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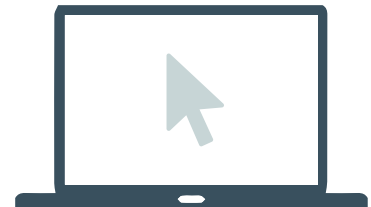
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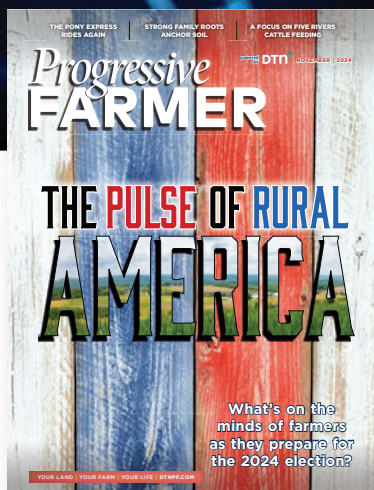
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NOVEMBER 2024
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Close the Gap on Food Security

With U.S. farmers harvesting an expected record corn and soybean crop, and the country's reputation as the land of plenty, food security is likely not part of the dinner conversation of most Americans.

However, look beneath the bumper harvests and fully stocked grocery shelves, and you'll find a much different menu. According to the USDA Economic Research Service, one in seven U.S. households experienced food insecurity or lack of access to an affordable, nutritious diet in 2023. Globally, one in 11 people faced hunger last year in the latest United Nations "The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World" report.

Since 2010, the "Global Agricultural Productivity (GAP) Report" globalagriculturalproductivity.org/2024-gap-report has highlighted the growth rate in food production and what's needed to meet the world's growing demand for food, feed and fiber. This year's report offers a reminder of the formidable challenge to meet this demand.

Global agricultural productivity growth has slowed from 1.9% annually during 2001–2010 to 0.7% during 2013–2022. At this rate, the GAP Index projected that global total factor productivity (TFP) growth will need a big boost, averaging 2% annually. TFP is a measure used to ensure agriculture can meet the global food demand by 2050 by looking at how efficiently ag resources—land, labor, capital, crop inputs, livestock, equipment, etc.—are converted to produce food.

The U.S. saw a negative TFP growth, averaging -0.21% annually during 2013–2022. The report's authors attributed the downturn, in part, to a reduction in public support for ag research and development, and increasing political and social forces that seek to dictate choices affecting technology adoption.

"This dramatic slowdown [to 0.7%] will prevent us from reaching our agricultural production and sustainability goals by 2050, with potentially dire impacts on food and nutrition security, unless we reverse this trend," explains Tom Thompson, the report's executive editor and associate dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Virginia Tech.

> WHAT'S NEXT?

TFP growth worldwide has historically been driven largely by research and development, and the adoption of new technologies—improved crop and animal genetics, precision-farming tools—and sharing the knowledge to use these tools.

But, the report makes clear this alone will not be enough to reach the 2050 food goals. "It requires cooperation across political and philosophical lines throughout the food system," explains Jessica Agnew, associate director of CALS Global at Virginia Tech. And, while she says, "using our resources wisely and most efficiently is applicable to every farmer in every farm system at every scale of production," many of the priorities identified in the report to drive ag productivity growth focus on smallholder farmers and farmers in developing and low- and middle-income countries. Priorities include:

- ▶ Invest in agricultural innovation systems to access and sustainably adopt productivity-enhancing tools.
- ▶ Expand robust and resilient market access, including competitive input and commodity markets, and price/information transparency to optimize productivity and profitability.
- ▶ Strengthen regional and global trade. Trade liberalization and opening larger markets creates opportunities for specialization and encourages adoption of productivity-enhancing tools.
- ▶ Reduce food waste and improve quality of outputs. Invest in distribution channels, storage, transportation and processing technologies.
- ▶ Cultivate partnerships to pool resources, share knowledge and drive innovation.

As the report shows, the U.S. is not immune to its own productivity challenges. Despite the country's current negative TFP growth, the world will continue to look to us to provide the know-how to grow more food.

We've all seen what happens when people don't have enough to eat. Food insecurity leads to economic, social and political unrest. The GAP report provides a road map to satisfying the world's appetite in 2050. ///


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Attention, hardworking farmers! As you navigate through the vast fields and rugged terrains, your all-terrain vehicle (ATV) or utility task vehicle (UTV) becomes an indispensable companion in your daily operations. To ensure a prosperous harvest and safeguard your livelihood, investing in ATV/UTV insurance is not just a choice but a necessity.

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In the unfortunate event that your ATV/UTV causes damage to someone else's property or results in an injury, liability coverage protects you financially in case you're held responsible for injuries or damages to others while riding. This ensures that you can focus on your farming activities without the stress of legal liabilities.

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Farming is a year-round endeavor, and your ATV/UTV plays a crucial role in every season. Whether it's plowing through snow in winter or navigating muddy fields in spring, knowing that your ATV/UTV is protected allows you to concentrate on what matters most—your crops.

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Chapter 12 Bankruptcy Can Be A Lifeline for Struggling Farms

With losses expected in farming, the topic of farm bankruptcy has come up again. Bankruptcy in farming is not new and even has its own bankruptcy code: Chapter 12. Although bankruptcy has a bad stigma, it allows the farm to restructure and continue operations. It's interesting to look at the numbers. About half of farm bankruptcy filings are in the Midwest, followed by the Southeast (Georgia) and California. Also, on average, three out of 10,000 farms file for bankruptcy each year. So, it's not as uncommon as you might think.

Let's look at how Chapter 12 works. To start, you are eligible to file Chapter 12 bankruptcy under the following conditions:

For individuals (Schedule F):

- You are actively farming.
- Total debts are less than \$10 million.
- At least 50% of fixed debts relate to the farming operation.
- More than 50% of gross income derives from farming (preceding year or for each of the second and third prior tax years).

For farm entities:

- More than 50% of the corporation or partnership is owned by one family or extended family.
- The family or extended family actively operates the farm.
- Eighty percent of the value of the entity's assets relate to the farming operation.
- Total debt does not exceed \$10 million.
- At least 50% of the entity's fixed debt relates to the farming operation.
- Stock (if any) is not publicly traded.

Once filed, Chapter 12 automatically stays most collections against the farmer or farm entity. It also protects anyone that cosigned as a guarantor. Unless authorized by the court, a creditor can't act against the cosigner. This is very important when you have a generational farm, and Mom or Dad might have guaranteed debt.

Chapter 12's goal is to come up with a workable restructuring plan. The plan must demonstrate the ability to cash-flow payments with consistent/regular income. Considering the farm economy, this may prove very



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challenging. However, Chapter 12 can provide an option to "right size" the farm and move forward as a more economically viable farm. The plan does not have to pay unsecured creditors in full as long as the farmer or farm entity agrees to a payment plan. Secured creditors (banks, financed equipment) must get paid as least as much as the fair market value of the asset when Chapter 12 was filed. Unsecured creditors must receive as much as they would have if all nonexempt assets were liquidated under a Chapter 7 bankruptcy.

An impartial trustee is appointed in every Chapter 12 case. The trustee's job is to evaluate the assets and debt of the farmer or farm entity, and give his opinion on the feasibility of the plan. If the plan is approved, the trustee disperses payments to the creditors according to the plan. Once the farmer or farm entity has completed the Chapter 12 plan, the court will issue a discharge releasing the farmer or farm entity from the debt as provided by the plan.

Why is Chapter 12 different from a tax perspective? Under Chapter 12, tax associated with the sale of certain farm assets is treated as unsecured debt. Without this benefit, servicing the tax liability associated with asset sales would take a significant portion of the income from the farming operation that would otherwise be used to pay secured creditors. Under the 2019 change, the farm assets can now be sold before or after filing Chapter 12, and still have some or all the tax liability discharged.

Bankruptcy isn't a bad thing. Sometimes, it's a way to save your farm. It is very complex, so consult a bankruptcy attorney before deciding if Chapter 12 is right for you. ///



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

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➤ A recent episode features a wide-ranging conversation with DTN Senior Ag Policy Editor Chris Clayton on how the 2024 general election could dramatically change the scope of ag trade and policy, a new farm bill, biofuels and more.

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BLOGS & COLUMNS



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Nov. 8: WASDE Report: DTN market analysts provide commentary on USDA's world supply and demand commodities estimates and what the report means for markets. Visit www.dtn.com/events to register.

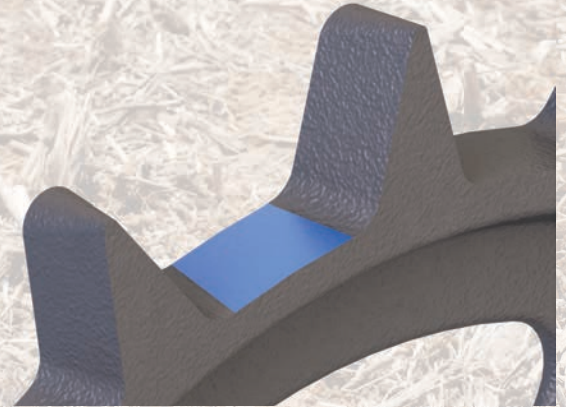
Dec. 5-6: DTN Ag Summit: Our annual event will take place each day from 9-11 a.m. Central Time. Presentations will cover ag policy and potential tax implications as the result of the election, farmland values, winter/spring weather forecasts and perspective on the grain and cattle markets. Find all the details and register at <https://dtn.link/DTNAgSummit2024>

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In 1986, with corn trading below \$2 a bushel, a young commodity broker escapes to the Sandhills to get some perspective—the kind of adventure Todd hopes to do more of in retirement.



Todd Hultman
 Lead Analyst

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► You may email Todd at **todd.hultman@dtn.com**, or call 402-255-8489.

One Career Ends, the Challenge Of Taming Markets Goes On

My first introduction to grain markets was at a young age in the summers spent on my grandparents' farm often involving walking soybeans. At the noon meal, we had to be quiet when Grandma would turn up the radio for Grandpa to catch market prices on WOW radio out of Omaha. I didn't know what all the prices meant then, but I could tell by Grandpa's face they were important.

I was a good student with a knack for numbers and liked the challenge of figuring out puzzles. A couple of jobs after college showed me what I didn't want to do before a friend introduced me to Larry Hagan, a sharp businessman and all-around good guy. It was the 1980s, Larry had started Delta Futures, a commodity discount brokerage in Omaha, and he needed another broker. I signed on, and for the next 13 years, I had a front-row seat where I was able to watch a wide variety of people's styles trading markets, both successfully and unsuccessfully.

For me, those early years were a great experience and helped me realize what I have long taught: Markets are people, and just as people are imperfect and emotional, so are markets. Theories about supply and demand, and equilibrium prices taught in school are no match for the Wild West behavior that markets frequently exhibit. I've often joked with DTN Ag Meteorologist John Baranick that the one thing our two jobs have in common is that no matter how much we study, neither of our forecasts can ever be 100% certain. Life and markets just don't work that way.

In 2011, I landed at DTN and was pleased when a slot opened to write daily grain market comments working with Senior Analyst Darin Newsom. Darin is a DTN legend, known famously for pointing out the flaws in USDA's methods. I always appreciated how Darin and DTN's Six Factor Market Strategies kept the focus on what prices were telling us about the market as opposed to other people's estimates or predictions. Markets are too wild to be corralled by any one method, but I'm glad to



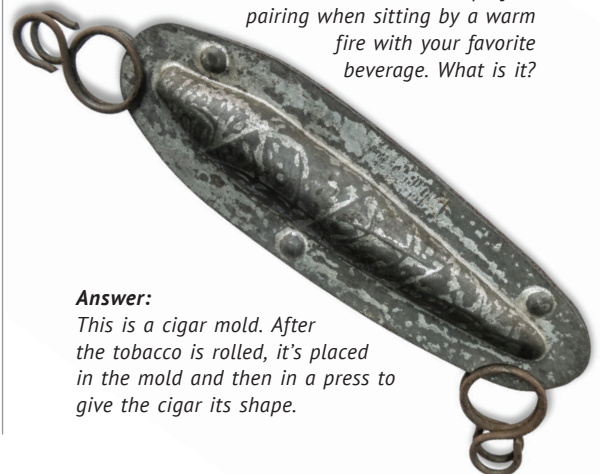
say, Six Factors offered good guidance to customers more years than not.

After 40 years in the commodity business, my parting market advice for grain producers is simple: Know your costs, and try to protect your production at the start of every season with inexpensive put options, provided they offer protection above your crop insurance terms. Pay attention to seasonal influences, and avoid selling crops in the October-through-December window. Finally, pay attention to price behavior, and keep an eye out for the surprises that inevitably occur.

After all these years, the challenge of taming markets is embedded in my bones, and I'll always maintain an interest—but at a more leisurely pace. Vacations have been short during my career, and I'm looking forward to exploring the beauty this country has to offer. I hope readers of this column found something helpful in the past several years and wish you all the best. ///

TOOLS FROM THE PAST

This device created the perfect pairing when sitting by a warm fire with your favorite beverage. What is it?



Answer:

This is a cigar mold. After the tobacco is rolled, it's placed in the mold and then in a press to give the cigar its shape.

Input Prices Soften, but Negative Returns Remain for 2025

Farmers are preparing for a third year of corn and soybean prices that won't pay the bills. As purchases for the 2025 season begin, more farmers are making appointments with their bankers and studying input supplies financing deals. Few farmers will be able to self-fund their input costs like they did in 2023 and 2024.

"I don't know how many guys are going to be able to pay in cash this year," says Illinois farmer and AgMarket.Net founder Matt Bennett, who says growers he talks to are weighing a variety of strategies to minimize expenses without jeopardizing yield.

At the late-summer farm shows, Bennett says few people seemed to have prepurchased fertilizer, but he wasn't sure how many were reevaluating their application plans compared to those waiting to see if prices keep going down.

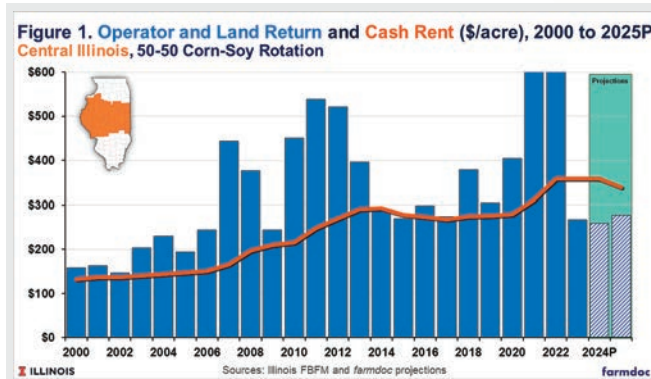
Fuel and fertilizer prices are expected to soften for the 2025 growing season, according to initial projections from the University of Illinois Farmdoc team.

"Across regions of Illinois, projected corn and soybean returns improve relative to 2024 but remain negative for 2025," wrote ag economists Nick Paulson, Gary Schnitkey, Bradley Zwilling and Carl Zulauf in a recent blog post. "Central Illinois returns to high-productivity land for corn are projected at -\$73 per acre for 2025 compared with -\$161 for 2024. Similarly, projected returns to soybeans for 2025 are -\$50 per acre compared with -\$53 for 2024."

While interest rates could continue to decline in 2025, higher borrowing levels could offset the potential for significant per-acre cost reductions.

Break-even costs, including cash rent for farmland, across Illinois are forecast to range between \$4.60 to \$4.66 per bushel of corn and \$11.01 to \$11.56 per bushel of soybeans.

"Production costs remain above pre-2020 levels," they write. "History would suggest further cost adjustments may



continue to occur but will do so gradually over multiple years."

One of those that will take time is cash rent. The Farmdoc budgets account for a \$20-per-acre cut in 2025, but Purdue ag economist Michael Langemeier says any rent reductions that occur will be small, below 5%.

"You really need two or three years of low net returns to land before the market seems to say ... perhaps we need to do an adjustment of cash rent. This makes sense, because it takes awhile to convince someone it's a new normal," he says, adding that it might take until 2026 before rents move broadly.

One thing that's different from the last downcycle is how quickly farmers could burn through their capital. Illinois farmers have more of it following record incomes from 2020 to 2022.

"However, farmer returns since 2023 have also been significantly more negative than the roughly break-even returns experienced, on average, from 2014 to 2019," the Illinois economists warn. "There exists the potential for rapid erosion of accumulated resources and resulting financial stress. This is particularly true for farms who are highly reliant on cash-rented acres, which tend to be younger operators who have not yet been able to establish a meaningful owned farmland base or adequate working capital to help in smoothing negative income shocks." ///

Illinois farmers are forecast to have a third consecutive year of operating returns that fall short of paying their land rent.
SOURCE: FARMDOC



Katie Dehlinger
Senior Farm
Business Editor

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business blog at
**ABOUT.DTNPF.
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Cleaning Out the Clutter

BY Meredith Bernard

'Tis the season for family and friend gatherings, food and more food, and then, before long, for many of us, an onslaught of gifts to go with the good times.

Living in a “cozy” house (code for smallish with a lack of storage space), this time of year has been known to cause what I’ll call “abundant anxiety.” As in knowing the children would be amassing more things that they didn’t necessarily need, adding to a house full of stuff I’ve never been good at keeping cleaned out. While our kids aren’t small anymore, and the gifts tend to get smaller (albeit more expensive) with age, years and years of “things” have led to a recent desire, and finally more discipline, to let go of.

Did you know it’s now incredibly easy to list items for sale on eBay, as well as Facebook Marketplace? If I’m telling you, it’s easy—IT’S EASY. The past several months, I’ve made enough to buy more than a few tanks of fuel (i.e., liquid gold), selling gently used homeschool books, shoes that found their way to my closet but never to my feet and the old cane rocker I had to have that was taking up valuable space in the attic rocking nothing but some dust.

It’s been cathartic cleaning out bathroom cabinets

(goodbye 10-year-old foundation I never wore), clearing off dresser tops and cleaning that infamous bedroom chair. You know, the one that collects all the clothes too clean for the wash but too dirty for the closet.

As a farmer’s wife, it’s been tricky business making sure not to

dispose of any bolts, screws, (8-year-old) receipts, knives and seemingly useless pieces of metal in varying shapes and sizes, but so far so good, and no divorce in sight. It can be done.

There is beauty in letting go of what’s keeping us bogged down. And, starting with cleaning out clutter in our homes has a way of cleaning out clutter in our hearts.

Happy letting go, friends. ///



MEREDITH BERNARD



Meredith Bernard keeps busy writing, clearing clutter from dresser tops and tending to farm and family from North Carolina. Follow her on social media [@thisfarmwife](#) and visit her website at [thisfarmwife.com](#)

Through the Lens of a Farmer

BY Jennifer Campbell

I was surprised to realize the emotions I feel as a farmer are mirrored when I’m behind the camera photographing farming life. It’s as if I’m living in two worlds at once—one where I’m physically doing the work and another where I’m capturing it.

I find the same deep satisfaction in photographing the raw, unpolished moments that make up everyday farm life as I do living it. It’s like having my hands in the dirt and my eye behind the lens at the same time—a perfect balance of both worlds.

When photographing farm work, I love the familiarity of the sights, sounds and smells. They are comforting and put me at ease, like I belong in the scene.

This connection allows me to capture not just the image but also the feelings behind it. It’s profoundly satisfying preserving those moments of hard work and dedication—not just to a job but to a way of life.

I’ve spent my entire life around agriculture. I understand the grit, patience and endurance that go into every task. That intimate knowledge is something I hope brings an added layer of meaning to my photos. I’m not just framing the shot; I’m embracing a piece of the story behind it.

Together, each photograph weaves a larger narrative, one that hopefully captures the true essence of what it means to farm and bookmarks the lives we are living right this minute to preserve them for time.

When I’m out in the field or in the barn, my focus is on the task at hand. But, when I pick up my camera, my personal filter comes off, and I can’t wait to grab each image.

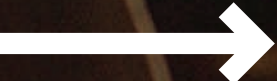
It doesn’t take a fancy camera to experience the joys of photography. Try it! You will never regret taking too many photos, but there will always be regret at none. ///



CHRIS CAMPBELL



Jennifer (Jent) Campbell pushes the shutter and captures life from a seven-generation Indiana family farm. She also writes a blog called Farm Wife Feeds ([farmwifefeeds.com](#)). Follow her on X [@plowwife](#) and on the [@girlstalkgag](#) podcast.



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Family Roots Run Deep To Protect FRAGILE SOILS

>By Dan Crummett



PHOTOS COURTESY OF NOLL'S DAIRY FARM

During mild weather, you're likely to find Mark and Cherie Noll a short ATV ride from their home enjoying a morning cup of coffee on the bluff above the Mississippi River.

From that 500-foot vantage point, the Nolls enjoy sitting at their



Cherie and Mark Noll

picnic table watching barge traffic on the river and gazing westward into Minnesota. It was there where ancient winds eroded light glacial soils and deposited them across the river to the east along the western edge of Wisconsin, where the Nolls farm near Alma. That natural geological gift has sustained the family dairy operation for four generations.

As the loess soils settled into undulating slopes on the lee of the bluff, they accumulated more than 20 feet deep in some areas, forming a rich but highly fragile foundation for crop production.

"Our farm came in on the winds and rolled all sorts of ways," Mark Noll explains. The family owns 735 acres, 450 of which is timber. They lease 100 to 120 additional acres of nearby farmland for cropping to get to 400 acres in crop production. "But, it's all hilly,

No-till crop rotation anchors conservation plan to protect fourth-generation farm against erosion.

and there's not a rectangular field on the place."

He points out his father laid out the first contour lines in 1954, and they continue to no-till farm along those lines. "The farm has 121 fields, and the largest is 12 acres," he explains. "It's not very efficient as modern farms go, but if we didn't constantly work to prevent erosion, our soils would take off in a heartbeat."

Still, the system produces enough feed for the farm's 120-head Holstein dairy plus grain to sell. The Nolls' management is aimed at soil conservation, careful nutrient management and an eye toward overall conservation of natural resources. The farm received the Wisconsin Leopold Award for Conservation in 2023.

> COWS, CROP ROTATION AND CONSERVATION

Mark and his brother, Curtis, operate Noll's Dairy Farm LLC, and Curtis' son, Scott, is buying into the business and runs the operation's on-site Five Star Dairy LLC.

Supporting the dairy operation is an eight-year crop rotation that includes alfalfa, no-till corn for silage and grain, soybeans, oats and off-season cover crops. On steeper slopes, corn follows hay up to three years then yields to a year of oats before the field goes back to hay, Mark explains. Some slopes on the hilltop farm tilt as much as 16 degrees and may stay in corn and hay for longer periods.

The Nolls have been no-tilling since 1984. "That first year, Dad wouldn't allow me to no-till anywhere near the road where the neighbors could see," Mark recalls. "Once he observed the corn emerging successfully in those back-of-the-farm fields, we adopted the practice 100% for our corn."

The family's standard field is 75 feet wide (with some stretching up to a mile), enough room to handle >



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□ *The Nolls no-till directly into cover crops.*

their current 15-foot, six-row 955 International Cyclo air planter spaced on 30 inches. The narrow fields form

strips of different crops in the rotation and provide beautiful aerial views of the meandering paths.

In 1987, the Nolls added soybeans to the rotation, planting with a 5100 International grain drill. Since 1999, however, the beans have been 100% no-tilled with the air planter. Soybeans average 60 bushels per acre to complement the farm's 200-plus-bushel corn grain yields. The older drill is still used to plant cover crops.

"Where we're cutting feed, we chop off corn silage in mid- to early September and follow the harvester with our grain drill and cereal rye cover crop," Mark explains. "The rye will be a couple of inches tall by the first hard freeze, and it overwinters to protect the fields from erosion."

> NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT

He says the alfalfa provides four to five cuttings a year for four years—without the need for herbicides on those acres—and provides weed control plus some residual nitrogen for the following no-till corn crop.

Manure from the dairy goes back onto the fields, applied twice a year according to regular three-year soil sample analyses, and is distributed with a pair of tractor-drawn side-discharge manure spreaders. Curtis, a Percheron enthusiast, occasionally spreads a few loads with his horse-drawn John Deere spreader.

Nutrient credit for the manure, soybeans and alfalfa is taken into consideration for preplant broadcast applications of stabilized dry nitrogen on corn acres. Preplant starter fertilizer rates for corn are also determined according to soil samples. A typical application is roughly 110 pounds of 9-11-30-6S.

Mark Noll soil-samples a third of the farm every year to monitor basic fertility. Because of a well-managed, diverse crop rotation and years of no-till, the light soils on the farm generally range from 2.5 to 3% organic matter.

> WOODS AND WILDLIFE

The detailed crop-production and nutrient-management decisions on the farm reflect the family's long-standing commitment to soil conservation and respect for natural resources. Since 1964, they have built more than 20 earthen dams to catch and slowly release runoff during excessive rainfall as a guard against flash flooding. Also, they actively manage their timber harvests to restore the region's natural oak populations.

"This area was naturally covered with hardwood forests of oak, hickory, elm and ash," Mark explains. "Over the years, as the oaks were selectively harvested, they were gradually succeeded by more shade-tolerant species. When we realized this, we began managing our woodlands with selective clear-cuts and controlled burns to allow sunlight to spur the regrowth of oaks and other species native to the bluff tops."

Those efforts helped the family restore a remnant of a dry bluff prairie—an ecologically rare landform sometimes referred to as a "goat prairie"—after Mark became inspired through the writings of Calvin Fremling in his book "Immortal River."

In addition to patchwork native forest restoration, clear-cut management also provides the "edge factor" so critical for wildlife ecology.

"Animals like those areas at tree lines where they can forage in open areas but can stay close to timber cover," Mark Noll explains. "By the 1930s most of the deer had been wiped out in this area. But, because landowners realized the potential of rebuilding the



PHOTOS COURTESY OF NOLL'S DAIRY FARM

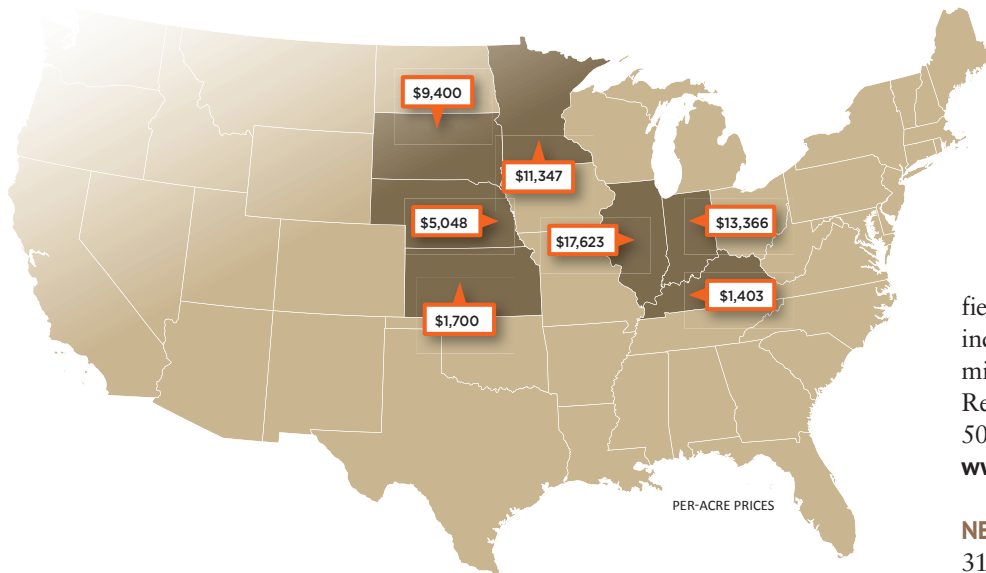
deer herd, they have begun managing their forests for habitat, along with providing food plots with a diverse buffet of forage."

The efforts, fully embraced by the Nolls, have made Buffalo County where they live the No. 1 Boone and Crockett Club white-tailed deer county in the nation.

"[Curtis' son] Scott is an instructor for our hunter safety education program, and I was a member of the Wisconsin Conservation Congress for 40 years," Mark Noll explains. "The roots of farming and wildlife conservation run deep here." //

Recent Farmland Sales

> By Katie Dehlinger, @KatieD_DTN



ILLINOIS, Christian County. In early September, 972 acres of mostly tillable farmland sold at hybrid auction for \$17.13 million, or an average of \$17,623 per acre. Twelve tracts were grouped into three offerings. The first offering contained four tracts totaling 420 acres, which all sold for \$18,900 per acre. The tract with the highest selling price was the only one with drainage tile, and its 70 acres sold for \$21,200 per acre. On the low end, a 58-acre tract sold for \$13,100 per acre. It is split by a railroad and is subject to a utility easement.

Contact: Logan Frye, Field Level Agriculture; logan.frye@fieldlevelag.com, 217-619-6473

www.fieldlevelag.com

INDIANA, Wabash County. A 101-acre farm sold in an online auction for \$1.35 million, or \$13,366 per acre. This mostly level property contains 88 tillable acres with a Weighted Average Productivity Index of 158.2 and nearly 9 acres of woodland. **Contact:** Joe Halderman, Halderman Real Estate and Farm Management; joeh@halderman.com, 260-563-8888

www.halderman.com

KANSAS, Edwards County. A 310-acre wheat and milo farm sold in two tracts

at a hybrid auction for \$527,000, or an average of \$1,700 per acre. There are 293 acres of cropland with a waterway running through a portion of the second tract, which sold for \$400-per-acre less. The seller will retain the landowner's 1/3 share of the 2024 milo crop, but the buyer will receive the landowner's 1/3 share of the 2025 wheat crop that was planted this fall. **Contact:** Travis Weaver, Farm and Ranch Realty Inc.; frf@frfmail.com, 719-342-2997

www.farmandranchrealty.com

KENTUCKY, Muhlenberg County. Seven tracts of previously surface-mined land totaling 434 acres sold at auction for \$609,098, an average of \$1,403 per acre. Tracts ranged from 37.8 acres to 89.6 acres. The land's best use would be for hunting. There were three strip pit lakes on three of the tracts. **Contact:** Joseph Mills, Kurtz Auction and Realty Co.; jmills@kurtzauction.com, 800-264-1204

www.kurtzauction.com

MINNESOTA, Blue Earth County. A farm with 668 acres sold at hybrid auction for \$7.58 million, or \$11,347 per acre. All but one of the sale's six parcels were contiguous and ranged in size from 40 to 161 acres. The mostly flat

fields are well-tiled with productivity indexes ranging from the upper-70s to mid-80s. **Contact:** Nick Meixell, Hertz Real Estate Services; NickM@hertz.ag, 507-246-0909

www.hertz.ag

NEBRASKA, Nance County. Nearly 312 acres sold in an online auction in two tracts for \$1.575 million, or an average of \$5,048 per acre. The first tract—160 acres with center-pivot irrigation—sold for \$6,425 per acre. Its 127 tillable acres border a creek, and the property includes a farmstead with a home, but it is not in livable condition. The second tract is 152 acres in total, with 38 acres in dryland crop production and the rest in pasture. It sold for \$3,600 per acre. **Contact:** Mark Stock, Big Iron Realty; contact@bigironrealty.com, 402-276-2077

www.bigiron.com

SOUTH DAKOTA, Campbell County. An 80-acre farm set a new record for the county: \$752,000, or \$9,400 per acre. The farm's loam and silt loam soils boast a productivity index of 82. A tree line on the southside provides habitat for pheasants and wildlife. **Contact:** Kristen Gill, Gill Land Co.; kristen@gcland.com, 605-848-4502

www.gcland.com

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

Submit recent land sales to
landwatch@dtm.com

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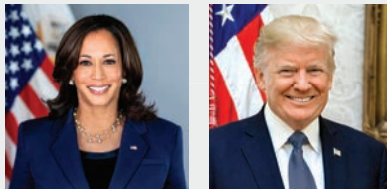
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PULSE OF RURAL AMERICA

> By Chris Clayton

Our exclusive poll reveals strong support for former President Donald Trump and the top issues on the minds of farmers as they prepare to vote.



If you had to choose today, who would you vote for out of these candidates?

| | |
|---------------|------------|
| Kamala Harris | 19% |
| Donald Trump | 70% |
| Undecided | 9% |

carries a commanding level of support in the 2024 DTN/*Progressive Farmer* Pulse of Rural America poll. As many as 90% of poll respondents are farmers, ranchers or rural landowners.

The survey of 1,393 rural Americans shows nearly 70% say they support former President Donald Trump. Another 19% say they support Vice President Kamala Harris. There were 9% of rural residents who were undecided, and a wild card 2% say they back Robert

F. Kennedy Jr., who has since ended his campaign and is supporting Trump.

The Pulse of Rural America poll shows Trump's backing among rural voters continues to strengthen.

David Trimmer, who co-owns a 3,100-head dairy farm near Athens, Wisconsin, and also grows silage and forage crops, bought his farm with his family partner in 2016. Trimmer noted he and his partner built the largest robotic milking barn in Wisconsin in 2019.

"When it comes to bigger issues like



Is U.S. agriculture better off or worse off now than it was four years ago?

| | |
|------------|------------|
| Better Off | 8% |
| The Same | 14% |
| Worse Off | 72% |
| Not Sure | 6% |

In the stretch of a few weeks, Indiana farmer Kip Tom was hitting state fairs, farm shows and debates in late summer to talk about the rural economy, regulations and trade under the Biden-Harris administration.



CHRIS CLAYTON

Tom is a former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture under former President Donald Trump. He's also coleader of the Farmers and Ranchers for Trump 47 coalition.

"I think Donald Trump is clearly the leader in making sure that we have a strong ag economy and making sure we can continue to export our excess production here in this country," Tom says.

> TRUMP LEADS AMONG RURAL AMERICANS

Most rural residents agree with Tom's take as Trump



The country is heading in the right direction.

| | |
|----------------------------|-----|
| Strongly Agree | 2% |
| Agree | 8% |
| Neither Agree Nor Disagree | 11% |
| Disagree | 21% |
| Strongly Disagree | 56% |
| Not Sure | 1% |



David Trimner

CHRIS CLAYTON

inflation, foreign affairs and stability overseas, I feel like a Trump presidency would be much more favorable,” he says. “If we were to build that barn today, I would expect about a 40% increase in the cost to build it in just a few short years, which makes things much more

difficult for us but then also the consumer, and they’re the ones we rely on to buy our products.”

When it comes to farming and ranching, 72% of rural Americans say agriculture is worse off now than four years ago, while just 8% say it is better off. Another 14% say everything is about the same, while nearly 6% are unsure.

Carolyn Durak, 85, and her husband, Mike, raise Angus-cross cattle in Hardin County, Tennessee. She expresses her love for her cows and the lifestyle of having a forest and open space, and has been pleased with calf prices in recent years.

“We happen to be getting some amazing prices for cows, which never happens,” Durak explains. “We happen to be getting favored, which is kind of nice for a change.”

Asked about the presidential race, Durak says she became much more encouraged when Harris stepped in for Biden on the presidential ticket.

“I’m so glad to have a sane person running that we can maybe save our country,” she says.



Carolyn and Mike Durak

COURTESY OF CAROLYN DURAK

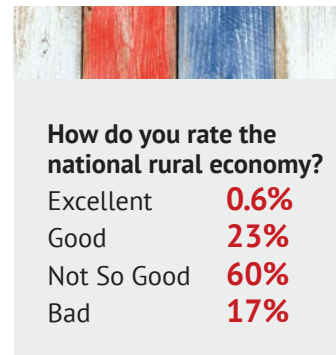
economy under Biden and Harris. A full 77% of poll respondents disagree or strongly disagree with the Biden administration’s handling of the economy.

Just 24% of rural Americans rate the national rural economy as excellent or good. Another 60% view the rural economy as “not so good,” and nearly 17% describe the rural economy as “bad.”

Still, 11% of survey respondents report their personal finances are “excellent,” and another 56% say their personal finances are “good.” Another 30% of rural Americans indicate their finances are “not so good,” while nearly 3% describe their personal finances as “bad.”

Inflation has hit farmers in various ways. Brian Pedersen, a 27-year-old cattle producer and hay farmer near Franklin, Nebraska, says his finances “were a lot better under Trump.” He points to interest rates on his operating loans that are more than double what they were four years ago.

“When I first started, when it was still under Trump, I was only paying 3.5% on an operating loan. It doesn’t



sound like much until you are talking about a couple hundred thousand dollars,” Pedersen says. “That’s a very big deal, and fuel prices are a lot higher when I buy diesel for the tractors and stuff to feed cows.”

Not many rural residents expect a big turnaround next year. Just 15% of poll respondents say they expect to be “better off” than now. Just under 36% respond their financial situation will be “the same” next year, while nearly 29% say they expect to be “worse off.” Another 21% say they are not sure what next year might hold.

Asked about some national issues, more than 43% point to the national debt and budget deficit as their biggest concerns.

“Someone is going to have to pay for that spending and debt,” Trimner says. “And, generally, it’s going to be taxes, and if it’s not taxes, it’s going to be, in a sense, printing money. And, that’s when you get into inflationary trouble. As a farmer, we’ve all seen that.”

Of the respondents, 17% are concerned about Chinese ownership of U.S. farmland, and nearly 12% are more ➤

➤ THE ECONOMY AND INFLATION

Most rural Americans are worried about the nation’s



Do you expect your financial situation to be better or worse a year from now?

| | |
|----------|------------|
| Better | 15% |
| The Same | 36% |
| Worse | 29% |
| Not Sure | 21% |

concerned about Chinese ownership of agribusinesses. The U.S. agricultural trade deficit is the biggest concern for 15% of people surveyed. Access to global ag markets is the biggest concern for nearly 9% of rural Americans, while the war in Ukraine is the biggest issue for 4% of respondents.

Immigration policy and border enforcement under Biden also are concerns for producers. Though most of the people caught at the border are immediately deported, border crossings during Biden’s time in office are more than four times higher than during Trump’s.

“Whether you’re conservative or liberal, I don’t think anybody really likes that,” says Rick DeGroot, a farmer near Parkersburg, Iowa. “I’m sure there are some, but that has ruffled a lot of feathers.”

Another issue that has a lot of rural Americans



Rick DeGroot

CHRIS CLAYTON



shaking their heads is Biden’s push for electric cars, or the “Green New Deal.” Biden’s team is spending a combined \$13.5 billion to build electric charging stations and invest in battery manufacturing. Other policies such as emissions standards will force manufacturers to build more electric-powered cars and pickups.

“In rural America, everything is based on agriculture. When farmers do good, everybody does good,” DeGroot says. “We depend on ethanol, and we depend on livestock.”

> INCREASED REGULATIONS, SAFETY NET WORRIES

Assuming that high input costs and low commodity prices are the biggest challenges for farmers, increased regulations also emerged as a top issue for 30% of survey respondents. This is followed by 26% citing concerns about “more extreme weather events.” After that, 18% of those surveyed identify “a weak farm safety net” as their biggest challenge. The lack of affordable land came in next for 16% of poll respondents. Another 10% say their biggest challenge is the lack of affordable labor in rural America.

Inflation also continues to haunt producers and their profitability.

“If you look at the price of corn, it’s still a decent price, but the issue is the cost of production has skyrocketed,” DeGroot explains. “Our ammonia,



Assuming high input costs/low commodity prices are your biggest challenge, what is your next biggest challenge in farming?

| | |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| Increasing Regulations | 30% |
| More Extreme Weather Events | 26% |
| A Weak Farm Safety Net | 18% |
| Lack of Affordable Land | 16% |
| Lack of Affordable Labor | 10% |





JOEL REICHENBERGER

If forced to choose, should a new farm bill place more emphasis on commodity programs or provide more support to conservation programs?

| | |
|-----------------------|------------|
| Commodity Programs | 73% |
| Conservation Programs | 27% |

regulatory costs for everyone, citing a conservative group’s estimation.
 “Kamala Harris needs to look no further for price gouging than to look in the mirror at herself,” he says.

> THE FARM SAFETY NET AND CONSERVATION

Respondents of the DTN/*Progressive Farmer* poll express mixed feelings about the current farm bill. A full 44% of rural residents could “neither agree nor disagree” about whether the current farm bill “helps my operation remain viable and resilient to changes in the marketplace and extreme weather.” Another 30% of producers disagree or strongly disagree about the farm bill’s protections. Nearly 15% agree or strongly agree about the safety net. And, 12% of respondents are unsure about the farm bill.

A large majority of survey respondents, 73%, expresses a desire for more emphasis on commodity programs, while 27% want increased support for conservation programs. Breaking this down further, nearly 80% of Trump supporters favor more focus on commodity programs, whereas 44% of Harris supporters place greater importance on conservation programs.

For producers who support Harris, there is a higher priority placed on climate-smart farming practices. Approximately 47% of rural Americans say they also do not support keeping rules about climate-smart practices ▶

What is your biggest concern?

| | |
|-------------------------------------|------------|
| National Debt/Deficit | 43% |
| China’s Ownership of U.S. Farmland | 17% |
| U.S. Ag Trade Deficit | 15% |
| China’s Ownership of Agribusinesses | 12% |
| Access to Global Ag Markets | 9% |
| War in Ukraine | 4% |

our nitrogen, our fertilizer, the cost of seed, the cost of chemicals, fuel, the cost of equipment and cost of labor—it’s all just gone crazy.”

Trump brought a trade war to rural America with his tariffs on China and other trading partners. Farmers lost \$29 billion in export sales in 2018 and 2019, which was offset by \$23 billion in ad hoc subsidies.

Under Biden, food and agricultural imports have soared, leading to a \$32-billion agricultural trade deficit. Harris supporters point to the trade instability created in Trump’s first term.

“The four years of the Trump presidency was defined by chaos and uncertainty for the farm economy, and a second term would be even more severe,” says Rod Snyder, a former senior adviser for agriculture at EPA under the Biden administration and owner of a small farm in West Virginia.

In September, Snyder and former U.N. ambassador Tom participated in a Farm Foundation debate about policies in rural America under Biden and Trump. Tom says the Biden-Harris team has led to \$1.6 trillion in

The Inflation Reduction Act provided \$19.5 billion for farmers to enact climate-smart practices. The plan in Congress is to add those remaining dollars to the new farm bill. Do you support keeping rules about climate-smart practices to receive those dollars?

| | |
|--------|------------|
| Yes | 25% |
| No | 46% |
| Unsure | 29% |



Agronomic Advice and Dyna-Gro® Seed Cultivate Farmer's Success

Missouri grower trusts his Nutrien Ag Solutions® crop consultant for recommendations to enhance economic sustainability on every acre.

Missouri farmer Jay Buckman (left) started a crop spraying business to help diversify income opportunities. Nutrien Ag Solutions crop consultant Trent Tiemann (right) is a valuable resource for Buckman when making agronomic decisions.

A passion for driving tractors on the family farm before age 8 started Jay Buckman on his entrepreneurial path. "As soon as I could push the gas pedal, I wanted to drive it," Buckman says. He credits his dad's teachings that fueled his farming passions and business savvy.

Buckman's passion extends to doing things right to boost ROI on every acre. He tried various products but eventually turned to Nutrien and its elite Dyna-Gro® Seed hybrids and varieties, as well as advice from the company's Nutrien Ag Solutions® crop consultants.

DRIVEN TO GROW

Buckman started farming on his own at age 11 when he took over one of his dad's 60-acre share crop fields in central Missouri near Centralia. He traded his labor to plant all the corn, soybeans and wheat in exchange for the use of equipment, and his dad cosigned his first operating loan.

By age 16, Buckman was sharecropping around 400 acres and managing a Charolais cow-calf herd with a brother. He learned the old ways of row crop farming with lots of tillage and conventional cropping, yet he yearned for more efficiency and sustainability.

His achievements earned his grandmother's trust to cash-rent her farm, pushing his dream closer to becoming

a career farmer. Over the next 15 years, Buckman grew his business to 2,600 acres, while shifting to a more sustainable no-till practice with cover crops, variable rate fertility and seeding on 2.5-acre grids.

In 2017, Buckman sought more spraying efficiency and pursued his interest in ag aviation, becoming a helicopter pilot. He leaned into his dad's entrepreneurial spirit and partnered with another pilot to form Buckman Aviation, offering custom applications to area farmers.

"None of this—the farm or the custom application business—would be possible without the agronomic and strategic seed knowledge skills and finances available from Nutrien and Dyna-Gro," Buckman says. "Their team of people supplying fertilizers, seed, chemicals, logistics and crop consulting work has been essential to my success."

Today, Buckman Farms 3,400 acres, and his spray business has covered 125,000 acres. Due to the size of his operation, he's returned full circle to relying heavily on Nutrien, Dyna-Gro Seed and his Nutrien Ag Solutions crop consultant Trent Tiemann.

TRUSTED ADVISOR

Like many busy farmers who also love their cab (or chopper) seat time, Tiemann understands the value he brings to Buckman is built on trust. "He hires us to solve issues and improve efficiency, ranging from variety choices and variable rate seeding to fertility, seed treatments, micronutrient solutions and cover crop problem solving," Tiemann says.

Buckman leaves his seeding plans up to Tiemann's expertise. "I'm not going to spend nights pouring over seed brochures because Trent's knowledge of seeing

varied results from many growers on 100,000 acres far exceeds my ability to examine my 3,000 acres," he says.

Open-mindedness toward input selection that drives economic and environmental sustainability has created numerous win-win scenarios for Buckman Farms. "In the last three years, we've seen Dyna-Gro corn and soybeans be competitive with the other big companies' products at a lower price point, so we're shifting to those numbers that fit our acres," Buckman says.

Such teamwork also pays dividends when products can solve problems. For example, premium seed treatments and spoon-feeding micronutrients from Loveland Products® have helped Buckman overcome variable highly erodible land (HEL) soils to deliver healthy, uniform stands.

SUSTAINABLE TEAMWORK

Other agronomic recommendations include lowering soybean populations to increase yield, mixing in longer-maturity corn while maintaining field drydown and using a planter 2x2 fertility mix with sulfur to deliver healthy corn out of a cereal rye cover crop.

"Working with Trent to correctly use the right Nutrien products to solve these problems and create efficiencies are just a few reasons why I've shifted more than 95% of my business to Nutrien," Buckman says.

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(signed) Jackie Cairnes, Business Manager on 9/24/2024



Climate change currently does or will in the future negatively impact my farming operation.

| | |
|----------------------------|-----|
| Strongly Agree | 14% |
| Agree | 28% |
| Neither Agree Nor Disagree | 29% |
| Disagree | 14% |
| Strongly Disagree | 9% |
| Not Sure | 6% |

on any Inflation Reduction Act funds rolled into the farm bill's conservation programs. Another 25% want to keep those climate guardrails, while 28.5% are unsure.

Rural residents also have broad views on whether climate change is currently affecting their operation negatively or will do so in the future. Some 42% agree or strongly agree that climate change is affecting their operations; another 29% could "neither agree nor disagree," while 23% disagree or strongly disagree. Another 6% of respondents are unsure.

Tennessee cattle farmer Durak and her family are also concerned about the environment and committed to protecting farmland and wooded areas from development. She believes Democrats are more prone to helping finance conservation programs. Her family has invested its efforts into replanting hardwood trees in areas where a former owner had depleted them. They are also developing a pollinator habitat. Both efforts are aimed at protecting the soil and providing more habitat for wildlife diversity.

"We think it's important to have some cost-share incentives for conservation," she says. //

Editor's Note: Poll numbers may not add up to 100 because of rounding. Poll was conducted from mid-August until Sept. 1, 2024.



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How To Prepare For The End of Your Business

As history goes, the United States is a relatively young nation. A farm or ranch operating in America today, even if the owners have generations of consistent family ownership, is the result of someone starting anew. They left something else—a job, another business or possibly another country. Every business beginning involves some type of ending.

Family companies rarely stay the same over time. Some people choose not to return to the family business. Some businesses get sold, split up or merge. A business division may occur due to participants' diverging goals, or there may be conflict between partners or their spouses. Some may simply desire more freedom to operate on their own, or they might want a wholesale change in their career.

Whatever the reason, the chances are that somewhere in your future, your business will experience an ending, split or dissolution. You may not want to think about the inevitability of an exit, but being prepared can be instrumental for positive family relationships. In many cases, thinking early about the ending, well before it occurs, may help reinforce the reasons to stay together.

Several activities help prepare for an eventual but successful ending or division of the business.

First, if you are in a partnership, review your legal agreements to understand the transfer or buy-sell provisions. Some entities don't have an agreement for how people get out of business together, while many others have terms not reflective of owners' current intentions. Those terms govern unless the owners agree to an alternative. The time to review the agreement is before anyone expects to exit.

Second, assess the quality of your financial records. Maintain a current income statement and balance sheet to model different revenue, expense and ownership scenarios. Discuss asset values at regular intervals to foster an understanding of the business' value. Understand the capital gains, deferred income or negative tax basis implicit in your balance sheet. Visit

with your accountant to understand your current financial condition.

Third, consider what might comprise one, or several, economically sustainable units. If the business or land is split, can there be two or more smaller businesses that still support a family? I've known several families who purchased assets knowing they might someday be spun off to partners who go their own way.



GETTY IMAGES

Fourth, contemplate what assets are not considered core to the operation. If a buyout or division becomes a reality, those assets can be used to facilitate a transaction, becoming a source of cash or capital for the deal.

Finally, stay in communication about each person's goals and plans. What are family members' aspirations for the future? Does a partner plan to retire? Move to a different geography? Sometimes a business split offers the necessary permission to change.

Splitting up, winding down or selling a business is seldom easy, but an ending is sometimes necessary for the relational health of the family and the mental health of the participants. Talking about an eventual business ending now may help you be a better family later. ///



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Ghost Stories

This month's column includes real ghost stories in the work world of a mechanic. A strange problem on a machine that is difficult to diagnose is code-named a "ghost." Like an actual ghost, you never know when it will appear, but usually it's just about the time you get back to the shop from the field.

Where Is the Ground?

Steve: Many ghosts like to cause electrical issues, and the problem is often finally found with the ground. The photo (right) had a ghost in it. The owner had installed a new aftermarket distributor on this late-model 8N Ford tractor. The points, coil and condenser were new.



The tractor had been converted to a 12-volt system and had the correct internal resistor coil. It would run fine at idle and half speed. But, when you throttled up, it would miss, spit and sputter. I have had a bad condenser cause this problem before, but it did not fix this one. Yep, it was getting plenty of fuel.

It's rare, but since a distributor must be grounded, and if it is losing its ground on the engine, it will cause this problem. I have seen it on older trucks.

In the photo above, you will notice a little blue wire that I installed from the base screw of the points to the base of the distributor. This wire fixed the problem. The points must ground to the distributor before the distributor can ground to the engine block. Some older original distributors came with this ground wire for the points.

Strange Oil Leak

I have a 4600 John Deere front-wheel assist tractor that has developed an oil leak on the front-wheel drive. Oil runs out and down the inside of the wheel, and down the tire. I have had to add oil occasionally, but now, it has become a bad leak and stained my shop floor. I can't tell where the leak is coming from, but I need to fix it, because I use this tractor to put out round bales. Can you tell me what could be causing this leak?



Steve: Tractors with front-wheel assist put a lot of stress on the oil seals because of all the load, twisting and turning, as well as the side load. I don't know how many hours are on the tractor, but if the tractor has been used for round bale handling, it is very possible that some twine or net wrap got under the seal, or the seal is just worn out.



Have a mechanical problem you can't resolve? Email Steve Thompson at mechanic@progressivefarmer.com

Please include your contact information and phone number.

The small, lugged tires on the front of your tractor like to grab twine or net wrap, and roll it directly under the seal. You can't see the seal, because it is in the hub. The photo (bottom left) is a tractor like yours in my shop that had an oil leak caused by twine and net wrap. You will need a new seal to fix the problem.

Full of Hot Air

Steve: I have a Kubota 8540 that lost its air-conditioning. I have replaced the compressor, high and low switches, expansion valve, evaporator, dryer and condenser, and have flushed the system—two times in some cases. It would blow, but this Texas 105°F air parked the tractor during hay season.

My neighbor knows a lot about air-conditioning, and after reading his gauges, he told me I needed a new compressor. My wife ordered an aftermarket compressor online, and the air still was hot. My neighbor insisted the problem still was with the compressor. She ordered another one with the same result.

Finally, the neighbor recommended we go get a compressor at the Kubota dealership. It worked. This was an expensive lesson, not only because of the cost of the compressors and other parts, but also the rental expense of another tractor during the first cutting of hay. I have heard of many other problems with online parts. Buyer beware of aftermarket parts sold online. ///

SAFETY TIP

NO STRINGS ATTACHED

The photo (right) of a string of twine on the highway in front of my house could very well be a ghost story, because it is scary for you and the person mowing the highway.

If you have ever used twine in a rectangular or round baler, you know what it looks like if the twine does not get cut, catches the wind and is blown out, or just falls out of the machine. It will feed out all the rolls on the highway, including the ones tied together, leaving miles of twine.

Do not attempt to roll it up. If you try, and all that twine, blowing along the highway, in your hands and piled up around you, were to get snagged by a car or truck, it could cause you serious bodily harm. That is scary, but probably just as scary for the tractor operator mowing the highway if the mower grabs the twine.



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Pros and Cons: Grazing Crop Residue

Q What things should I be aware of if I'm turning cows out on crop residue?

A **DR. McMILLAN:** I will focus on animal health and leave the debate about the value of residue to soil fertility to the crop scientists. I will also say this is not a common practice in our area, so I would welcome input from those who have done this with their cattle.

Grazing crop residue can be a low-cost supplemental feed for cows, especially dry cows in the mid-trimester to early third trimester when nutrient requirements are lower. But, there are several potential problems.

On harvested corn ground, there is a potential to eat too much grain, which can lead to rumen acidosis, bloat and founder. Corn residues from highly fertilized crops can be very high in nitrogen. In our area, corn will often sprout and grow after harvest. These plants can be very high in both nitrates and prussic acid, or hydrogen cyanide. If these young plants are stressed by drought or frost, toxicity can be dangerously increased. Toxic plants, especially around the field margins, is another issue. In our area, we are particularly concerned about coffeeweed and sicklepod, but your area may have different plants.

As winter progresses, and crop-residue quality decreases because of grazing selection and weathering, supplementation of protein and phosphorus will likely become necessary. So, yes, if done properly, crop residues can be a great option for many producers.

Q What is the best way to wean calves?

A **DR. McMILLAN:** I like to wean fenceline to fenceline or nose to nose. This is much less stressful on mamas and babies, but you must have a good fence. I use an electric fence. This method has worked well for me and other producers I have recommended it to. The animals bellow and squeal for a few days, and then all is good.



JENNIFER CARRICO

If you move cows or calves to a pasture across your farm or to a new location, make sure your fences are very good. The last year we did this, a cow jumped and/or tore through three fences. We spent hours doing repairs. Her number was 343. You remember a lot that is learned in the school of hard knocks.

Another method is weaning rings that prevent the calves from nursing. These rings are applied in the nose of calves, and they are turned back with their dams. This does add two trips through the chute, but this would be an opportunity to vaccinate calves before the stress of other methods of weaning. I have had no experience with this method. We would appreciate comments from readers who have used it.

The worst method in my opinion is to wean and ship the calves to the sale barn. This is the highest stress event in a calf's life, and to add in the extra stress and disease exposure in a sale barn is a really bad idea. This will cost you money. Order buyers will discount these green calves. And, it is not good for your industry. As I have said before, we are all in this together. ///

Please contact your veterinarian with questions pertaining to the health of your herd. Every operation is unique, and the information in this column does not pertain to all situations. This is not intended as medical advice but is purely for informational purposes.

These are only my thoughts and general guidelines. Please get with your veterinarian and together develop the best program for your herd.

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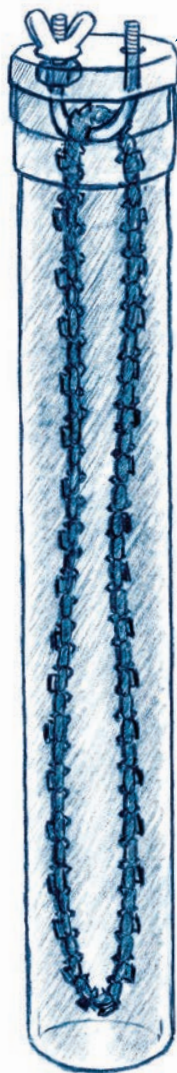
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Handy Devices

Easy-to-build ideas make your work easier.



◀ CHAIN IN A TUBE

Here's a way to keep your chain saw chains in some semblance of order—while also preventing cuts to your fingers. Robert Schornick, Yates Center, Kansas, used a length of PVC long enough to hold chains and glued a female threaded collar to one end. Into a male threaded plug, he drilled two holes large enough to accept a 1/4-inch U-bolt. Onto the U-bolt, Schornick screwed a lock nut to each side and then slid the ends up through the holes. They are held in place by a pair of wing nuts. When ready to use, he loops the chains through the U-bolt, slides the U-bolt up through the holes in the plug, tightens the plug, and it's ready to be stored.

DING DEFLECTOR ▶

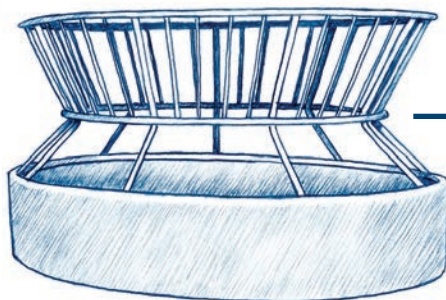
Wayne Shipman, Cost, Texas, found a way to protect the bumper of his truck from dings when backing up to attach his trailer. It's pretty simple. He welded a 5- x 16-inch piece of quarter-inch steel to the top of the trailer hitch. The steel plate does not interfere with the safety chains.



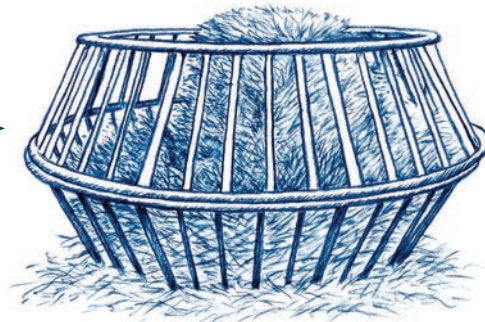
▼ BROKEN NO MORE

Joan Rakes, Chatham, Illinois, says she has bought many hay feeders over time, as they tend to fall apart. But, she found a way to create new rings by salvaging old parts. Rakes cut off the tops of two old rings, flipped one over and welded the two halves together. It's a perfect hay feeder for goats and sheep, she says.

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Five Rivers Cattle Feeding seeks environmental excellence when managing manure and water.

When you're one of the largest feedyards in the nation, it carries certain responsibilities, especially when it comes to environmental sustainability.

Grant County Feeders is a southwest Kansas feedyard with a capacity of nearly 100,000 head. It is one of 13 feedyards owned by Five Rivers Cattle Feeding with a one-time total capacity of 900,000 head. Tom McDonald, senior vice president, environmental and sustainability for the company, says it's important

for their feedyards to follow regulations and guidelines, and to foster the relationship between proper animal husbandry and ecosystem health.

"By managing water and manure, we can be sure to provide the animals with the proper environment to thrive," he says.

┆ *Chad McCormick and Tom McDonald oversee the feedyard's sustainability efforts.*

› FOCUS ON PROTOCOLS

Providing the proper environment revolves around regulations outlined by the EPA that focus on water and manure management. It starts with retention ponds to catch and contain stormwater, which includes runoff from the feedyard.

McDonald says their facility in southwest Kansas receives about 17 inches of rain annually. Other Five Rivers locations in Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Oklahoma and Texas have similar amounts of precipitation, which helps when managing the rainfall.

"We are required to hold all the runoff from a 4.6-inch rainfall event. That's a 25-year, 24-hour storm. And, we have to have enough capacity to catch that if it

□ Growing feed for the cattle is part of the feedyard's ecosystem.



would come again in two weeks,” he says. “Our ponds are designed to catch and contain, and then beneficially use that water on farmland. To do that, we also have a detailed nutrient management plan.”

That plan consists of annual soil-sampling, crop-planning and analyzing field nutrients and nutrients the crop puts in the soil. Each field has its own rating, which is plugged into the nutrient management plan to show how many gallons from the retention ponds to apply. Clay liners help prevent seepage and keep water from moving beneath the ponds.

Water from the retention ponds is pumped through an underground pipeline to center pivots and applied to fields from the spring through fall, as needed. The

additional ponds help provide extra capacity when dewatering isn't possible in winter months.

➤ SUSTAINABILITY INCLUDES MANURE

Manure in the pens is another component of Five Rivers environmental sustainability. It is a valuable fertilizer for surrounding farmers and is sold or given to neighboring farmers who have silage contracts with Five Rivers. “Farmers understand the value of manure to get the micronutrients and organic matter,” McDonald explains.

Manure is hauled out of cattle pens and applied to fields after wheat and corn harvests. Some manure is stockpiled on field corners to spread once the crop is harvested. “We will have manure stockpiled around ➤

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the feedyard if it hasn't been marketed yet. Berms surround the manure piles to prevent runoff," he adds.

Grant County Feeders General Manager Chad McCormick says farmers like the feedyard manure because it's dry and easy to spread, unlike manure from other types of animal operations. "In addition, an application of manure will have three years of benefits, because it takes that long to break down, unlike commercial fertilizer."

Cattle at the Grant County Feeders location produce about 1 ton of manure per head yearly, which is used within a 20-mile radius. Typically, it's spread at a rate of 15 to 20 tons per acre, depending on the nutrient analysis.

> WATER USE MANAGED CLOSELY

Most of the Five Rivers feedyards are in areas with lower rainfall to help with water management. The bulk of the water is used as drinking water for the cattle. "This feedyard [Grant County Feeders] will use about 12 to 12½ gallons per head per day. Included in that is a little

The retention pond at the feedyard holds rainwater and runoff.



water used for steam-flaking corn," McDonald adds. "We have meters to track how much water is used daily to be alert to any problems."

Wells around the feedyard are nearly 400 feet deep. The water comes from the Ogallala Aquifer, which serves a large area of the Great Plains region.

"We are constantly trying to figure out how to use less water and use it in a better way. The sprinklers on irrigation pivots are lower than they used to be to be sure the water is being used and not evaporating," McDonald says.

A monthly meeting with feedyard managers is used to discuss topics from nutrition to health and to evaluate how the environmental management plan is working. Recommended changes are provided after analyzing the feedyard and records. "This gives us another set of eyes to notice what's going on in the yard from a different perspective," McCormick explains.

> MONITOR FEED CONVERSION

A manure analysis is done at least once a year. Awareness of changes in feed throughout the year is



important. Feed testing is done daily to ensure quality and consistency of the ration fed to the cattle.

Some 1,500 tons of feed is used at Grant County Feeders daily. Cattle rations consist of steam-flaked corn, corn silage or wheat silage, some distillers grains as a protein source and vitamin and mineral premix. Hay is fed to new arrivals for transitioning to the regular feed ration.

"When you have changes in the feed mill or in the cattle, we will see differences in the feed conversions, which leads to different amounts of manure in the pens," McCormick says. "As soon as cattle leave a pen, the scraper will be there cleaning. We want to keep the area ready for the next group of cattle."

McDonald's experience in environmental management at the Five Rivers feedyards spans more than 28 years. Through the years, he says technological changes have helped feedyards become more environmentally sustainable.

"In the beginning, there wasn't a lot of thought about nutrient management plans. There has been an evolution since the late 1990s, when the EPA wrote their first regulations for CAFOs (concentrated animal feeding operations)," he explains. "Tying retention ponds to your farming operation has come a long way since the early 2000s. Our team keeps track of what is happening in the feedyard every day. It's pretty rigorous."

McCormick says if a person is passionate about managing the water, manure and farm ground, he or she could be on staff at a feedyard for many years and never work with the actual cattle directly, but still be an important part of the team. Three people are in the environment and sustainability department for Five Rivers. However, at each feedlot, the yard maintenance department is responsible for changes needed to make it more sustainable.

"The biggest thing that has changed is the culture," McDonald explains. "It's a source of pride that our environmental system works like it's supposed to. We get upset when we see someone else not doing it right."

Overall, while profitability is the key enabler for environmental excellence and social responsibility, leaving the land better for the next generation is also important. So, too, is raising good cattle to feed the world. Five Rivers takes that seriously in its pursuit of sustainability. ///

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PONY EXPRESS RIDES AGAIN

Annual historic reenactments have become a tradition for families across the country.

On April 3, 1860, a celebratory crowd in downtown St. Joseph, Missouri, whooped and hollered as a young man on a horse with saddlebags stuffed with mail raced down dusty Penn Street toward a ferry that would take him across the Missouri River. Ten days and almost 2,000 miles later, another Pony Express rider trotted into Sacramento, California, carrying the

same saddlebags full of mail. The first Pony Express ride was a success.

On June 17, 2024, a crowd at the same historic location in St. Joseph cheered as a young woman on a horse started on the same historic

route with saddlebags full of letters. The rider and an honor guard clip-clopped through St. Joe's streets

and over a four-lane bridge across the Missouri River. Ten days later and right on time, another rider trotted into Sacramento and delivered the same saddlebags of letters. The annual re-ride by the National Pony Express Association (NPEA) had delivered the mail again.

NPEA has 700 to 800 members whose annual re-rides keep alive the romance and the history of the Pony Express. The romance springs from the image of daring young horsemen racing across the vast western half of the continent to deliver bags of mail. The history recognizes



The Patee House in St. Joseph, Missouri, is a museum and the starting point of the annual re-ride on even-numbered years.



A mural near the Pony Express Museum in St. Joseph pays tribute to the riders and to Western pioneers.



AND AGAIN

the significance of the Pony Express riders, because the mail they carried united the new state of California to the rest of the nation, which was on the verge of a civil war. Today, the NPEA is a dedicated multigenerational organization, says Larry Carpenter, NPEA's corresponding secretary. "Our riders are grandmothers, grandfathers, mothers, fathers, sons and daughters."

> MULTIGENERATIONS

On the Kansas side of the Missouri River bridge in Elwood, a cluster of horses, trailers, riders and families stood under a hot sun waiting for the arrival of first rider Penny Orrick, of Easton, Missouri. Kids played with toy farm animals in the shade of a gooseneck trailer as parents and grandparents donned riding gear and fiddled with saddle cinches. Newly arriving members of the Kansas contingent of NPEA hopped out of pickups to greet and hug comrades they hadn't seen in a year. Some were the third generation to take part in a re-ride.

Among the riders waiting in Elwood was Jake McCracken, 42, who is a saddle maker, farrier and horse breeder from Dawn, Missouri. "I originally got in the re-ride because this old guy my dad shod horses for was in it," McCracken says. "Every year I'd ask him, 'What does a guy have to do to be



Jake McCracken and his horse Tupelo wait for their turn to ride.

a Pony Express rider?' And, every year he'd tell me, 'You have to wait for somebody to die off.' In 2003, he asked me if I still wanted to ride, and I said, 'Sure. Who died?' I've ridden in it almost every year since."

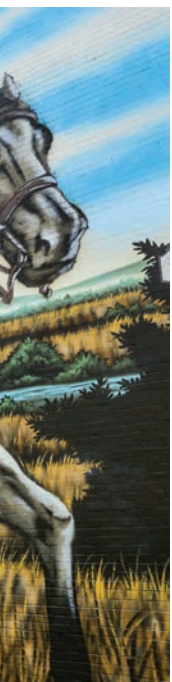
McCracken's niece Halli Anderson, 16, rode this year. His daughter, Reata McCracken, is only 11 and, since riders must be at least 14, she couldn't carry the mail this year. But, she did participate as a buddy rider.

When first rider Orrick arrived from St. Joe, the Kansas horseman designated as second rider grabbed her custom-made saddlebag (called a mochila), threw it over his saddle and set out at a trot into countryside back roads. A mile or so down the road, another cluster of horse trailers and riders waited, and another horseman snatched the mochila and took off down the road. The relay of replacement horses and riders would continue across eight states and eventually involve more than 600 riders and their mounts trotting and cantering westward

at 10 to 12 miles per hour in 1- to 5-mile segments 24 hours a day.

Also among the gathering in Elwood were >

All riders of the re-ride take the official National Pony Express Association oath not to curse, drink nor quarrel.



David Sanner and his wife, Melva, of Blue Rapids, Kansas. David, 69, would ride nine 1- to 2-mile segments that first day; Melva would drive a pilot vehicle to alert motorists that a horseback rider was coming. The Sanner family caravan included horse trailers, children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. It would traverse 67 miles that first day on a route that is as close as possible to the original Pony Express route.

□ *Kansas state NPEA president Lyle Ladner puts a GPS device in the mochila so people all over the nation can track the re-ride in real time.*



“We somehow just worked into it, and now it is a part of our lives,” she says.

> ORIGINS

Of course, the Pony Express originally was about commerce, not family traditions. The entrepreneurial owners of the Central Overland California and Pike’s Peak Express Co. figured they could make a healthy profit by charging \$5 per half-ounce to transport mail to and from the nation’s western outposts. The only mail-delivery alternatives were ships (many months) and freight wagons (several weeks). When the Express Company

said it could get mail from Missouri to California in 10 days, what it was selling was speed. It was like the builders of the Concorde supersonic jetliner more than a century later bragging they could get passengers from New York to Paris in three hours instead of eight.

For a brief time, it looked like the Express Company’s big gamble would pay off. But, establishing, manning and running a network of Pony Express stables across 2,000 miles proved costly. So did hiring willing and able riders. It’s unclear whether Pony Express ever turned a profit.

Even if it did, progress in the form of telegraph lines quickly killed it. Telegraph poles and wires finally linked California and Missouri in early 1861. Suddenly, words traversed the immense distance in seconds instead of days. The last Pony Express ride was in October 1861, only 18 months after that first ride out of St. Joe.

But, the romance and history live on. ///

The NPEA’s re-ride tradition began in 1978 on only portions of the trail. Bolstered by its success, in 1980, the re-riders finally dared the entire Missouri-California route. David Sanner’s father became a rider in 1982. One year later, David joined him. In 2024, two of David’s daughters and his 24-year-old grandson donned the Pony Express uniform (blue jeans, red shirt, yellow kerchief and brown vest) and rode across eastern Kansas. “In a few years, I will have some great-granddaughters riding,” David says.

Melva wasn’t crazy about the idea at the beginning. She got into horseback riding by accident, she says with a laugh: “I married a guy with horses.” But, when David became involved in the Pony Express, she did too. Eventually, she became the first female Kansas Pony Express rider. She and David have each been national president of NPEA three terms.

□ *Rider Sarah Bailey gets up to speed during the re-ride.*



New Blood Flow Breakthrough Helps Men Enjoy Strong, Long-Lasting Intimacy – At Any Age

Men across America are raving about a newly enhanced performance supplement that helps achieve healthy blood flow on demand

After age 40, it's common knowledge that performance begins to decline in many men. However, a new, performance empowering pill is showing that any relatively healthy man can now enjoy long-lasting, and frequent intimacy – at any age.

This doctor-designed formula, created by leading anti-aging expert Dr. Al Sears, has already helped men overcome low and sinking libido -- and has recently undergone a potency-enhancing update -- with remarkable new results.

When the first pill -- **Primal Max Black** -- was first released, it quickly became a top-selling men's performance helper, promoting intimacy across America.

It worked by supporting healthy testosterone levels. However, Dr. Sears soon realized that this isn't the only challenge men face with performance. That's when he turned his attention to blood flow.

And this became **Primal Max Red**.

THIS PROVEN SOLUTION IS MORE MECHANICAL THAN HORMONAL

Truth is, once blood flow slows down for men, no matter how exciting it is, it won't be enough without the necessary amount...

So enjoying intimacy without healthy blood flow becomes difficult for most men.

Luckily, a Nobel prize-winning scientist discovered the simple answer to help support performance strength and confidence -- by boosting vital blood flow -- and enhancing this essential

performance function.

Using this landmark Nobel Prize as its basis, **Primal Max Red** enhanced healthy blood flow for untold millions of men around the world with the use of strong nitric oxide boosters.

While **Primal Max Black** helped maintain optimal testosterone, **Primal Max Red** tackles a lesser-known challenge.

Director, Al Sears MD, who has authored over 500 scientific papers and has appeared on more than 50 media outlets including ABC News, CNN, ESPN, Discovery, Lifetime, and many more say, *"Less than optimal blood flow can be part of a huge problem that affects a lot of men. And it needed to be addressed once and for all, so men would not dwell on it. Then, once we optimized it and had a great deal of success, we set out to see if we could do even better."*

The former formula had excellent results. However, new research showed that for even faster, anytime, anywhere results, increasing the dose of a key compound was needed.

So, one of the three nitric oxide boosters in the new **Primal Max Red**, L-Citrulline, was clinically boosted to 9000 mg, and the results were astounding. Which is no surprise considering that 5000 mg is considered a "normal amount" -- giving the new version nearly doubled the blood flow boosting power.

Men who had previously been unsure about their power and stamina were overjoyed to be back to their old selves and to get and maintain a healthy



A new discovery that increases nitric oxide availability was recently proven to boost blood flow 275% - resulting in improved performance.

bloodflow when they needed it.

BETTER BLOOD FLOW, STRONGER RESULTS

The best way to promote healthy blood flow throughout the body is with the use of **Primal Max Red**. By using it, when exciting signals leave the brain, blood flows much faster like it used to.

This critical action is how men across the country are enjoying full and satisfying performance at any age. No need to bother with testosterone-boosting shots, blue pills, or shady capsules that have no effect.

Primal Max Red can effectively promote healthy blood flow that most men can use for maximum intimacy. This is leading to more greater capacity and satisfaction, coupled with long-lasting performance.

"There was a time when men had little control when it came to boosting their blood flow," Dr. Sears said. "But science has come a long way in recent years. And now, with the creation of nitric oxide-boosting **Primal Max Red**, men can perform better than

ever, and enjoy intimacy at any age."

Now for men across America, it's much easier to stay at their performance peak as they get older.

HOW TO GET PRIMAL MAX RED (AND FREE PRIMAL MAX BLACK):

To secure free bottles of **Primal Max Black** and get the hot, new **Primal Max Red** formula, buyers should contact the Sears Health Hotline at **1-800-909-1799** TODAY. "It's not available in retail stores yet," says Dr. Sears. "The Hotline allows us to ship directly to the customer." Dr. Sears feels so strongly about **Primal Max**, all orders are backed by a 100% money-back guarantee. "Just send me back the bottle and any unused product within 90 days from purchase date, and I'll send you all your money back."

Call NOW at **1-800-909-1799** to secure your supply of **Primal Max Red** and free bottles of **Primal Max Black**. Use Promo Code **FPFMAX1124** when you call. Lines are frequently busy, but all calls will be answered!



Capture The Flavors of Fall

SWEET AND SPICY DEVILED EGGS

These treats are quick and easy, have only five ingredients and are perfect for a last-minute soirée.

TOTAL TIME: 10 MINUTES
MAKES: 12 DEVILED EGGS

6 large hard-boiled eggs, cooled completely
2 tablespoons mayonnaise
1 tablespoon red pepper jelly
½ teaspoon salt
Fresh cilantro for garnish, optional

1. Carefully crack eggs; fully remove shells. Slice eggs vertically.
2. Using a small spoon, scoop out yolks; transfer to a mixing bowl.
3. Add mayonnaise, pepper jelly and salt to the bowl; mix well.
4. Transfer yolk mixture into a piping bag or plastic bag.
5. Pipe filling into each cavity of boiled egg white. Top with more pepper jelly and fresh cilantro, if desired.

PUMPKIN MOUSSE

This delightfully creamy dessert is a great way to enjoy fall's offerings.

TOTAL TIME: 40 MINUTES
MAKES: 6 SERVINGS

1 (14-ounce) can sweetened condensed milk
1 (15-ounce) can pumpkin puree
¼ teaspoon kosher salt
2 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice
3 cups cold heavy whipping cream

1. In a medium saucepan, combine sweetened condensed milk, pumpkin, salt and spice.
2. Cook over medium heat until mixture begins to bubble and thicken (about 8 minutes).
3. Transfer mixture to the fridge; cool completely (about 15 to 20 minutes).
4. Using a stand or electric mixer, whip heavy cream until it forms stiff peaks. Reserve about ½ cup whipped cream to top the mousse.
5. Fold pumpkin mixture into whipped cream until well-combined. Divide into serving dishes.
6. Top with the extra whipped cream; garnish with extra pumpkin pie spice, if desired.

POMEGRANATE-APPLE CIDER

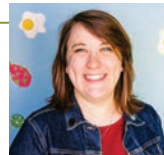
There's nothing like enjoying a crisp sip of cider in the chilly air of the season.

TOTAL TIME: 20 MINUTES
MAKES: 6-8 SERVINGS

16 ounces pomegranate juice
4 cups water or apple cider
¾ cup brown sugar
1 (1.2-ounce) package mulling spice mix
5 sweet cinnamon sticks

1. In a large pan or slow cooker, combine pomegranate juice, water or apple cider, brown sugar, mulling spice mix and cinnamon sticks.
2. If cooking on the stove, simmer 10 minutes. Remove cinnamon sticks; serve.
3. If cooking in a slow cooker, heat on low for 2 to 4 hours. Remove cinnamon sticks; serve. ///

Recipes and Photos By
Rachel Johnson
On Instagram
@racheltherecipe



DTN^o

To stay ahead of the storm you first need to get ahead of it

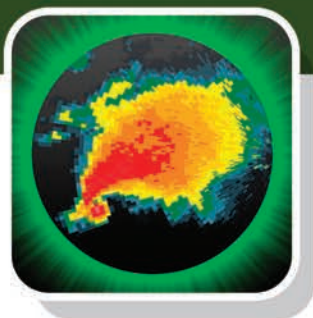


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“Success usually comes to those who are too busy to be looking for it.”

—Henry David Thoreau

Success is not final; failure is not fatal: It is the courage to continue that counts.

WINSTON CHURCHILL

Try not to become a person of success, but rather try to become a person of value.

ALBERT EINSTEIN

Success is most often achieved by those who don't know that failure is inevitable.

COCO CHANEL

Success isn't always about greatness. It's about consistency. Consistent hard work leads to success. Greatness will come.

DWAYNE JOHNSON

There are three ways to ultimate success: The first way is to be kind. The second way is to be kind. The third way is to be kind.

FRED ROGERS

Success is just a war of attrition. Sure, there's an element of talent you should probably possess. But if you just stick around long enough, eventually something is going to happen.

DAX SHEPARD

Develop success from failures. Discouragement and failure are two of the surest stepping stones to success.

DALE CARNEGIE

Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experience of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, vision cleared, ambition inspired and success achieved.

HELEN KELLER

Success is peace of mind, which is a direct result of self-satisfaction in knowing you made the effort to become the best of which you are capable.

JOHN WOODEN

Delight thyself also in the Lord: and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.

PSALM 37:4 (KJV)

Success is no accident. It is hard work, perseverance, learning, studying, sacrifice and most of all, love of what you are doing or learning to do.

PELÉ

The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time.

THOMAS EDISON

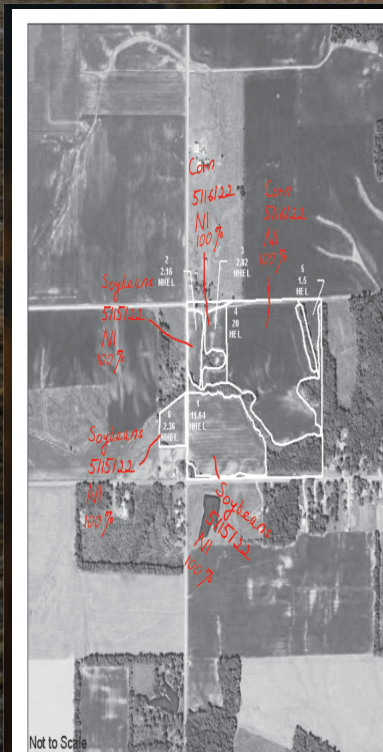
Success does not consist in never making mistakes but in never making the same one a second time.

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

It's not whether you get knocked down, it's whether you get up.

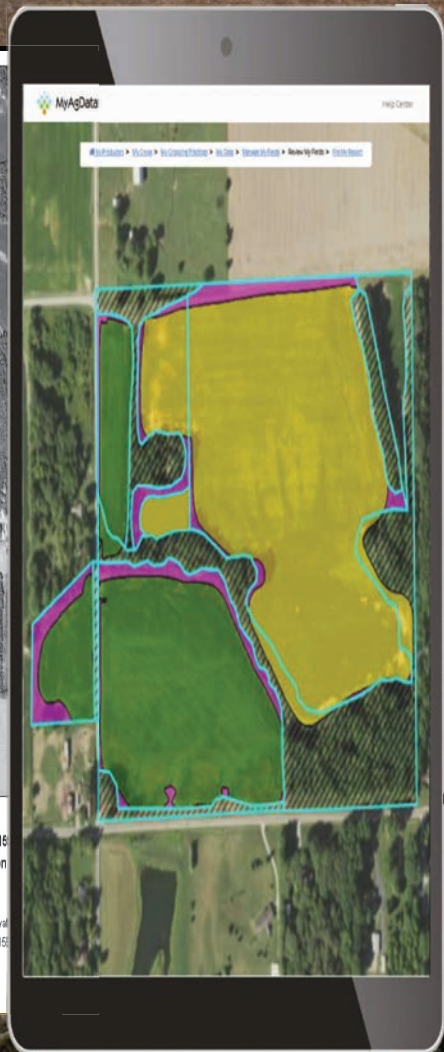
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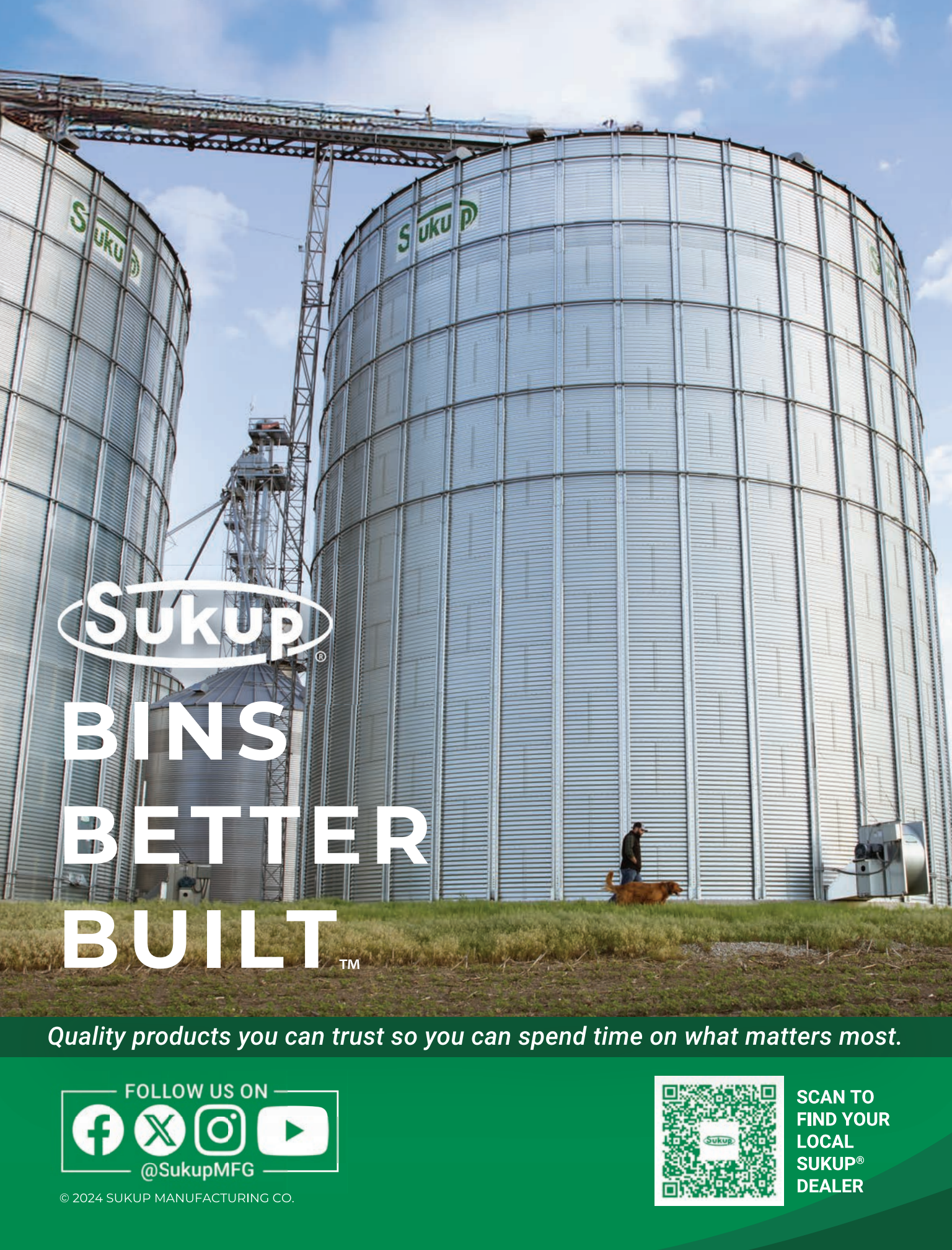
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