital Yield, to include dryland winter wheat farmers in six select states. The category allows digital agriculture technologies and data from calibrated grain cart scales to tally yields. Additional awards were given to national winners whose wheat was deemed to be of exceptional quality.

Entries for the 2026 contest will be accepted starting March 1. Learn more at **www.wheatcontest.org**

MEET THE BIN BUSTERS

IRRIGATED WINTER WHEAT
Rylee Reynolds

Twin Falls, Idaho
Variety: WestBred WB1621
Yield: 228.13 bpa

COURTESY OF RYLEE REYNOLDS

When growing high-yielding winter wheat in south-central Idaho's Magic Valley, the Reynolds family follows SOP: standard operating procedure.

"We have our program that we believe in, and we stick to it," says Rylee Reynolds, a fourth-generation farmer who works alongside his brother, Oree, and father, Gary. "We treat every single acre of wheat the same."

Following SOP on the farm has led to something else: winning. Rylee bested all entries in 2025 with irrigated soft white winter wheat that yielded 228.13 bpa. It was the second-highest yield recorded in the contest's 10-year history and Reynolds' second time atop the category. He set the overall contest record in 2022 with wheat yielding 231.37 bpa.

In a region that annually receives about 7 inches of precipitation, irrigation is a necessity. Access and availability to that water require rotation considerations. ➤

WestBred®

WB4792 • WB4422 • WB4595 • WB1621 • WB9590 • WB9645 • WB7589 • WB6430 • WB2542

WHEN YOU'RE 'BRED DIFFERENTLY, PERFORMANCE IS IN YOUR DNA.

Jess Blatchford
Baker City, OR | WB6430
168.89 Bu/A

Jordan Christman
Hettinger, ND | WB9590
101.27 Bu/A

Brad Disrud
Rolla, ND | WB9590
103.00 Bu/A

Andrew Doll
New Salem, ND | WB9590
100.79 Bu/A

Matt Dornan
Chandler, OK | WB4422
106.45 Bu/A

Daniel Edmonds
Morris, OK | WB2452
99.00 Bu/A

Isaac Hendrickson
Agate, ND | WB9590
119.00 Bu/A

Alec Horton
Leoti, KS | WB4792
138.00 Bu/A

Shawn Kimbrell
Sunray, TX | WB4595
70.04 Bu/A

Charles A. (Tony) Kodesh
Red Rock, OK | WB4422
108.32 Bu/A

Greg Messer
Richardton, ND | WB9645
101.15 Bu/A

Kenneth O'Neal
Groom, TX | WB4792
89.14 Bu/A

Brent Philipp
Goodridge, MN | WB9590
123.67 Bu/A

Oree Reynolds
Castleford, ID | WB1621
226.59 Bu/A

Rylee Reynolds
Castleford, ID | WB1621
228.13 Bu/A

Dallin Wilcox
Rexburg, ID | WB7589
190.10 Bu/A

BAYER

"Our typical rotation is corn, dry edible beans, winter wheat," Reynolds explains. "With wheat in the rotation, we're done watering it by the end of June, so that lets us put our water elsewhere. It's a real plus for us."

Reynolds selected WestBred WB1621, an awnless, medium-late-maturing soft white variety considered to have excellent standability for irrigated production while excelling with both yield and test weight.

Using a broadcast spreader, Reynolds seeded the field at a rate of roughly 100 to 120 pounds per acre. The seed was treated with CruiserMaxx Vibrance. Nutrition was also broadcast in the fall with roughly 100 units of nitrogen and 40 to 60 units of phosphorus applied per acre.

A warmer-than-average fall and one good rain allowed the wheat to emerge strong and begin tillering in earnest. Reynolds says it looked almost like a turf field going into winter dormancy, but then a dry pattern set up. He began watering a thirsty crop as soon as the irrigation district made it available. He estimates they applied about 15 inches of water per acre.

Applications of Starane Ultra herbicide and Nexicor Xemium fungicide limited competition and helped the wheat stay healthy and green. The season's biggest hurdle was ensuring the wheat had moisture when it needed it.

As for family competition in the yield contest, Reynolds says there are no production secrets. Rylee's entry only bested Oree's by 1.54 bpa—a difference of less than 1% in total yield.

"He threshes his, and I thresh mine," Reynolds says. "I guess my combine was set just a little better."

DRYLAND WINTER WHEAT

Steve VanGrunsven

Forest Grove, Oregon
Variety: Oregon State University Rosalyn
Yield: 198.32 bpa

JASON JENKINS

It wasn't long ago that Steve VanGrunsven viewed the winter wheat he planted as simply a means of extending his crop rotations, a way to "clean up the ground" for the grass and clover seed he grew as his primary cash crops.

Today, though, he knows wheat can be so much more—as his award-winning yields can attest. In 2025, the farmer earned his third Bin Buster title with a crop of Oregon State University's Rosalyn that yielded 198.32 bpa.

The winning field, which had previously been in red clover, was planted on Oct. 5, 2024, with a conventional double-disc drill at a rate of 1 million seeds per acre. The seed was treated with a fungicide package, an insecticide and a biological. A preemergent pass of herbicide was applied to ensure a clean field.

"That red clover is leaving behind a fair amount of nitrogen, so that really helps the wheat crop get established," VanGrunsven says. "We used to question whether our seed treatment was beneficial, but we're seeing that crop come out of the ground quicker with a whole lot more root growth. The insecticide protects against early aphid pressure since we don't typically get a cold snap to kill them off. The aphids can vector barley yellow dwarf virus in our area, so it's an insurance package against that."

A relatively mild winter in Oregon's Willamette Valley meant the wheat crop broke dormancy and began tillering with vigor. VanGrunsven met the crop's fertility needs with a broadcast application of 140 pounds of nitrogen, 30 pounds of potassium and 20 pounds of sulfur per acre prior to jointing. A stabilized urea product has been his go-to nitrogen source.

"It's allowed us to reduce our rates by 10% to 15% while still maintaining yields," he adds.

With a crop nearing 200 bpa, harvestability was VanGrunsven's biggest concern during the season. To combat lodging, a plant growth regulator (PGR) was applied to shorten and stiffen the plant.

"When you've got 6 tons of grain standing 3 feet off the ground, it makes us worry," he notes.

VanGrunsven says he often is asked what's the "one thing" that's key to high-yielding, high-quality wheat.

"The truth is there is no 'one thing,'" he admits. "It's the entire program—the defensive genetics, the seed treatments, the fungicides, the fertilizer rates. You put together the package and make sure the crop has no restrictions."

IRRIGATED SPRING WHEAT

Derek Friehe

Moses Lake, Washington
Variety: AgriPro AP Venom
Yield: 204.83 bpa

JOEL REICHENBERGER

Washington farmer Derek Friehe gets a head start on the spring wheat season by planting some of his crop in the fall. The move took him to the top of the irrigated spring wheat category with an entry of 204.83 bpa.

The AgriPro AP Venom hard red spring wheat was planted Oct. 8, 2024. It takes a special kind of hardiness for a spring variety to withstand winter conditions.

"We have enough experience with the practice to say that yield is better when it does work," Friehe says. "The same AP Venom variety planted as a spring crop ➤

Committed to Excellence

Whether you're searching for season-long plant health benefits or battling tough weeds and disease, BASF is committed to helping you get the most from your fields. We're proud to have helped our 2025 National Wheat Yield Contest winners in their achievement. Congratulations to:

- **Karissa Berg** *Bottineau, ND*
- **Greg Messer** *Richardton, ND*
- **Erick Olson** *Bonners Ferry, ID*
- **Brent Philipp** *Goodridge, MN*
- **Rylee Reynolds** *Castleford, ID*

Want to learn how they did it? Discover all the innovative solutions in the BASF Wheat Protection Portfolio. No matter your needs, we have answers to fit your field.

BASF
We create chemistry

using the same agronomic practices yielded on average 20 to 40 bpa less in 2025.

"Planting in the fall gives the crop a longer time to tiller and grow. It also allows the crop to pollinate earlier and avoid some heat events. Harvest on fall-planted wheat runs about one week earlier than when the crop is planted in the spring," he adds.

Friehe Farms agronomy manager Heath Gimmestad helps fine-tune crop management. It was a stellar weather year. The crop received about 18 inches of water in-season to supplement an 8-inch seasonal rainfall.

"Overall, this is the best wheat crop we've ever had. We had four or five fields that averaged in the 190 (bpa) range, and they were all fall-planted," Friehe explains.

The fertility program for the field included 25 pounds of sulfur and 83 pounds of nitrogen per acre in the fall. Another 65 pounds of nitrogen was applied prior to jointing and 91 pounds before leaf extension. Tissue testing at flag leaf helps optimize the fertility program.

The winning entry was planted at 85 pounds per acre and followed potatoes in the rotation. Spring wheat fields planted in the fall are dictated by what potatoes are harvested early enough to get fertilizer on and the ground prepped. Early to mid-October planting is preferred to allow the wheat to get some growth, but not too much.

The farm also grows Kentucky bluegrass, which is planted in August. Fall-planted wheat or green peas also fit nicely between potatoes and bluegrass in the rotation.

A plant growth regulator (PGR) was used to shorten plant internodes and increase the size and stiffness of the stem.

"Even where we used a PGR, we had more lodging this year than we've seen for a long time. Maybe it was because the heads were so heavy," Friehe says.

DRYLAND SPRING WHEAT

Nick Pfaff

Bismarck, North Dakota
Variety: Croplan 3119A
Yield: 147.81 bpa

RUAN VAN ROOYEN

Nick Pfaff faced severe drought going into the 2025 spring wheat season. In fact, it was so dry, the North Dakota farmer cut nitrogen applications in half prior to seeding to hedge his input bets.

The gasping start makes the story of Pfaff's eventual Bin Buster win in the yield contest remarkable. His 147.81 bpa entry of Croplan 3119A, an awnless variety, bested the next entry in the category by 24 bpa.

"All of a sudden, the rains started coming like crazy after emergence," Pfaff says. "I quickly realized I needed to topdress everything. I think that late dose of nitrogen helped yield, but it wouldn't have gone out if we hadn't gotten moisture."

Pfaff won the same category in 2024 by producing 117.60 bpa with Croplan 3099A, another awnless (also known as beardless) variety. During the 2024 crop year, he noticed Croplan 3119A outyielding other varieties planted on his higher-productivity fields by 10 to 20 bpa—all while exhibiting better protein levels. He made a note to plant more of the variety in 2025, and it paid off.

The central-North Dakota farm is spread over 75 miles. Fields closer to the Missouri River tend to be more nutrient dense and yield better.

"This winning entry didn't get any special ingredients that didn't go out on all our wheat fields," Pfaff says. The winning entry was extracted from a 322-acre field that averaged around 83 bpa.

"It takes our very top ground to produce consistently high yields," he notes. "This year was more variable, and relentless spring rains resulted in some added disease pressure that hurt our overall average."

The 2025 entry was seeded on April 12. Split nitrogen applications on the field totaled 222 pounds per acre. Approximately 75 pounds of the nitrogen went on at jointing. He also applied a full micronutrient package.

Routine fungicide treatments have proven to be a good investment against fusarium head blight and other diseases. Beardless varieties can be more susceptible to disease.

"The upside is awnless wheat has a longer maturity, which extends grain fill and gives us a longer harvest window. Awnless varieties tend to be more durable and hold up to wind and weather," he explains. Croplan 3119A is rated at 62 days to heading and 95 days to maturity.

Pfaff says nitrogen management helps manage protein. But, discounts are always a concern since there's typically a trade-off with higher yields. ///

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit www.wheatcontest.org for a complete list of contest rules.

AT HOME ON ANY ACRE.

DYNAGRO SEED

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2025 NATIONAL WHEAT YIELD CONTEST

NATIONAL WINNERS

Karissa Berg
Variety -Ballistic

Blake Anthis
Variety - 9533

Wyatt Ramage
Variety - Ramsay

All three of our National winners were Top-Quality winners as well!

STATE WINNERS

Doug Horrall
9862

Jacob Horrall
9862

Blake Anthis
9533

Wyatt Ramage
Ramsay

Justin Young
9322

Dennis Carnahan
9533

Jake Wipf
Ramsay

Phillip Cartner
9231

Ross Swan
9422

Brandon Knight
9422

Kelly Ramage
Ramsay

Gus Bowles
9231

Brandon Philipps
Rocker

Michael Wood
Rocker

Karissa Berg
Ballistic

Available through:

Nutrien Ag Solutions®

LEARN MORE ABOUT THESE WINNING PRODUCTS HERE

DynaGroSeed.com

MEET THE 2025 NATIONAL WINNERS

WINTER WHEAT DRYLAND

First Place: Jerry and Daniel Mullen
St. Paul, Oregon
Variety: Oregon State University Gale
Yield: 186.11 bpa

Second Place: Garrett Warren
Dayton, Washington
Variety: Limagrain Cereal Seeds 50% Shine/50% Jefe
Yield: 169.00 bpa

Third Place: Erik Olson
Bonners Ferry, Idaho
Variety: Washington State University Scorpio
Yield: 164.42 bpa

Fourth Place: Steve Wilkens
Random Lake, Wisconsin
Variety: Pioneer 25R64
Yield: 161.48 bpa

Fifth Place: Blake Anthis
Wheatland, Indiana
Variety: Dyna-Gro 9533
Yield: 155.70 bpa

WINTER WHEAT DRYLAND ABOVE COUNTY AVERAGE

First Place: Shawn Kimbrell
Sunray, Texas
Variety: WestBred WB4595
Yield: 70.04 bpa, 448.48% above Moore County, Texas, average

Second Place: Matt Dornan
Chandler, Oklahoma
Variety: WestBred WB4422
Yield: 106.45 bpa, 242.40% above Lincoln County, Oklahoma, average

Third Place: Kenneth O'Neal
Groom, Texas
Variety: WestBred WB4792
Yield: 89.14 bpa, 219.62% above Carson County, Texas, average

Fourth Place: Charles A. (Tony) Kodesh
Red Rock, Oklahoma
Variety: WestBred WB4422
Yield: 108.32 bpa, 216.55% over Noble County, Oklahoma, average

Fifth Place: Wyatt Ramage
Billings, Montana
Variety: Dyna-Gro Ramsay
Yield: 141.84 bpa, 205.55% above Golden Valley County, Montana, average

WINTER WHEAT IRRIGATED

First Place: Oree Reynolds
Castleford, Idaho
Variety: WestBred WB1621
Yield: 226.59 bpa

Second Place: Nick Suwyn
Wayland, Michigan
Variety: Irrer Seed Farm ISF780
Yield: 185.60 bpa

SPRING WHEAT DRYLAND

First Place: Brent Philipp
Goodridge, Minnesota
Variety: WestBred WB9590
Yield: 123.67 bpa

Second Place: Karissa Berg
Bottineau, North Dakota
Variety: Dyna-Gro Ballistic
Yield: 110.64 bpa

Third Place: Robert Holzwarth
Hazel, South Dakota
Variety: Limagrain Cereal Seeds Cannon
Yield: 87.86 bpa

SPRING WHEAT DRYLAND ABOVE COUNTY AVERAGE

First Place: Jordan Christman
Hettinger, North Dakota
Variety: WestBred WB9590
Yield: 101.27 bpa, 157.04% above Adams County, North Dakota, average

Second Place: Greg Messer
Richardton, North Dakota
Variety: WestBred WB9645
Yield: 101.15 bpa, 150.25% above Stark County, North Dakota, average

Third Place: Andrew Doll
New Salem, North Dakota
Variety: WestBred WB9590
Yield: 100.79 bpa, 126.75% above Morton County, North Dakota, average

SPRING WHEAT IRRIGATED

First Place: Dallin Wilcox
Rexburg, Idaho
Variety: WestBred WB7589
Yield: 190.10 bpa

Second Place: Jess Blatchford
Baker City, Oregon
Variety: WestBred WB6430
Yield: 168.89 bpa

PILOT DIGITAL YIELD – WINTER WHEAT DRYLAND

High Yield: Alec Horton
Leoti, Kansas
Variety: WestBred WB4792
Yield: 138.00 bpa

High Above County Yield: Daniel Edmonds
Morris, Oklahoma
Variety: WestBred WB2542
Yield: 99.00 bpa, 67.88% above Okmulgee County, Oklahoma, average

PILOT DIGITAL YIELD - SPRING WHEAT DRYLAND

High Yield: Isaac Hendrickson
Agate, North Dakota
Variety: WestBred WB9590
Yield: 119.00 bpa

High Above County Yield: Brad Disrud
Rolla, North Dakota
Variety: WestBred WB9590
Yield: 103.00 bpa, 85.19% above Towner County, North Dakota, average

Quality Counts

Big yields may generate big headlines, but in the world of wheat, bushels per acre is only one consideration. The crop's functional qualities are just as important—if not more.

Since 2022, the National Wheat Foundation (NWF) has incorporated a quality component into the National Wheat Yield Contest. Winners submitted a 10-pound sample of their grain, which was analyzed for grain, milling, flour and end-use qualities. Flour from the winning wheat was used to produce baked goods, including sponge cake and sugar cookies for soft wheats, and bread for hard wheats. A panel of experts reviewed the results and determined which winning entries earned a Top-Quality Award.

= Top-Quality Award Winner

Tolvera®

HERBICIDE

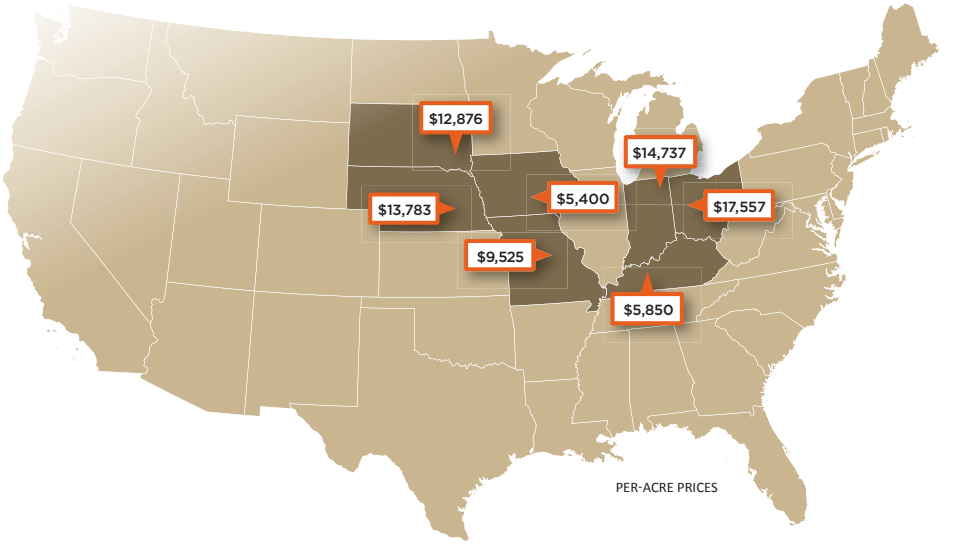
Leading the pack in weed control.

Put a leash on kochia, foxtails, barnyardgrass, resistant waterhemp, wild buckwheat and mustards. Tolvera® herbicide features two modes of action — bromoxynil and tolpyralate, an active ingredient new to the cereals market — to help combat weed resistance while providing flexibility in application timing and crop rotation.

CORTEVA™ agriscience

Visit us at **corteva.com/us/Tolvera**

Recent Farmland Sales



INDIANA, Adams County. A 95-acre farm sold at auction for $1.4 million, or $14,737 per acre. The farm is about 4.5 miles east of Decatur and consists of five contiguous parcels, including four mostly tillable parcels of about 84 acres with Blount and Pewamo soils, and one parcel of about 11 wooded acres. **Contact:** Al Pfister, Schrader Real Estate and Auction Co. Inc.; 260-760-8922
www.schraderauction.com/auctions/9359

IOWA, Monroe County. A 135-acre recreational farm sold for $729,000, or $5,400 per acre. The farm, located in the Albia area, is known for its white-tailed deer hunting, a thriving turkey population and various upland birds. The property includes a mixture of hardwood timber and native Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) grasses that generate an annual income of $11,723 at a rate of $243 per acre through September 2027. **Contact:** Matt Hoenig, Peoples Co. Integrated Land Solutions; matt.hoenig@peoplescompany.com, 319-330-9735
https://peoplescompany.com/listings/land-monroe-county-iowa-18720

KENTUCKY, Daviess County. A 120-acre farm sold in two tracts for $702,000, or $5,850 per acre. Tract 1 includes 30 acres of rolling pasture and about 5 acres of potential cropland. It also features a 1979 mobile home with about $600 per month of rental income. Tract 2 has 90 acres that includes 41 acres of tillable cropland with primarily Belknap silt loam soils, as well as 18 acres of CRP land. It also includes a cattle barn and livestock pond. **Contact:** David Hawes, Kurtz Auction and Realty; david@kurtzauction.com, 270-926-8553
www.kurtzauction.com/auctions/120-acres-2-tracts-state-route-762

MISSOURI, Audrain County. A 641-acre farm divided into four tracts sold for $6,105,541, or $9,525 per acre. The farm includes three tracks of highly productive tillable cropland divided into 166,127 and 281 acres, respectively. The farm also includes an old farm site with older grain bins and a pole barn. It is touted for recreation and hunting. **Contact:** Steve Zeiger, Sullivan Auctioneers; steve.zeiger@bigiron.com, 573-231-9802
https://sullivanauctioneers.com/auction/three-kings-1-13-2026

NEBRASKA, Butler County. A 159-acre farm sold for $2,191,440, or $13,783 per acre. The cropland farm with Hastings silt loam soils features a full circle pivot and electric irrigation well, and is centrally located between ethanol and soybean crush plants. **Contact:** Jeremy Schreiber, Farmers National Co.; jschreiber@farmersnational.com, 402-276-3076
www.farmersnational.com/real-estate/properties/a-10806

OHIO, Champaign and Logan Counties. A 314-acre farm divided into two tracks sold for $5,513,028, or $17,557 per acre. Tract 1 includes 183 acres with a 67-acre corn base and a 156-bushel Price Loss Coverage (PLC) yield; a 91-acre soybean base with a PLC yield of 47 bushels; and a wheat base of 21 acres and a PLC yield of 66 bushels. Tract 2 includes 131 acres with a 63-acre corn base and a PLC yield of 156 bushels, as well as a 63-acre soybean base with a 47-bushel PLC yield. **Contact:** Sandy Kuhn, Farmers National Co.; skuhn@farmersnational.com, 740-209-4177
www.farmersnational.com/real-estate/properties/a-17425

SOUTH DAKOTA, Moody County. A 161-acre farm sold for $2,073,030, or $12,876 per acre. The farm, located between Egan and Trent, features a 78.1-acre corn base with a 145-bushel PLC yield and a 77-acre soybean base with a 38-bushel PLC yield. In addition, dairy cattle manure was applied in 2025 at fertilizer value $13,860 at no cost to the buyer. **Contact:** Chuck Sutton, Sutton Auctioneers and Land Brokers LLC; office@suttonauction.com; 605-997-3777
https://tinyurl.com/4mk7j6zh

These sales figures are provided by the sources and may not be exact because of rounding.

Submit recent land sales to **landwatch@dtn.com**

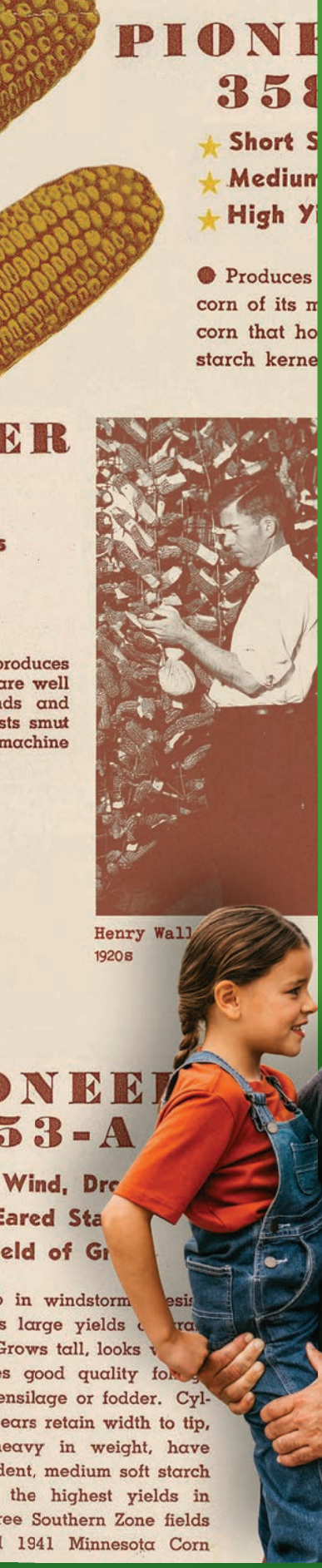
Find previous Landwatch listings at **www.dtnpf.com/agriculture/web/ag/magazine/your-land**

1926-2026

Celebrating One Hundred Years

PIONEER®
HUNDRED YEARS

ONE FARMER.
ONE SEED.
ONE SEASON.



One farmer can make a difference.
And one seed can grow the future.
One hundred years ago, Henry A. Wallace and the founders of Pioneer revolutionized farming with the commercialization of hybrid seed corn.

Will you be the one to launch what's next?

PIONEER.COM/100

CORTEVA™ agriscience

"Pioneering" Corn Production

Commercialized hybrid seed corn company celebrates a century.

By **Jason Jenkins**, @JasonJenkinsDTN

Henry A. Wallace inspects ears of corn for a breeding project in the 1920s.
UNIVERSITY OF IOWA SPECIAL COLLECTIONS DEPARTMENT

Henry Agard Wallace didn't invent hybrid corn. He wasn't the first to investigate inbred or crossbred lines. The Iowa native can't even take credit for selling the first commercial hybrid seed.

Yet, Wallace is often remembered first among the pantheon of hybrid corn trailblazers for one simple reason: He and his Hi-Bred Corn Co. brought this innovation to the farmgate.

Today, the company Wallace founded is known as Pioneer Hi-Bred International, the flagship seed brand of Corteva. On April 20, 2026, it celebrates its 100th anniversary as the first company dedicated to the development, production and marketing of hybrid corn.

"Even now, a century later, crop innovation that increases productivity for farmers is the guiding force at Pioneer," says Dean Podlich, the company's digital seed lead and de facto brand historian. "What an incredible journey of progress it has been."

Ears of hybrid corn in a yield trial are weighed.
COURTESY OF PIONEER

HYBRID HOPES

In the early 20th century, corn farming in the United States wasn't much different than after the Civil War. USDA records from the mid-1860s to the 1930s estimated national average corn yields between 25 to 30 bushels per acre (bpa).

"Farmers were growing a lot of different open-pollinated varieties of corn, and production was very primitive," Podlich explains. "At season's end, farmers would look for the best ears and keep that as seed. Yield had basically stagnated."

Scientists searched for ways to break through this yield ceiling. In his book, "The Hybrid Corn Makers," A. Richard Crabb described early efforts by Edward Murray East in Connecticut and George Shull in New York, both of whom experimented with inbred corn lines and attempted to harness "the power of hybridization."

"The two men differed over the best means of using this power," Crabb wrote, "but the two great scientists stood shoulder to shoulder on the great underlying concept that hybridization properly applied could give us corn and other plant and animal servants vastly superior to any that had ever existed before."

Around the same time in Iowa, Wallace was exploring his interest in corn. In May 1904, he conducted his first experiment, measuring yield performance between winners and losers from a corn competition that judged on aesthetics and uniformity. The prize-winning ears failed to outyield the lowest-ranking ones, a result that would shape his thinking.

Wallace graduated from Iowa State College in 1910 and was conducting corn research by 1913. When news of a double-cross hybrid reached Wallace in 1919, he began to look upon corn breeding in a different light.

"One of the limitations with single-cross hybrids was adequate seed production," Podlich says. "This concept of a double-cross provided more reliable seed production, enabling hybrids to be scaled across a greater number of corn acres."

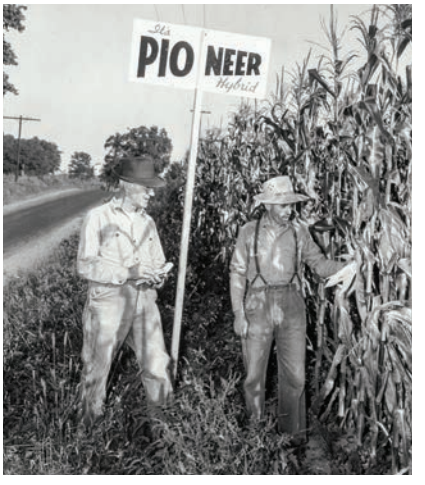
In 1920, Wallace helped to establish the Iowa Corn Yield Test. This competition, Crabb explained, identified outstanding open-pollinated varieties from which superior inbred lines could be developed while also providing comparison against hybrids. Top-yielding entries received the Banner Trophy.

Wallace entered hybrids in the test, notably winning with a single-cross hybrid known as Copper Cross. In 1924, the hybrid was sold to farmers, making it Wallace's first commercial seed venture and placing him at the doorstep of seed innovation.

SEED COMPANY SPROUTS

Initially, hybrid developers envisioned farmers producing their own seed. Wallace concluded the only way to provide high-quality hybrid seed in sufficient volume was to produce it for them. The Hi-Bred Corn Co. was thus born in 1926.

"It was a struggle at first," Podlich says. "There were skeptics. Hybrid seed was expensive, and the Great Depression had begun. The first products sold for $10 or $12 per bushel compared to open-pollinated seed that cost 50 cents or was free. But, then the droughts of 1934 and 1936 really allowed hybrids to shine, and adoption took off."



Two farmers examine an early Pioneer hybrid corn plot.
COURTESY OF PIONEER

In Iowa in 1932, hybrids accounted for less than 1% of all corn acres. In 1935, the same year the company name changed to Pioneer Hi-Bred Corn Co., hybrids were found on 6% of acres; by 1942, about 99% of Iowa corn acres were planted to hybrids.

Pioneer employed a "farmer-salesman" approach, identifying reputable farmers who could explain the benefits to friends and neighbors. They distributed free 8-pound bags of seed to let farmers experience hybrid corn.

"They also had what they referred to as 'half and half,' where half a field was planted with a hybrid and the other half planted with an open-pollinated variety," Podlich says. "The farmer would only have to pay if the hybrid performed better."

In 1933, Wallace left the seed company he helped found to become U.S. Secretary of Agriculture under President Franklin Roosevelt; he later served as his vice president.

COURTESY OF PIONEER

Pioneer continued to grow, establishing independent hybrid corn seed businesses in other U.S. states and Canada, along with ventures into both chickens and cattle.

"After World War II, the improvements in genetics—combined with increased mechanization and the advent of synthetic nitrogen fertilizer—really helped to drive productivity," Podlich says. "In the late 1950s, Pioneer began branching into sorghum and alfalfa."

In 1970, Pioneer's separate entities combined as Pioneer Hi-Bred International Inc., which continued to grow, expanding into wheat, soybeans, canola and sunflowers. In 1973, the company went public. By 1999, Pioneer was wholly owned by DuPont, and after merging with Dow Agrosciences in 2017, the agriculture division was spun off as Corteva, where the Pioneer brand resides today.

In 1926, when the Hi-Bred Corn Co. began, the average corn yield was 25.7 bpa. In 2025, U.S. corn production reached a record average yield of 186.5 bpa—more than a sevenfold increase in 100 years. While farm management and new technologies have been instrumental, there's no doubt that hybridization of corn was paramount to this increase.

Even today, the legacy of those early hybrids still lives on in Pioneer's product offerings. For example, in 2023, Virgina farmer David Hula set the current world record corn yield of 623.8439 bpa with Pioneer P14830VYHR.

"We can trace that product's pedigree all the way back to an experimental hybrid that won the Banner Trophy in the Iowa Corn Yield Test in the 1920s," Podlich says. "It's fascinating to see the evolution of the germplasm and the continual power of selection." ///

POWER! In the Family Business

Some of the most popular television shows of the last few years take place within family businesses. Whether it's Paramount's "Yellowstone" or HBO's "Succession," or going back a few decades to "Dallas" or "Dynasty," family-owned companies seem ready-made for drama.

Even if your family company isn't characterized by billion-dollar deals, land grabs, fancy cars and airplanes, or attempted murder (do you remember who shot J.R.?), there are still plenty of power dynamics at play. Consider the different ways power is expressed in your family business.

Power as legal authority. One clear way power is expressed in a business is through a company's legal entities. According to your bylaws, trust document or operating agreement, you may be the president or chief executive officer. You might have power of attorney, be a trustee or have enough ownership to control the direction of the business. You have a legal right to make certain decisions affecting how the company operates.

Power as generational, or gender, authority. A more subtle way power is expressed is through age or birth order. Parents may control the business, even if they have transferred ownership to the next generation, simply because the younger generation respects them and defers to them on key decisions. An older sibling might be seen as the leader because he or she came back to the business first, regardless of whether that person is the most qualified to make certain decisions. Sometimes, power goes to men in the family business even though a woman might be the better leader.

Information as power. Another form of power is one's proximity to important information. Knowing what is going on strategically or financially can be an advantage. For example, the sibling who knows the parents' plan for dividing their estate can use that information to prepare for the future in ways other siblings cannot.

Proximity as power. Related to informational power is the emotional distance between family members. A family partner may share detailed information with his or her spouse at home in the evenings, where other family members can't hear the discussion. Or, key decisions may get made without the participation of all owners because of how close some partners are to one another.

Money as power. An obvious form of power lies in who controls the checkbook. The ability to disperse or withhold funds, make purchases, take on debt or sell assets or grain has the power to commit the business to significant future liabilities. When this power is coupled with poor communication, the results can be disastrous.

Chaos as power. My final observation about power ties back to the television shows I mentioned but is also alive and well in most "normal" family businesses: Power is the ability to create chaos. The person who causes drama by throwing a fit, initiating a lawsuit, speaking inappropriately to a customer, vendor or employee, blowing up at an in-law, withholding support or declining to participate in any family decision but still does whatever he or she wants holds a certain power over the rest of the participants in a family business. Their power comes from the idea that we have certain expectations for how family members should relate to one another, and when they violate those expectations, we don't know how to respond.

To navigate some of the power struggles in family businesses, create clear lines of authority, specify your expectations of others, talk about the future and communicate regularly about important decisions.

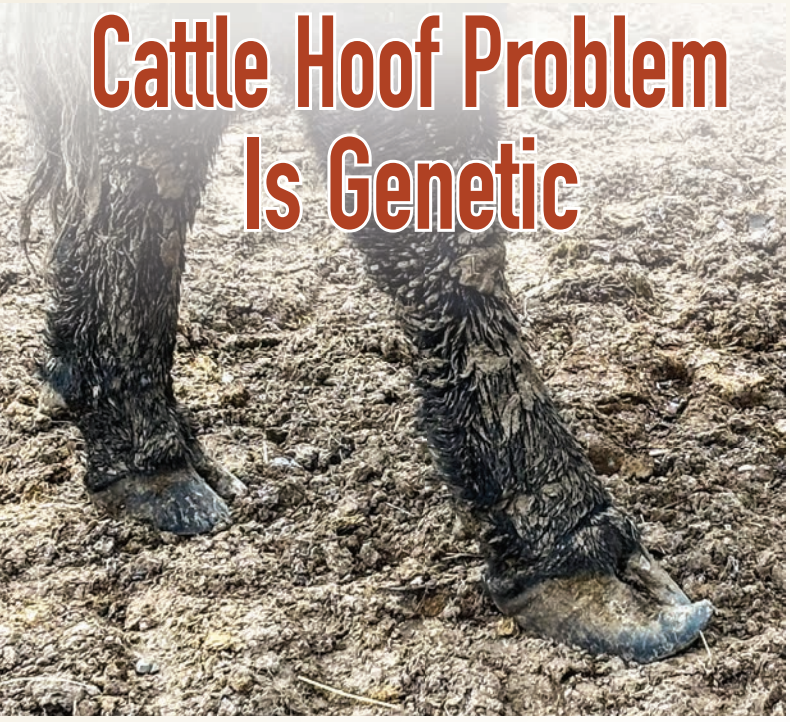
There will always be power dynamics at work in a family-owned company, but those dynamics can often be more effectively managed toward a successful future. ///

Email Lance Woodbury at
lance.woodbury@pinionglobal.com

[1] 2022–2024 BASF-sponsored small-plot replicated trials (n=16). Revylok® fungicide (5.5 fl oz/A) applied with 0.25% v/v NIS at the R2.5-R3 soybean growth stage. Trials conducted in AR, GA, IL, KY, TN, LA, MO, MS, NC, and AL.

Always read and follow label directions. Revylok is a registered trademark of BASF.

Cattle Hoof Problem Is Genetic



REGGIE HEADRICK

*Email Dr. Ken McMillan at **vet@dtn.com***

Q ***You will notice this cow's right rear hoof is growing out and turning up. My dad always thought this was a condition caused by a cow getting "foundered" from eating too much grain while not being accustomed to having grain. To my knowledge, this cow has not had the opportunity to ever eat an excessive amount of grain at one time. This leads me to believe there is something else which causes this condition, and I am hoping you can tell us what it is?***

A **DR. McMILLAN:** This is a great picture. There are not many times I can say for certain what is going on from a picture, but this is classic screw claw, also known as corkscrew claw (CC).

It is most commonly seen in cattle older than 3½ years of age, and it almost always affects the lateral claw of the rear leg. Most experts feel it has a strong heritable influence related to a misalignment of the second and third bone in the digit. Nutrition, management, foot disease or lack of proper foot care have also been linked to CC.

Because of the malalignment, the third digit, known as P3, will often rotate inward and turn under, leaving the excessive weight bearing on the outside wall. This can lead to separation at the white line or the area where the hoof wall and sole meet, which increases the potential for infection within the claw. There is also evidence that the back and mid walls grow faster in cattle with CC. This often leads to lameness from bruising, infection and sole ulcers.

Hoof trimming can help some cattle, but it is not a simple task and must be done by a veterinarian or very knowledgeable hoof trimmer or farrier. Correction is not the goal. This should be viewed as a salvage procedure to get the cow or bull to the point it can be sold.

This condition has been reported to be highly heritable, and calves from cows and bulls with the condition should not be kept or at least should be watched very closely for problems.

Founder, or laminitis, is a very different disease. It is most commonly caused by rumen acidosis, which leads the rumen microbes to produce toxins that cause swelling and inflammation within the hoof. This leads to a separation of the lamina, which holds the hoof wall to P3, and P3 rotates downward.

It is commonly linked to diets high in fermentable carbohydrates, but sudden changes in rations, very lush pasture and other factors can lead to laminitis, as well. Hoof appearance is very different, often affecting both claws, but lameness and infection are common signs. Over time, the claws may grow out to be very long and, in some cases, turn upward. While still difficult, hoof trimming can be more successful in these cases.

Q We took some calves to the sale barn and saw a really nice bull there and bought him. We saw him try to breed a cow, and he had a swelling about the size of a baseball on his penis right where it came out of the sheath. I'm not sure he can breed cows. What do you think is going on, and what do I need to do?

A **DR. McMILLAN:** Rule No. 1 for me is never buy a bull from a sale barn. He is there for a reason, and selling the best bull a guy ever owned for cash-flow reasons is probably not at the top of the list. You are always taking a chance with injury, disease, libido, fertility and other soundness factors.

Rule No. 2, and this is where you are: Always do a Breeding Soundness Exam by a competent veterinarian on every bull before every breeding season. This exam will check all the reproductive organs, including the prepuce and penis, semen motility and morphology (normal or abnormal), as well as his physical condition.

Without seeing the bull, I expect he developed a hematoma of the penis from a breeding accident. When he thrust and missed, the penis bent, and the tunic holding the blood inside the penis ruptured, creating a blood pocket or hematoma. This can be corrected surgically early on, but I am not a fan of that because, as I always say, I think everything has some heritability to it. Surgery is expensive, and you lose the bull for the breeding season. Some bulls will heal without surgery and be able to breed cows, but he needs a complete examination or needs to go back to where he came from. ///

THIS IS HOW IT SHOULD WORK.

Current Manual Process

Digital Acreage Reporting

Manual
Error-Prone
Redundant

Streamlined
Accurate
Sing-Source, Many Uses

Digital Acreage Reporting.

MyAgData®

In cooperation with DTN

Email us at Support@MyAgData.com to get started!

CATTLE LINK

By **Jennifer Carrico**, @JennCattleGal

Theileria Spreads in the U.S.

BELINDA PRETORIUS, GETTY IMAGES

As invasive Asian longhorned ticks spread, so does a new cattle disease.

While relatively new to the U.S., Theileria orientalis is spreading quickly, infecting cattle herds in several states. The disease is transmitted by the invasive Asian longhorned tick, which is arriving in new areas carrying the protozoa and infecting animals.

"There are several genotypes of Theileria orientalis, but the one we are most concerned with in the cattle industry is the Ikeda genotype," says Craig Payne, University of Missouri director of veterinary medical Extension and continuing education. "Sometimes, this disease will be mistaken for anaplasmosis." A diagnostic test will reveal differently. Payne says a misdiagnosis could mean Theileria has been circulating in a herd longer than thought. The first diagnosis of Theileria was in a Virginia cow/calf herd in 2017.

DISEASE SYMPTOMS

Cattle with Theileria show lethargy, anemia and difficulty breathing. The protozoa infect red blood cells, Payne explains. "These infected cells are damaged and either break down in circulation or are removed by the body, leading to anemia."

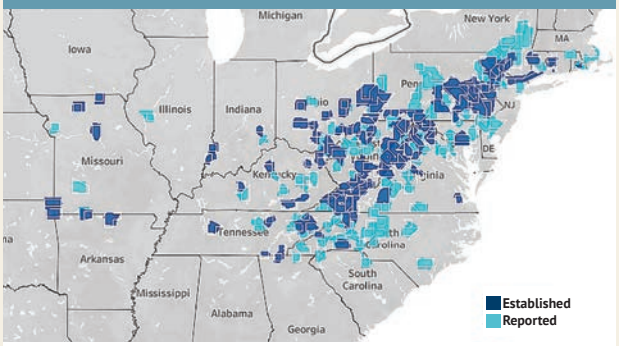
Additional symptoms include an elevated temperature, depression and pale mucous membranes. Cattle with severe cases will show signs of jaundice and extreme depression. Pregnant animals can abort. Payne says many animals will become infected and show no signs. Death loss is usually less than 5%, but some herds have experienced much higher rates of illness and death loss. Infection most noticeably leads to weight loss.

"The incubation period is one to eight weeks. By the time you see clinical signs, your herd could all be affected, some just won't have the clinical severity as others," Payne explains. "Infected animals are infected for life, although they may never show signs again."

The disease spreads when ticks acquire the protozoa while feeding on infected animals and later transmit it through their saliva. Other insect vectors include biting flies, mosquitos and other tick species. Payne says outbreaks in herds have also been associated with heavy sucking lice infestations.

Mechanical transmission can happen through blood-contaminated equipment—including needles and dehorning, castration and tagging equipment. "This is a good reason to dispose of used needles even after one use," he adds.

Counties With Established Asian Longhorned Tick Populations



Established: At least six individual ticks or at least two of the three host-seeking life stages have been identified in a single collection period (one year).

Reported: A single life stage (host or vegetation association) is present with no consistent collections over time and space.

SOURCE: USDA APHIS

Vertical transmission can occur from an infected cow to her calf. It's estimated this happens in about 10% of animals. While not as common, testing of calves from infected cows can reveal their fate.

INSECT SOURCE SPREADS DISEASE

The Asian longhorned tick is particularly concerning with the spread of Theileria because it reproduces asexually, meaning a single female can establish an entire population without mating. This allows for rapid

population growth, with animals sometimes becoming infested with hundreds or even thousands of ticks.

Teresa Steckler, University of Illinois Extension livestock specialist, says the Asian longhorned tick is native to southeast Asia and has gradually spread around the world. The tick can exist bisexually, as well, but since no male field specimens have been collected, it is thought that the spread in the U.S. is due to the parthenogenic (asexual) reproduction.

"A second way the tick is spreading is because of the wide range of hosts, including cattle, horses, deer, raccoons, squirrels and numerous species of birds," she explains, adding there are 11 genotypes of the parasite. The Ikeda and Chitose types cause the most problems for cattle producers, with Ikeda spreading Theileria.

ESTABLISHED TICK POPULATIONS CAUSE PROBLEM

"Although Theileria is not widespread in the U.S. as to date, the presence of the Asian longhorned tick can be an indicator of its future presence," Steckler says.

Payne notes, in Missouri, Theileria was first detected in June 2023 with a positive case in a southern tier county. By October 2023, a case was found in northern Missouri, and the disease was added to the Missouri animal reportable disease list in November 2023. By January 2024, Theileria was detected in four counties and, a year after that, in 22 counties. Most recently, in January 2026, the disease had spread to 59 of the 114 Missouri counties.


JAMES GATHANY

"We would consider this an endemic disease in Missouri. Since the Asian longhorned tick is a vector, Theileria orientalis can likely become endemic in the areas the tick has established populations," Payne adds.

TREATMENT AND PREVENTION

There isn't a cure or vaccine available for Theileria currently, and once recovered, Payne says, these animals will enter a chronic carrier state, which may require further management.

"The key is to reduce the level of exposure to the source of the disease by using pour-ons and fly tags to keep insects off of the cattle," he explains. "It's also important to be careful when bringing cattle into your herd from areas where the disease is present."

Supportive care to minimize stress and handling, providing access to water and feed, and the addition of anti-inflammatory medicines could be helpful, as well. There are currently no medicines approved for use in the U.S. to fight Theileria, which is why Steckler says is it so important to look for ticks on animals on a daily and weekly basis.

"Theileria is much faster moving than anaplasmosis," she adds. And, unlike anaplasmosis, Theileria doesn't seem to respond to antibiotics.

Notable differences between Theileria and anaplasmosis are that animals with Theileria show clinical signs at any age, where anaplasmosis is more common in adult animals. Both show anemia, although it is more severe in anaplasmosis. Weakness and lethargy are common with both, as are abortions in pregnant cows. Anaplasmosis also has a high mortality in adult cattle, while mortality is low with Theileria. A blood test is required to make an exact diagnosis.

Even with no exact treatments available, tick preventative is a way to help keep the disease from attacking cattle. Medgene, an animal health company located in Brookings, South Dakota, makes protein-based prescription-platform vaccines to target diseases affecting animal health.

Bob Gentry, veterinarian and technical adviser for Medgene, says the company started making tick vaccines in 1979, originally to be administered on the Texas-Mexico border to help prevent diseases crossing into the U.S. Gentry says the tick vaccine will reduce the tick burden on cattle, as vaccinated cattle produce antibodies that interfere with tick feeding. Over time, this will lead to fewer ticks on animals, fewer eggs laid and lower tick pressure.

The vaccine should initially be given in two doses about three to four weeks apart and then as an annual booster, Gentry explains. It is safe for any age animal and best to be timed before peak tick season. "This vaccine can help reduce the transmission risk of Theileria," he says.

Being aware of animal health situations and consulting a herd veterinarian for a health plan is recommended for all vaccination and treatment plans. Even though Theileria is not widespread in the U.S. yet, the Asian longhorned tick can be a good indicator of its future presence. Steckler says minimizing the movement of the tick is necessary to reduce Theileria infestations.

Payne suggests culling infected cows that are not thriving. It is also recommended to separate infected cows from noninfected cows to reduce the chance of infection spreading via insects. Proper biosecurity and reducing cross-contamination between animals can help prevent the spread, as well. "Assume there is a local establishment of the disease if there is an Asian longhorned tick population or Theileria is confirmed, and then get a long-term management plan," he concludes. ///

CATTLE LINK

Story and Photos By **Becky Mills**

Make Hay While the Sun Shines

Cattle producers reinvest record beef profits in their operations.

Mississippi cattleman Johnny Thompson has been in the cattle business long enough to know he wants to carefully spend profits now.

In his 63 years, Johnny Thompson has seen a cattle cycle or two. He also has a long memory. "In the early '70s, cattle prices went up, and my Daddy bought a bunch of high-priced bred cows. Then, the market crashed." Thankfully, his father had an off-farm job. "We didn't sell anything but what we had to sell, but we put heifers everywhere we could put them and basically just lived 'til the price came back."

That lesson means Thompson eyes every purchase carefully, even while his cattle are bringing in extra income. He runs the operation, which also includes four broiler houses, with full-time help from his son Caleb. His wife, Sharon, and son Josh have off-farm jobs but help when needed.

He is slightly increasing the numbers on his 250-cow commercial herd, but only because he was able to buy a 90-acre tract of cutover timberland from family members. "You can't rent land around here, it is all in pine trees from the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)," he notes.

Besides the purchase price, the land came with expenses. Fortunately, Thompson was able to get Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) cost-share funds from the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). He's crossfencing it and putting in waterlines and three all-weather water troughs. "I know it is important for cattle to have good-quality water, but if prices weren't as good as they are, I would have still crossfenced, but I would have just let them drink out of ponds and creeks."

He's also taking a hard look at his equipment. For starters, there are five tractors that do triple duty with the cattle, hay and broiler houses. Despite the fact they are anywhere from 10- to 30-plus years old, he's not in the market for a newer one. "I would love to have another tractor, but we've got enough tractors that are OK."

CAREFUL CONSIDERATIONS FOR PURCHASES

Next, Thompson turned his sights to his balers. He has two older balers that run and a third he says might run in a pinch. He uses the 4 x 6 baler for high-moisture baleage and the 5 x 6 for dry hay. "We try to fix things and just keep running them rather than buying new equipment. Last summer, there was a roller inside one of the balers that was giving me trouble. I gave $12,000

for the baler. We spent a couple of thousand dollars on a new roller, and it bails just like a new $70,000 one."

He does consider the new Krone mower-conditioner a luxury in spite of the fact he needed it for putting up high-moisture baleage, but says, "I would have bought a used one if I could have found one."

In the truck department, even the frugal cattleman doesn't have trouble justifying his recent purchase of a 2017 F-550. Along with the cost of converting it to a flatbed, it was around $27,000. It replaces a 1992 Chevrolet 3500 and a 2005 Ford F-350. The two older trucks are now for sale, and the newer one will take over cattle-hauling duties, as well as pull the lowboy trailer.

"People act like they've never heard of the cattle cycle," Thompson says. "Prices are going to go back down. I just wish I had a crystal ball to know when."

PROFITS HELP IMPROVE INFRASTRUCTURE

In Prattville, Alabama, Bill Lipscomb and his sister, Linda Lipscomb, are using the profits from their 100-cow Angus-Hereford herd for infrastructure improvements. Even though the roof isn't finished, the catch pen they built at the intersection of four of their pastures is their pride and joy. "With the roof, now the cows will have shade if we have to get one up," Linda says. It's already getting a workout. They've had three sets of twins so far in their fall calving herd and have used it to convince at least one mama to take both calves.

A roof extension will provide more shade for the cattle and will let the Lipscombs work cattle in the rain.

Bill estimates they have spent around $14,000 to $15,000 on the catch pen and roof.

They are also adding crossfencing and putting gravel down on roads and around water troughs. ➤

Brother-sister duo Bill and Linda Lipscomb are investing beef profits in infrastructure improvements.

In addition, they're adding a 20- x 80-foot roof extension to their main working facility with a $10,000 price tag. "Now, we don't have to quit working cattle when it rains, and the cattle will have shade," Bill explains.

They also added a hay barn in 2023. "A hay barn is something more people should consider," he adds. "The specialists will tell you that you pay for a hay barn in hay losses whether you build one or not."

With their equipment, they bought a grapple to mount to one of their tractors to help keep fences clear of falling limbs. "That's the best $4,000 we've spent in a long time," Bill says.

The Lipscombs' big purchase is a trade-in tractor plus $50,000 for a used 6430 John Deere. "Our 5083 rode like a two-horse wagon," Linda says. "Plus, it was weak." Even with the newer John Deere, their '79 Allis-Chalmers tractor is still on the job.

MAKING IMPROVEMENTS IN THE HERD

While cattle prices are high, they're also planning on improving genetics by raising their price ceiling on bull purchases.

"We're used to working with limited resources," Bill explains. "When we get the resources, we try to use them to make it easier for us to operate." While they do have part-time help from other family members, the day-to-day operation of 3L Ranch is mainly Bill, 72, and Linda, 68, with Bill spending quite a bit of time away from the operation with local, state and national cattle-industry commitments.

"This cattle cycle has lasted longer, and the prices have been higher," he says, "but remember, these prices ain't going to be here forever."

Okeechobee, Florida, rancher Ralph Pelaez is not only taking advantage of higher beef prices but also healthy prices for bahiagrass sod. "While the sod prices are high, we are lifting as much sod as we can." He's replanting with GibTuck, an improved cultivar of limpograss.

"It's going to save a lot of supplement costs in the winter. The calves are going to be heavier, and we'll get a higher pregnancy rate."

He's also working on pens and fences while beef prices are high.

The 79-year-old rancher, who runs a Brangus-based operation with his daughter, Stephanie, adds, "It's important during these times to get your infrastructure updated and do the necessary repairs. I've seen these cycles come and go, and once this cycle breaks, it will just fall off the cliff. When the price of cattle comes down, the inputs don't come down. That's what hangs everybody."

Mississippi State ag economist Josh Maples gives two thumbs up to the producers' improvements. "We need to be thinking about things we can do now to set ourselves up to be successful in the next five to 10 years. It could be servicing debt or investing in your forage program to reduce your feeding costs." He says improving genetics and/or tightening up your calving season are worthwhile investments, as well.

"Now's a good time to think about it," Maples says. ///

Disappearing Oil Pressure

I know my Ford 8N tractor is old, but it has a special problem with losing oil pressure. It will start out at 35 pounds but will drop slowly as the engine warms up to near zero pounds. After the engine has time to completely cool down, it will repeat the same drop in oil pressure. The engine runs very clean at the exhaust, has no oil leaks or blowby but just will not hold oil pressure. The guy who sold me the tractor said it had been recently overhauled. Where is the oil pressure going?

Steve: The oil pressure is dropping when the engine warms because the engine's oil viscosity is thinning from heat from the engine (see photos below). The cool oil is much thicker than the heated oil and is filling up the leaks, but when the oil heats, the viscosity of the oil is much less, and it can't fill the excessive clearances in your engine. This problem can happen in any engine, not just your tractor's engine.

PHOTOS: STEVE THOMPSON

Since the oil pressure is holding when the engine is cold, we can eliminate any problem with the oil pressure regulator valve on the front of the engine. The engine in your tractor does not have cam bearings, so that will not be the problem.

The next two areas that usually cause your oil pressure to drop are the main bearings and the oil pump. Proper clearance between main bearings and crankshaft is between 0.001 and 0.003 thousandths. I bet if you listen to the engine when it starts cold, you will hear a slight rumble (not knock) coming from the engine before the engine picks up oil pressure. That noise is the crankshaft "rumbling" in the main bearings, which will require oil pan removal and clearance inspection using Plastigage (a measuring tool used to check bearing clearances).

The other area you need to check is the engine oil pump. A kit is available to rebuild it, but you will need to measure the width of the gears in the pump. One pump has larger ¾-inch gears. Also, look at the pickup tube plate that is removed to access the gears. If it shows wear at the location of the gears, replace it or have it milled smoothly at a machine shop.

Oil pressure can leak by any wear on the cover plate of the oil pump. Do not run the tractor again until you fix the problem to eliminate further damage to the engine.

Have a mechanical problem you can't resolve? Email Steve Thompson at ***askthemechaniccolumn@gmail.com***

Please include your contact information and phone number.

SAFETY TIP

Flying Stump Jumper

STEVE THOMPSON

Removing a stump jumper (sometimes called a pan or round blade arm holder) from a rotary mower can be a very dangerous job. The round stump jumper (see photo at right) is on the machine to help protect the machine when encountering mounds of dirt, rocks, foreign objects or, yes, stumps. The stump jumper allows the swinging blades to pivot away from an object on impact, while the stump jumper skids over the obstruction.

When the stump jumper must be removed for gearbox repair, it can become a dangerous repair job. Sometimes the splined, tapered shaft that attaches the blade holder to the gearbox can easily be seized by rust because of its contact with moisture and debris.

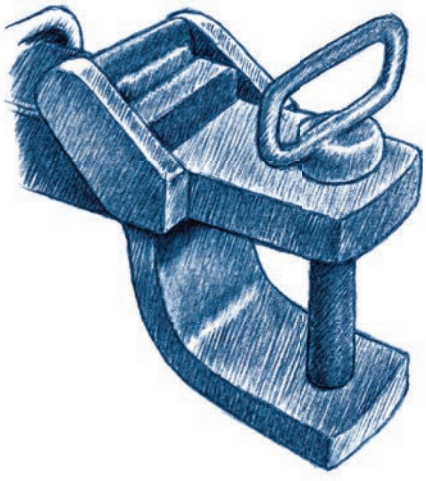
The safest way to remove the stump jumper is to remove the nut and any washers under it. Next, take a pipe or thick bar and place it through the hole on the deck that is there to change blades. Pound on the arm part of the blade holder, and if you are lucky, it will drop off. However, most of the time, it's too tight. The next thing to try is turning the mower upside down and applying penetrating oil to the shaft, then letting it soak for several hours.

Here is where the safety issue begins. When the stuck blade holder assembly comes off—whether it is from a puller, wedges driven under the blade arms, hitting the nut with a big hammer while the blade holder is under pressure, leaning up the mower and hitting it with a pipe through the blade removal opening or whatever it takes—always leave the securing nut on the shaft and screwed down flush with the shaft end. That's because when it decides to come off, it can fly off, sound like a shotgun and hurt or even kill you. Again, always leave the nut attached to the output shaft of the gearbox when stump jumper assembly is exposed under pressure. ///

By **Dan Miller**, Illustrations By **Ray E. Watkins Jr.**

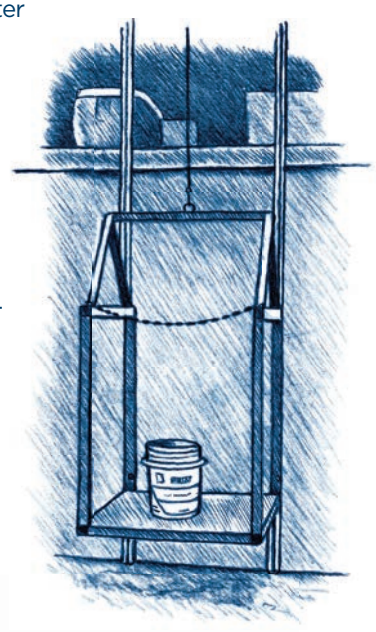
Handy Devices

Easy-to-build ideas make your work easier.



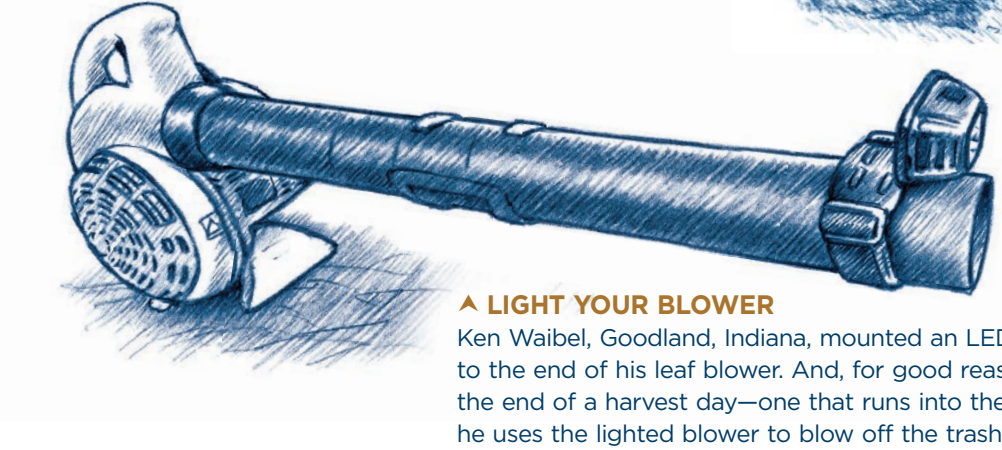
TWO HITCHES IN ONE

Brandon Waldner, Kimball, South Dakota, built a hitch that works as both a single- and double-tongue hitch. The key is the top piece of the hitch, as seen in the illustration (left). With the top portion of the hitch in the down position, Waldner has use of it as a heavy-duty, double-tongue hitch. When he removes the pin and flips the top portion of the tongue up and back, Waldner has a single-tongue configuration for lighter loads: same hitch body, different uses for different trailers.



NEW LIFT, OLD PARTS

Bill Boyce, Texarkana, Arkansas, built an inexpensive lift to move parts and supplies up from his shop floor to a higher-level storage area. The "elevator car" frame is 2- x 2-inch tubing left over from another project. The power is supplied by a repurposed 2,500-pound winch from an old side-by-side, off-road vehicle. The "car" is attached to common sliding barn door roller channels with matching rollers and is attached to the wall. The winch is mounted to a truss beam above the car and controlled by a corded remote.



LIGHT YOUR BLOWER

Ken Waibel, Goodland, Indiana, mounted an LED light to the end of his leaf blower. And, for good reason. At the end of a harvest day—one that runs into the night—he uses the lighted blower to blow off the trash and dirt accumulated on his combine during the day.

CASH FOR YOUR IDEAS: *Share with us your project ideas, and we'll pay you $400 upon publication. To submit a Handy Device, please send a complete explanation of your idea and clear photographs or detailed drawings. We'd like to see a video, too, but that's optional. If you've published your idea on social media (X, Instagram, Facebook), send us the link. With each entry, include your name, address and telephone number. Send Handy Device entries to:* ***dan.miller@dtn.com****. Sorry, but we cannot acknowledge submissions or return photographs, drawings or documentation.*

DELTAPINE®

EVALUATED WHERE YOU LIVE, TO YIELD MORE WHERE YOU GROW.

When you choose Deltapine® brand cotton, you're choosing seed that's already been grown and evaluated in your region. It happens courtesy of our New Product Evaluators — growers who identify varieties to maximize yield potential and fiber quality in the most important location of all: your operation.

FIND THE VARIETIES FIT FOR YOUR AREA.

DELTAPINE.COM

ALWAYS READ AND FOLLOW PESTICIDE LABEL DIRECTIONS.

BAYER

Story and Photos By **Joel Reichenberger**, @JReichPF

Harvest Time Is Family Time

It took 1,068 miles, seven states and 16 hours in the car to share a legacy with a new generation.

It was a four-letter word that transformed a simple admission into the cruelest thing I ever said to my dad. I was 11 years old, and he was trying to help me with my homework. As he leaned over my shoulder to explain something—long division, probably—I lashed out.

"I'll never need to know this," I snarled.

"You might. I use math in farming all the time," he replied.

"I don't want to be just a farmer," I shot back.

Words matter, and so does their order.

"I don't just want to be a farmer" says that maybe I'd like to mix a career as an astronaut in with growing crops.

"I just don't want to be a farmer" might also say, "I don't want to let you down, but alas, I must."

I didn't say it like either of those, though. I said it mean.

"I don't want to be *just* a farmer."

The note of irony did strike me when, about three decades later, all I wanted was to get my oldest daughter back to the family farm, though the world seemed to conspire against it.

We were nearly 1,100 miles away. The weather wouldn't cooperate, with heat and rain pushing our target—the summer's wheat harvest—forward and backward without a shred of concern about our plans. And, she was too busy, with dance practices and summer camps crowding the tiny window we had left available.

It wasn't easy, and that's why her words a week later meant so much.

"Dad," she said one night, teetering on the edge of sleep in the house where I grew up after a long day of wheat harvest, "I'm glad I came to Kansas."

AMBER WAVES

Wheat harvest was a way of life for my family in south-central Kansas on an 800-acre fourth-generation farm. It doesn't feel like long ago, but it was a different era: dryland corn and soybeans were nonexistent. There was some sorghum every fall, but wheat was king, and harvest monopolized our lives for the month of June. No other plans could be made—vacation taken or camps attended—until the wheat was cut.

Harvest meant long, hot days in the field. Lunch was just a few quick minutes under a shade tree or in a minivan. Dinner never came before 10 p.m., and we'd run past midnight if rain loomed.

My first real job on the farm—when I was maybe 11 years old—was pulling the unloading wagon, driving a John Deere 4020 with a radio that barely worked and no cab, let alone air-conditioning. The wagon was a teacup, just big enough to handle one load from Grandpa's Gleaner L2, with an auger so

stubby you had to all but rub the outer tractor tire on the truck bed to unload.

When I think back to those days, I don't remember being tired or hungry. I don't even remember being hot, though a 99°F day on the 4020 had to have been horrible. What I do remember is family. I remember riding in the combine with my grandpa and later my dad. I'm 43 years old and can't think of a seat more comfortable than the little one next to those men in the combine.

I remember aunts and uncles driving the grain trucks, and my mom with the lunch and snacks. I remember great-aunt Elsie would drive out from town with a cooler of cold beer in the evenings.

Wheat harvest was exhausting and stressful, even as a kid expecting to be paid regardless of yield or price. Yet, it felt like a celebration.

Memories of harvest are central to who I am and where I'm from in ways I never appreciated when I was 9. Going into last summer, my two daughters knew absolutely nothing of it.

A GENERATION REMOVED

There were plenty of reasons I never went back to farm. I bumped (some say "crashed") the 4020 into a barn during that first harvest I helped with. It was the start of an error-prone tractor-driving career. My proclivity to break things made it especially unfortunate that I wasn't fond of spending time in the shop fixing things. And, I had too little patience to wait for seeds to grow and too much willingness to let wayward weeds survive.

But, with age has come appreciation for what farming did give me. I now know that most things can be fixed with a little bit of effort and ingenuity. My ability to back up a trailer is wildly out of sync with the fact that I cut a quarterly check to an HOA. And, above all, I have a rooted understanding of a part of the world that's mysterious to so many.

Most students in my rural high school 25 years ago were at least one generation removed from farming, and that's felt more pronounced as I've gone on in life. I tell someone where I'm from or what I do for work, and some proudly explain they understand because their grandpa farms, or their uncle or their second cousin. But, I wonder, do they really understand?

What bothers me the most is that my children may not.

Lydia was 7 entering last summer and Eleanor 4, and they've existed a world away from the farm. They've known Grandpa Larry was a farmer, and they've been to the farm. But, they'd never been farming—a fact not easy to change living 16 hours away.

There's always been a reason not to go back—often a dozen—with summer days full of camps and evenings filled with dance classes and soccer practices.

What changed last summer was that my dad, 73 years old, is on the verge of retirement. Wheat harvest has been a fixture on the Reichenberger family calendar for more than 130 years, but that likely will end when my dad and his brother, who farm together, hang up their tractor keys.

Because I didn't go back to farm, nor did my brother or any cousins, there will be a "final family harvest," and it will be soon. With that in mind, we decided to make the time to get our oldest back to the farm.

So, my wife and I left a week in mid-June open in Lydia's schedule, and as the date approached, we prepared with suitcases and car snacks. ➤

THE RAINS CAME

But, while we packed, wheels turned in Kansas. Harvest started five days earlier than my dad expected. So, I rescheduled. Combines were rolling, and we needed to be.

The plans changed even more when humidity pushed the wheat's moisture too high and paused the party before a torrential downpour—nearly 6 inches in three days—which straight up stopped it. That pushed harvest not only back to the original timeline but straight through the week we'd set aside.

Joel Reichenberger (left), daughter Lydia and Grandpa Larry crowd in the cab during the 2025 wheat harvest.

Lydia had commitments that next week, and life was set to resume. We had missed our chance.

We vowed to try again the next year, but I couldn't stop thinking: Harvest next year could be in May (it was once) or July (it almost was last year). I had no idea what our schedules would look like, but I did know if we skipped a summer camp we'd already paid for, the last two dance classes of the season and the associated ice cream party now, Lydia would see wheat harvest.

After some cajoling, she agreed, and we set off.

SIXTH GENERATION

All I could think about on that drive was what my children won't have that I did. They won't have summers helping on the farm. They won't see 10 harvests. They may not even see two.

But, after 32 hours in the car, all that stood out was what we did have, including three days of rides in the combine, tractor and trucks.

Uncle Jack gave Lydia a grand tour of the elevator in town. Months later, she still remembered the mechanics of the facility almost as well as the three Dum-Dum lollipops she got from the staff at the scale.

We had time with family. Great-aunt Elsie is more than a decade gone, but Aunt Paula showed up at happy hour with a cooler.

We had Lydia engaged, excitedly relaying what she'd learned to her mom over the phone as we prepared for bed.

"Fun fact, Mom," she said. "Did you know you can make 1,400 loaves of bread from the wheat in one load from Grandpa Larry's combine?"

We had lunches in the minivan, dinners after 10 p.m. and real hours in that most comfortable of seats, the one in the combine next to Grandpa.

We had three days of her being just a farm kid, riding equipment and spending time with family at harvest—the sixth generation of Reichenbergers to be so lucky.

We had Lydia looking out the window all 1,068 interstate miles home explaining why farmers planted this in their field instead of that, insight she gleaned from conversations during the week.

And, thank God we skipped a week of summer camp, two dance classes and an ice cream party to drive across the country to give it to her.

We may not have it all, but we'll always have, "Dad, I'm glad I came to Kansas." And, that just might be enough. ///

LARRY REICHENBERGER

Joel waves from the John Deere 4020 during harvest in 1991 when he was 9 years old.

NATIONAL AG DAY

Celebrating 250 YEARS OF PROGRESS IN AGRICULTURE

Together We Grow

NATIONAL AG DAY
Tuesday, March 24, 2026

American agriculture provides food, fiber and renewable resources for a growing world.

With a population of 8 billion people (and counting), America's farmers are more important now than ever before.

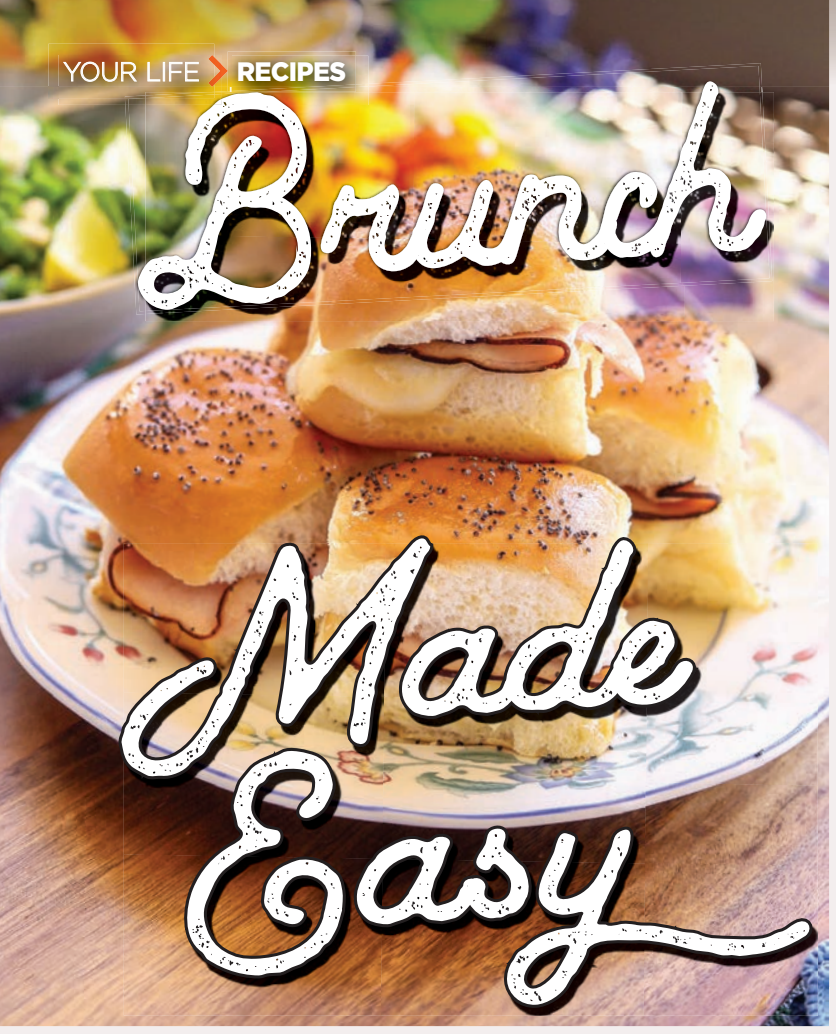
The Agriculture Council of America gratefully recognizes the essential value of farmers and America's farm families. On National Ag Day, we invite everyone to unite and celebrate the role that agriculture plays in all our lives.

Please join us on March 24, 2026 — along with producers, agricultural associations, corporations, universities, government agencies and countless others — to raise our voices in celebration of agriculture ... because *Together, We Grow*.

Learn more at agday.org

For sponsorship opportunities, contact jennyp@nama.org.

Hosted by the Agriculture Council of America in recognition of Ag Day.



Brunch Made Easy

HAM & CHEESE SLIDERS

This no-stress Easter brunch menu is built on shortcuts and meant to be shared with loved ones.

COOK TIME: 10 MINUTES
TOTAL TIME: 20 MINUTES

12 sweet Hawaiian-style dinner rolls
⅔ cup mayonnaise
⅓ cup Dijon mustard
1 tablespoon honey
1 pound sliced Swiss cheese
1 pound sliced Black Forest ham
1 egg white, beaten
1 to 2 teaspoons poppy seeds

1. Heat oven to 375°F. Slice rolls horizontally; place bottom half on a baking sheet.
2. Combine mayonnaise, mustard and honey; spread over roll bottoms. Layer Swiss cheese, ham and remaining cheese; add tops of rolls.
3. Brush rolls with beaten egg white; sprinkle with poppy seeds. Cover lightly with aluminum foil; bake 10 minutes until warm and lightly golden.
4. Cut into sliders with a serrated knife; serve warm.

SPRING PEA & FETA SALAD

Try this bright, fresh dish alongside some of your Easter favorites.

COOK TIME: 5 MINUTES
TOTAL TIME: 10 MINUTES

1 pound frozen peas
¼ cup olive oil
2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
1 teaspoon fresh mint, finely chopped (plus more for serving)
1 teaspoon chopped garlic (optional)
Kosher salt and black pepper
½ cup crumbled feta cheese
Lemon wedges, for serving

1. In a serving dish, add frozen peas and a splash of water. Microwave on HIGH 5 minutes.
2. For dressing, combine olive oil, mustard, mint, garlic (if using), salt and pepper; whisk well.
3. Toss hot peas with dressing; fold in feta. Serve warm or at room temperature with lemon and extra mint.

STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE TRIFLES

These no-bake dessert cups are the perfect sweet treat for Easter.

TOTAL TIME: 15 MINUTES (PLUS CHILLING TIME)

2 cups whipped topping
¼ cup strawberry jam, plus more for layering
Store-bought pound cake, cut into bite-sized pieces
2 cups diced fresh strawberries
Fresh mint, for garnish (optional)

1. Combine whipped topping and ¼ cup strawberry jam; stir until smooth.
2. Layer whipped topping, pound cake, strawberries and strawberry jam in four (8-ounce) glasses, repeating until full.
3. Garnish with mint, if desired. Serve immediately or refrigerate 2 to 4 hours for best flavor. ///

Recipes and Photos By **Rachel Johnson** On Instagram **@rachelthereCipe**

Microbial Packages Verified to Work on American Farms

SumaGroulx, The Original Biological Water Infiltration Formula.

Poor soil health restricts the inflow of water and air and limits root growth. Important nutrients are leached and overall carbon is low. In contrast, live soils treated with SumaGroulx have good structure, have more space for air, water, roots, biological organisms and chemical cycles related to plant health and function, including water storage and movement. Call us to help you and to reserve your order for 2026.

The SumaGroulx fields handle the water much better.

-Ion Regulation: Helps maintain better Na/K balance in plant tissues

-Nutrient Solubilization: Improves availability of P, Zn, and other micronutrients

-Phytohormone Production: Promotes root growth (auxins, gibberellins, and cytokinins)

-Exopolysaccharide (EPS): Reduces salt stress on roots

Call Us At 800-547-6859

Our goal is to make generations of farmers more profitable.

products available OMRI LISTED

SumaGroulx.com

Read our library of testimonials. See what farmers just like you are saying.

Ask about Super Saccharide Plus!

JD Financing plans.

No pay no interest untill December 2026

PFM326

SUMA GROULX

JOHN DEERE FINANCIAL

Family

PROGRESSIVE FARMER ARCHIVES, 1959

There's no road map on how to raise a family: it's always an enormous negotiation.
MERYL STREEP

All happy families resemble one another; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way.
LEO TOLSTOY

The happiest moments of my life have been the few which I have passed at home in the bosom of my family.
THOMAS JEFFERSON

Happiness is having a large, loving, caring, close-knit family in another city.
GEORGE BURNS

In family life, love is the oil that eases friction, the cement that binds closer together, and the music that brings harmony.
FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

We spend precious hours fearing the inevitable. It would be wise to use that time adoring our families, cherishing our friends, and living our lives.
MAYA ANGELOU

Rejoice with your family in the beautiful land of life.
ALBERT EINSTEIN

You don't choose your family. They are God's gift to you, as you are to them.
DESMOND TUTU

Of all the rocks upon which we build our lives, we are reminded today that family is the most important.
BARACK OBAMA

Peace in society depends upon peace in the family.
SAINT AUGUSTINE

To us, family means putting your arms around each other and being there.
BARBARA BUSH

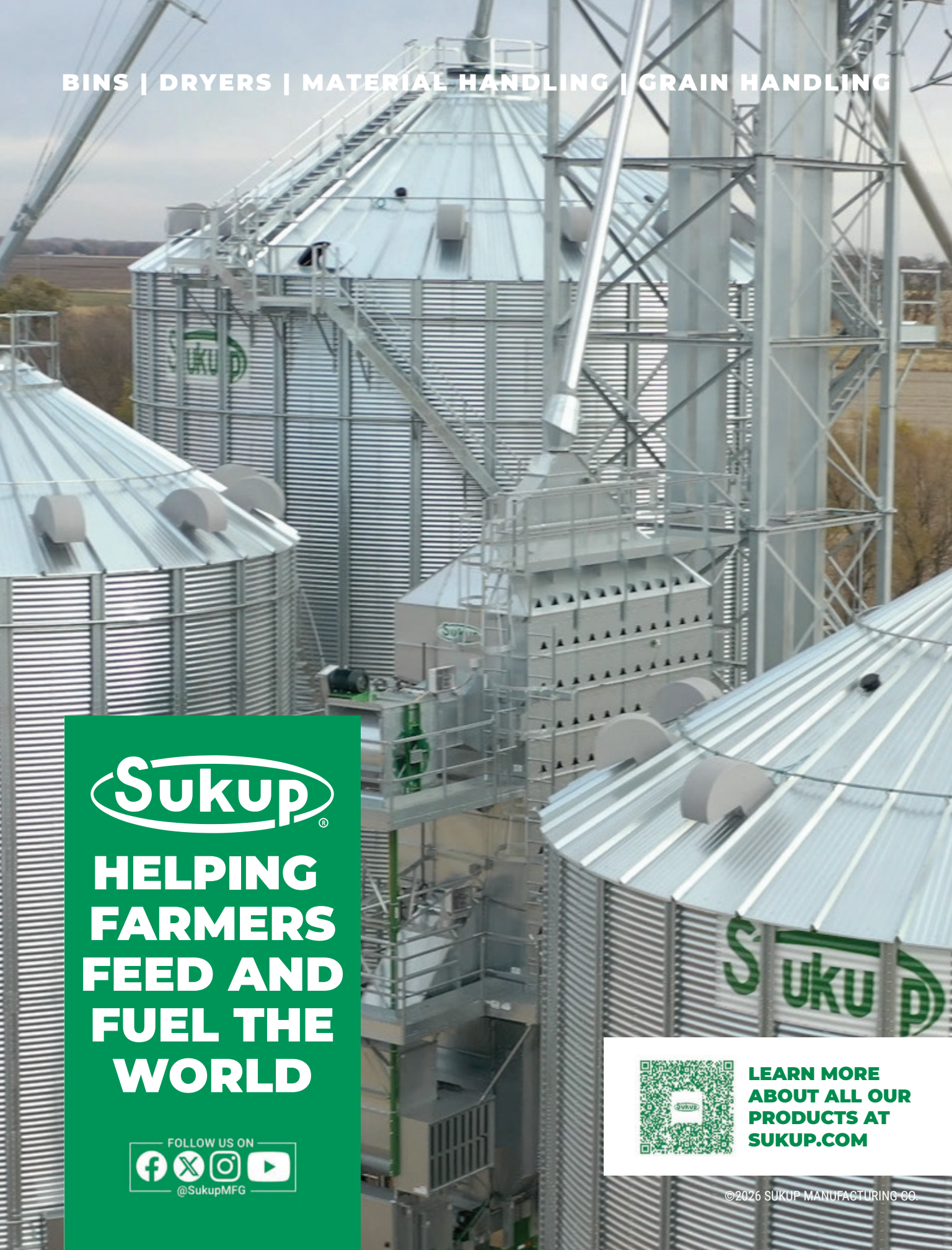
A family is a risky venture, because the greater the love, the greater the loss ... that's the trade-off. But I'll take it all.
BRAD PITT

The greatest thing in family life is to take a hint when a hint is intended—and not to take a hint when a hint isn't intended.
ROBERT FROST

I don't think quantity time is as special as quality time with your family.
REBA McENTIRE

If you want to change the world, go home and love your family.
MOTHER THERESA

Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.
EXODUS 20:12 (KJV)


BINS | DRYERS | MATERIAL HANDLING | GRAIN HANDLING
Sukup®
HELPING FARMERS FEED AND FUEL THE WORLD
FOLLOW US ON
@SukupMFG
LEARN MORE ABOUT ALL OUR PRODUCTS AT SUKUP.COM
©2026 SUKUP MANUFACTURING CO.