

125
CFE
YEARS

Views

Sharing New Perspectives & Information From Your Co-op



Implementing these practices not only has positive environmental impacts but also enhances the resilience of their operations against extreme weather events.

FARMING FOR THE FUTURE
PAGE 14

UNLOCK EXCLUSIVE INSIGHTS

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Stay ahead of the curve with IDEAL's essential weekly update, your go-to source for the latest on ingredient prices, cutting-edge nutritional strategies, and expert commentary from the field.

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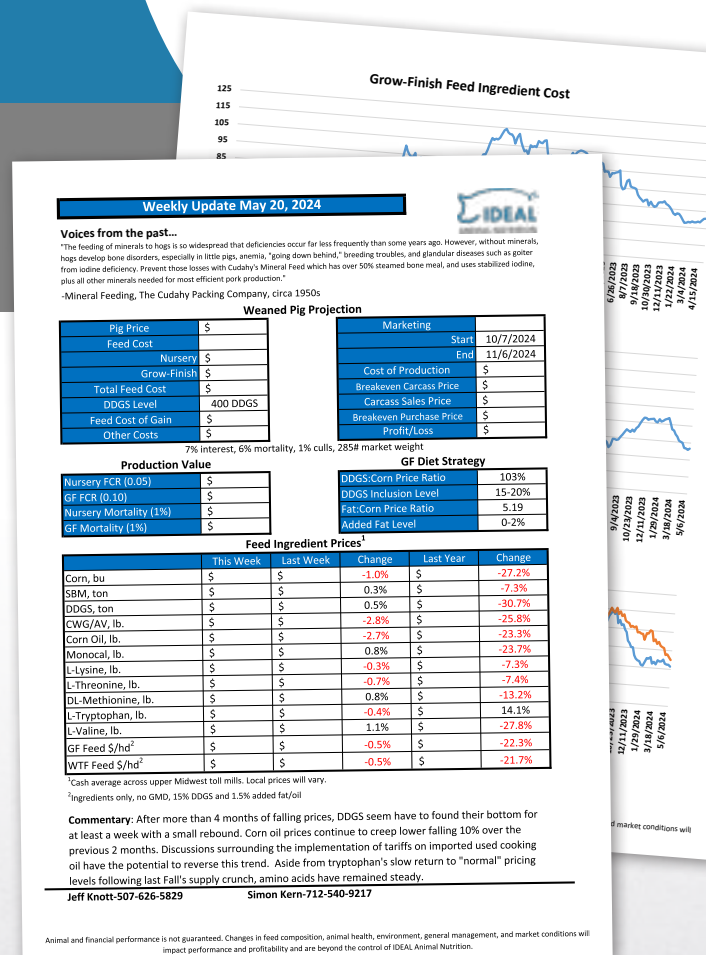
WHAT'S INSIDE?

- **Ingredient Price Trends:** Navigate market fluctuations with ease.
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- **Expert Commentary:** Benefit from on-the-ground observations and analysis.

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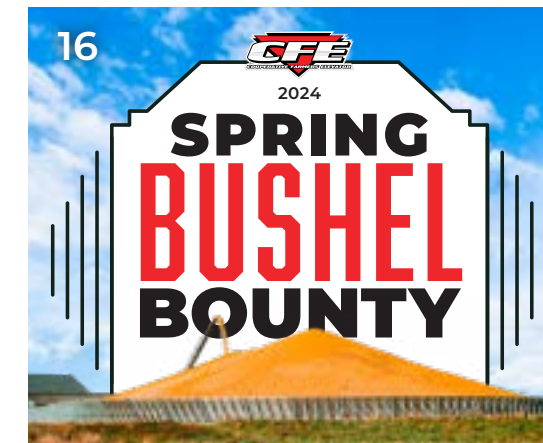


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A Look Inside

HONORING OUR PAST. CELEBRATING OUR FUTURE.

With a legacy spanning back to 1899, CFE proudly celebrates 125 years of cooperative business. This 125 years not only encompasses the three legacy cooperatives that merged to create CFE, but also those that preceded them.

One of the ways we are commemorating this celebration is through the creation of a coffee table book that will share photos of how CFE has evolved over the years, stories directly from cooperative leaders who helped build the cooperative to what it is today and notes on how we continue to use lessons learned from the past to shape a stronger future for the cooperative.

The book will be released at this year's annual meeting, but the anniversary celebrations will continue throughout the year. Find out how else we're recognizing this milestone on **page 17** and see a sneak peek into CFE's storied past from Clarence "Click" Hellinga below and on **page 18**.



CARE TO SHARE?

We want to hear your part of CFE's history. Scan this QR code to submit your photos and stories honoring this cooperative community.



ABOUT CFE

Cooperative Farmers Elevator (CFE), is a member-owned cooperative, serving 4,975 members at 27 locations in Iowa, Minnesota and South Dakota. The cooperative provides products, services and expertise in the areas of grain, agronomy, feed and lumber.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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ABOUT THE PUBLICATION

CFE Views is the official news publication of Cooperative Farmers Elevator (CFE) and distributed to co-op members and customers. The publication serves as the source for stories, highlights and features about the people, places and industries that encompass CFE.

A CornerPost publication.

CONTRIBUTE TO CFE VIEWS

Your ideas are welcome! Submit stories and topics for future publication issues by emailing news@coopfe.com.



125 Years Strong: Building on Tradition

A MESSAGE FROM ROB JACOBS, CEO.



Rob Jacobs
CEO

As we experienced a planting season wetter than the past three years combined, it's an ideal moment to reflect and look ahead with anticipation. These conditions highlight the unpredictability of agriculture and the resilience and adaptability of our farmers. This year holds special significance for our cooperative as we celebrate nearly a decade of achievements since CFE's inception in 2015, while also honoring 125 years of rich cooperative history within our territory.

I hope reflecting on the past nine years fills you with pride. Our cooperative has grown stronger thanks to the commitment of you all. We've weathered challenges and capitalized on opportunities, always guided by our core principles: operational excellence, accountability, employee engagement and financial security.

I hope reflecting on the past nine years fills you with pride. Our cooperative has grown stronger thanks to the commitment of you all.

This year is a milestone as we celebrate our 125-year history. CFE's legacy spans back to 1899, encompassing not only the three original legacy cooperatives but also those that preceded them. We're excited to celebrate with a special event on Saturday, June 29, from 1:00-10:00 pm at the Lyon County Fairgrounds in Rock Rapids. This celebration will bring us together to share

stories and honor our shared history. For more details, **see page 15.**

In addition to this event, we are compiling a commemorative history book that captures the stories, history, and people of CFE. This memento book, available at our 2024 annual meeting, will be a testament to the enduring spirit and contributions of everyone who has been part of CFE.

Your board of directors and senior leadership are committed to evaluating our past and planning our future with our core principles as our guide. The confidence we have in our cooperative's future is rooted in our strong strategic direction and the dedication of our members, employees and communities we serve.

As we reflect on our history and look forward to the future, let's celebrate our achievements and embrace the opportunities ahead. Thank you to our employees for your hard work and loyalty and to our members and customers for your continued trust and business.

Here's to another 125 years of working together to continue to build and grow your cooperative, CFE.

Rob Jacobs

EMPOWERING *Your Cooperative*

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF NOMINATING BOARD MEMBERS.

As the crop season unfolds, so does the start of another process: the nomination and election of board members for our cooperative. At the heart of this democratic process lies the opportunity for each member to help shape the future of CFE, ensuring their voices are heard and their interests are represented. Our member-elected board of directors plays a pivotal role in steering the course through investing their time and effort in advancing the interests of our cooperative and its members.

The make up of our board reflects the diversity of our membership, with representatives from various areas of our territory and various backgrounds in the industry. This ensures that decision-making is inclusive and equitable, with each member bringing different perspectives to the table.

Decisions are not made overnight; the board thoroughly deliberates and plans to ensure members are receiving the most value from the cooperative. Board members give us a greater understanding of the needs of members and the impact such decisions will have.

Nominations are a significant part of empowering cooperatives, giving members the freedom to express choice in leadership and giving the existing directors an idea of who will align with the cooperative's values and objectives. The nomination and election process is not merely a right, but a responsibility as this process has shaped the entire cooperative system for decades.

Although elections do not occur until the fall, now is the time to start

considering nominations. To qualify as a potential board member, you must possess a good business mindset, commit time for board meetings and actively support the cooperative with your business through a Class A membership. If you are interested in being on the nominating committee or board, fill out the form on our website by scanning the QR code below and we'll be in touch.

In the coming year, let us continue to work hand in hand, fostering collaboration and driving innovation. By actively participating in the nomination and election of our board members, we proudly display our commitment to the principles of democracy and collective stewardship. Together, we can build a brighter, more prosperous future for CFE. <<

MAXIMIZING
**CROP
YIELD**

THE IMPORTANCE
OF SUMMER CROP
SCOUTING.

WITH DAREN MUELLER

*Professor & Extension Plant Pathologist
Iowa State University*



Daren Mueller is a professor and extension plant pathologist at Iowa State University. He is also the coordinator of the Iowa State Integrated Pest Management program. His main research interests involve understanding the biology and management of field crop diseases. Daren is also a co-director of the North Central IPM Center and the Crop Protection Network.

Scouting during the early season can identify weeds and other problems; its significance during the mid-to-late summer cannot be overlooked. During this phase, crop scouting becomes a proactive tool, guiding farmers through management decisions later in the season. Here's why diligent mid-to-late summer scouting is essential:

IDENTIFYING LATE-SEASON MANAGEMENT NEEDS

Late summer scouting provides farmers a crucial opportunity to assess the health and development of their crops. Farmers gain an advantage by closely monitoring their fields for signs of plant stress, disease or insect pests. This allows for timely intervention with informed management strategies. One example would be the build-up of foliar diseases during a crop's reproductive growth stages. Farmers need to consider the crop stage and severity of the disease. Still, when conditions are right for disease development, a late-season fungicide application may protect yield and help crop standability and seed quality. Scouting may also influence the harvest timing for particular fields if certain diseases, such as corn stalk or ear rots, are prevalent.

IDENTIFYING PROBLEM AREAS

Summer scouting empowers farmers to pinpoint problem areas within their fields and tailor management strategies accordingly. Whether it's the detection of nutrient deficiencies, compaction issues or other abiotic problems, such as too much or too little water, timely scouting enables precision management strategies. As precision technology continues to improve, problem area detection will be increasingly important.

INFORMING FUTURE DECISION-MAKING

Beyond its immediate benefits, summer crop scouting provides a knowledge base for agricultural planning. Farmers gain valuable insights into the performance of different crop varieties, hybrids and management practices by documenting observations and trends over successive seasons. For instance, identifying recurring disease or insect pressures in specific fields can influence future variety/hybrid selection or purchasing appropriate pesticides to use in coming years. It may also affect crop management practices in future years. For instance, if

scouting reveals the presence of diseases like sudden death syndrome, farmers may opt to prioritize planting specific fields later than non-problematic fields to reduce risks. They may also select particular seed treatments depending on the problems identified.

In agriculture, crop scouting is a process of observation, analysis and intervention. Its significance transcends the immediate growing season, exerting a lasting impact on agricultural outcomes. Scouting serves as a reliable source of information, steering agricultural practices toward productivity and sustainability. An excellent resource for field crop scouting is the Crop Protection Network, where several field crop scouting resources are freely available.

Scan the QR code to visit Crop Protection Network's website and view their resources, including a Crop Scouting Basics e-book, a collection of Crop Scout School webinars, a disease severity and insect defoliation training tool and much more. <<



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TO JOIN?**

Scan here to fill out
an interest form
on our website.



We're for the farmer.

Helping you navigate sustainability and enhance the full potential of your farm.

At Truterra, making sure your land, practices and investments are working for you is the most important work we do. It's why we meet you where you're at – field by field – so we can provide the best expertise, tools and solutions, helping you achieve the agronomic, economic and environmental benefits you need to prosper. **Together, we cultivate tomorrow.**

LEARN MORE ABOUT TRUTERRA'S SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAMS AND PRE-ENROLL TODAY.



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ASK JIM

FARM CHEMICAL SAFETY—PRECAUTIONS ARE A MUST!

Crop protection products are used to control weeds, insects and plant diseases. When used properly and according to directions, these chemicals are an important and safe part of crop production. In this issue, we address questions about safe practices for handling chemicals.

By: Jim Jensen, CFE Director of Risk & Safety



Now that our two children are older, as a wife, I'm helping more with farming. One of the things that makes me nervous is the use of farm chemicals. What precautions should we take to keep everyone safe on our farm?

JIM SAYS: It is understandable to be nervous around farm chemicals, but with attentiveness to safety practices, you can keep yourself and your family free from harm.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): Human exposure to dangerous chemicals can occur by swallowing, inhalation, skin exposure or eye exposure. Labels and safety data sheets will list recommended PPE for the products. At a minimum, chemical gloves are a priority. They should extend further than the wrist. It is useful to fold the cuff back to prevent liquid from flowing onto the arm. The fold also makes it easier to take on and off. Face shields, safety glasses or goggles are

typically on the recommended list. Long pants and work boots should also be worn.

Mixing Site: Whether chemicals are mixed in the field or on the yard, it is important to keep the site safe and secure. Shut off all valves when you are not actively mixing products. Have a receptacle to store empty bags and jugs (after they have been triple-rinsed). Remind young kids that this is not a play area. If you are using a tender trailer, make sure the load is secure. A lot of chemical spills occur because of inadequate load securement. There should be two 2" straps on each pallet or shuttle. Jugs and bags should also be tied down or inside a barrier. Make sure you have a supply of clean water at the mixing site.

Container Labeling and Information: Keep products in their original containers if possible. If you must transfer to another, make sure the new jug is properly labeled. Mislabelled containers have a high potential of causing future problems, including accidental poisoning or crop damage.

Sometimes we need more information about the products we are using. The first resource is the product label. It lists product uses, application techniques, recommended rates, PPE recommendations and necessary additives. In addition, the Safety Data Sheet is an extensive document that details, among other things, hazard identification, first aid and firefighting measures, chemical properties and transport information. This can be found by searching the internet for the product's SDS. The last and best resource is your CFE agronomist.

Kids Safety: According to "Farm Safety for Just Kids," poison control centers handle over two million calls each year, most of them for children under six years of age. Here are some ideas to help keep kids safe on the farm:

- Seal all containers and valves when not being used.
- Make sure they know the chemical mixing area is off-limits.
- Store chemicals in a secure area.
- Dispose of all chemicals and containers properly. <<

THE NEW Dinner Table

HOW CONSUMERS INFLUENCE GRAIN AND LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION.

With the rise of Proposition 12 and additional legislation surrounding agricultural production practices, the influence of consumer trends and preferences on livestock and grain production has become clearer than ever. Many people in the Midwest and other peak agricultural regions have an understanding of farming practices and the reasoning behind each action a producer takes on their operation—whether choosing how many animals to house in one barn or if an insecticide application may be necessary in a corn field. However, there is still a much larger percentage of the population that does not have a background in agriculture or know why such actions are taken. The preferences of this demographic have shifted the way farmers produce the world's food, fuel and fiber.

Local First

The sudden, drastic shift in the marketplace during the COVID-19 pandemic marked a turning point for countless elements of everyday life—one of which being how people source their food. During this time, many consumers expressed a heightened interest in locally grown meat and produce. A recent Statista survey found that 33% of Americans between the ages of 18 and 29 prefer buying locally grown food products, along with

42% of Americans between the ages of 50 and 64.

The ability to know where their food came from and how it was produced, combined with the opportunity to support a local business or family, drove this shift in consumer preference. Livestock producers have met this demand by offering more private meat sales, having a steer butchered locally and sold in quarters or halves to their fellow community members rather than delivering the cattle to a major packer for nationwide or even global distribution.

Today, more and more consumers prefer to seek out and support local meat providers rather than massive packer corporations. Producers can capitalize on this opportunity to reach consumers in a new way, while also seeing increased profits in return. Price per pound when selling in quarters, halves or one to two whole head of cattle or hogs is much higher than price per pound when selling hundreds of animals at a time. However, sales are not guaranteed, and fewer quantities will be sold at a time. This means a complete shift in your livestock marketing strategy is not necessary, but sharing your offerings locally first may be worth considering. Direct-to-consumer sales give you the opportunity to see an increased return on investment for your

livestock and serve the preferences of consumers at the same time. Farmers can advertise their meat offerings through local newspaper advertisements, social media, farmer's markets, e-commerce websites and more.

Healthy Habits

Another one of the most notable trends impacting modern production agriculture is the growing emphasis on health and nutrition. Many of today's consumers are increasingly conscious of the nutritional content of their food, seeking out grains that offer not only sustenance but also health benefits. This has led to a surge in demand for whole grains,

ancient grains and gluten-free alternatives. According to Bestion Research, the ancient grains market is anticipated to grow by 13.4% annually from 2024 to 2031.

Additionally, there is a growing market for functional foods, which are products fortified with additional nutrients or health-promoting ingredients. Grain farmers may consider exploring more niche crops, such as pulses like common beans, chickpeas, lentils and pseudo-cereals like quinoa and amaranth, to take advantage of this evolving market.

Along with concerns about their personal health, consumers are also increasingly concerned about the health of the planet and the other

creatures within it. Practices such as organic farming, regenerative agriculture and carbon-conscious farming support consumers' protection of the environment. Producers may reconsider not only which crops they are growing, but how they are growing them.

An enlarged focus on sustainability has also led to fears about how agriculture is impacting the environment and how well livestock are cared for. In recent years, we have seen this play out through national legislature, as representatives debate factors from the impact of methane emissions from cattle to the space needed in a gestation crate. These

concerns demonstrate the knowledge gap between those in deeply involved production agriculture and those with no ties to the industry. Regardless, farmers have reached a turning point where they must choose to meet the demands of the consumer or risk being left behind.

With shifts occurring in both agriculture and consumer tastes, producers can choose to view these changes as opportunities or obstacles. By embracing diversification, innovation and technology, farmers and producers can position themselves to capitalize on emerging trends and seize new opportunities in the ever-evolving market. <<





SYDNEE KAMMRAD
WEST LYON HIGH SCHOOL



JORDAN VAN DE STROET
CANTON HIGH SCHOOL



ABIGAIL OTTO
HARTLEY-MELVIN-SANBORN



ISABEL THIER
ADRIAN HIGH SCHOOL



GABE SCHULTE
CENTRAL LYON HIGH SCHOOL



TREVOR DIEREN
CENTRAL LYON HIGH SCHOOL

TOMORROW'S LEADERS

MEET THE CFE SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS.

CFE firmly believes that today's students are tomorrow's leaders, which is why we pride ourselves on supporting youth. Our scholarship program recognizes graduating high school seniors, whose parents are class A or B members of CFE, who intend on majoring in an

agriculture-related field at a college, university or technical school. The selection process is performed by an internal committee based on a written application submitted by the student. The committee will evaluate applications based on leadership, character and

community involvement. CFE supports students who have a passion for agriculture, a desire to attain their educational goals and are driven to succeed to their fullest ability. Check out our youth programs for next year's application information.

Here the sun will rise, and here the sun will fall.
And now you realize there is nowhere else
you'd rather be, nowhere else at all.
You grew up going through the seasons, on your beloved home on the range.
But you now realize something you didn't before,
that you yourself are the change.

We are blessed to experience pure nature
A healthy calf is born as we observe
I cherish the moment knowing
my time won't always be spent here
I hope someday to come back to this moment
To share it with the next generation.

AGRICULTURE IS THE LIFE
GROWING CROPS
RAISING ANIMALS
INTERPRETING THE MARKET
CHECKING THE WEATHER
UNDERSTANDING THE UPS &
DOWNS LEADING WITH
TECHNOLOGY
TELLING YOUR STORY
UTILIZING GRAIN STORAGE
RIDING IN THE COMBINE
EMBRACING CHANGE

FROM DAWN TIL DUSK, I WORK EACH DAY,
ALWAYS TRYING TO FIND MY WAY.
AGRICULTURE IS MY SPACE,
I HOPE TO STAY IN THE RACE.

Agriculture is the backbone of our land,
Growing crops and raising livestock, all by hand.
Rural life is centered around this trade, and
It is a way of life that will never fade.
Culture and tradition passed on for years,
Until the end of time, agriculture perseveres.
Let's honor the farmers who work the land,
Teaching us to live off the earth, with nature at hand.
Under the sun and the rain, they toil with care,
Reaping what they sow, with hope and prayer.
Eternally grateful for all they do, supporting our families,
and our country too.

FRESHENING UP THE APPLICATION

CFE has followed the same application process year-over-year, but we decided to challenge the applicants this year. We added to the application a bonus question of, "Compose a poem, song or short story that captures your passion for agriculture in a creative way." Needless to say, the answers were great, filled with wisdom well beyond their years. Check out a few of the best below, and keep an eye out for your future student on updates to the application process in the future. <<

Sunlight streams,
I find joy, in farming dreams.
With dirt beneath & rain above,
I plant my crops with love.
I tend to them with love & care,
I'm always there.
For in the fields we plant the rows,
We watch & pray that they grow.

FARMING FOR THE FUTURE

THE DIRECTION OF SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE.

As agriculture continues to evolve, row crop farmers and livestock producers find themselves at a turning point.

With increasing environmental concerns and shifting consumer preferences, the move towards sustainable practices is pressing. Conservation, diversification and innovation, along with carbon initiatives, offer a path forward.

EMBRACING CONSERVATION

One of the primary avenues toward agricultural sustainability is the adoption of conservation practices. Conservation tillage, cover crops and nutrient management can help mitigate soil erosion, improve soil health and reduce nutrient runoff. After a longtime focus on maximizing soil and crop nutrient levels with multiple in-season product applications, production agriculture has now shifted to a more conservative approach, aiming to minimize the need for extra nutrient applications, focusing

instead on soil microbes naturally providing sufficient plant nutrients. For corn and soybean farmers, implementing these practices not only has positive environmental impacts but also enhances the resilience of their operations against extreme weather events, such as heavy rainfall and droughts.

Similarly, cattle ranchers can play a significant role in conservation efforts by implementing rotational grazing systems and managing manure effectively, among other practices. These strategies benefit the environment by protecting water quality and biodiversity while also contributing to ranch productivity and profitability by optimizing forage utilization and reducing input costs.

HARNESSING TECHNOLOGY

Technology offers a variety of opportunities for improving the sustainability of agricultural practices. Precision agriculture

tools, such as GPS-guided equipment, drones and data analytics software, empower farmers and ranchers to make informed decisions tailored to the specific needs of their fields and pastures. By precisely targeting inputs, such as fertilizers and pesticides, farmers can minimize waste, increase efficiency and reduce their environmental footprint. Rather than applying a nutrient to an entire field, farmers can identify certain areas lacking in nutrition and apply fertilizer specifically to those areas.

As the industry pursues sustainability, farmers can use these tools to minimize input and maximize output. For instance, leveraging biologicals is a great way to create self-sustaining microbiomes in the soil. Farmers can enhance nutrient efficiency where the soil can capture and convert available nutrients, reducing the need for additional resources and lowering the risk of nutrient runoff.

DIVERSIFYING YOUR OPERATION

For farmers, sustainability isn't just about preserving the environment—it's also about ensuring the long-term viability of your operations. By diversifying your crop and livestock systems, farmers not only become more resilient to market uncertainties and changing industry dynamics, but they also become more self-reliant in the process.

Diversification can have numerous benefits, including improved soil fertility and added revenue streams. For corn and soybean farmers, diversifying crop rotations with small grains, legumes or forage crops can help break pest cycles, improve soil structure and reduce the need for additional product applications.

Similarly, integrating livestock, such as grazing cover crops or incorporating manure as organic fertilizer, can further enhance the sustainability of cropping systems while providing additional income opportunities. For instance, cattle owners that graze stalks post-harvest can reduce waste, contribute natural fertilizer to the field and reduce feed costs for their livestock.

THE ROLE OF CARBON

Carbon can be a vital player in the quest for sustainability. Carbon credits in agriculture and the emergence of carbon scores as metrics to measure environmental impact have incentivized sustainable practices. The adoption of advanced technologies and management practices, such as precision agriculture and nutrient management, can optimize input use, reduce emissions from fertilizer application and enhance the efficiency of carbon capture by crops and vegetation. By quantifying carbon sequestration and emission reductions, farmers can generate carbon credits, which are then sold on carbon markets to offset emissions from businesses and individuals.

By partnering with carbon offset providers like TruCarbon™ by Truterra, farmers can quantify the carbon sequestered through these practices and monetize it as carbon credits. Truterra's Insights Engine empowers farmers to estimate the potential change in soil carbon levels resulting from specific practices, offering valuable insights into the credits they can earn. Farmers have a tangible incentive to adopt regenerative, sustainable agriculture systems.

This is not only a financially rewarding program, but it also ensures the family farm can sustain the next generation.

Beyond carbon credits, the emergence of carbon scores offers consumers transparent information to make sustainable choices. Carbon scores essentially track the carbon outcomes of production. This is a market-differentiating practice that farmers and ranchers can capitalize on. For farmers and food companies, carbon scores represent both a challenge and an opportunity. While they may face pressure to reduce emissions and improve environmental performance, they can also leverage carbon scores to make their products more appealing to an environmentally-conscious consumer.

The future of sustainable agriculture hinges on embracing conservation practices, harnessing technology for precision agriculture, diversifying crop and livestock systems and engaging in market differentiation and value-add opportunities. An approach that integrates environmentally conscious practices with economic viability is key for farmers and ranchers to thrive and secure the longevity of their operation. <<

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ALLENDORF
ALVORD
ASHTON
BIGELOW
DOON
GEORGE

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GERMANTOWN
HARRIS
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HAWARDEN
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LARCHWOOD
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OCHeyedan
ROCK RAPIDS
ROCK VALLEY
RUSHMORE
SIBLEY



2024

SPRING BUSHEL BOUNTY

FOR EVERY

8,000

BUSHELS OF

CORN

RECEIVE A

\$0.05 PREMIUM
PER BUSHEL

FOR EVERY

4,000

BUSHELS OF

SOYBEANS

RECEIVE A

\$0.12 PREMIUM
PER BUSHEL

To Apply Towards Your 2025 Seed Purchase!

>> **SCAN CODE TO LEARN MORE** >>

To qualify: For every 8,000 bushels of Corn or 4,000 bushels of Soybeans sold, you must purchase a minimum of 40 acres (16 bags of Corn or 40 bags of Soybeans) worth of seed.



A LEGACY OF SUCCESS

COMMUNITY FOCUS <<



LET'S CELEBRATE TOGETHER!

Saturday, June 29 | 1:00 - 10:00 pm

With a legacy dating back to 1899, we have a lot to celebrate as we embark on our 125th year!

**LYON COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS,
ROCK RAPIDS, IOWA**

Join us for a day of celebration on Saturday, June 29 from 1:00 - 10:00 pm at the Lyon County Fairgrounds in Rock Rapids, where we'll commemorate CFE's 125th anniversary with live music from local artists, fireworks, inflatables for the kids and games for all ages.

This is a FREE event and is open to the public!

For more information regarding this event, follow CFE's Facebook page. <<



To learn more about the anniversary and how CFE is celebrating this milestone, scan here.

HONORING THE PAST

TO SHAPE OUR FUTURE

STORIES FROM
A LIFELONG
COOPERATIVE
CAREER.



When Clarence “Click” Hellinga walked into the Ocheyedan elevator in 1961, little did he know he was opening the door to a lifelong career. From his first day where he scooped coal out of hopper cars to his last day in 1993 spent running the facility as general manager, Click, while he may not have realized it in the moment, left a lasting legacy with the cooperative.

Rob Jacobs sat down with Click, now 92 years old, to hear some

of his most memorable moments and lessons learned over the years, from one cooperative manager to another. Understanding the storied history of one of CFE’s legacy cooperatives, CEA, allows all of us to learn from our successes and losses over the years, building a stronger future for the cooperative and our members. Read a few of Click’s most

memorable moments, and watch for more to come in the upcoming CFE History Book, releasing at this year’s CFE Annual Meeting. <<

WANT TO SHARE YOUR CFE HISTORY?



Scan the QR code to tell us your stories and send in your photos you’ve collected through the years.

COAL: BACKBONE OF EARLY ELEVATORS

“Besides agronomy, grain and lumber, another thing the elevator had going while I was there was coal. We had briquettes, lump coal, egg coal, stoker coal—we had all of them. That was brought in by railroad. We had guys a long distance away—Spencer, Rock Rapids, Lakefield—come to Ocheyedan to get stoker coal. There were even a couple of guys from north of Worthington [MN] that came down.”



Ocheyedan Grain Bin

COMMUNITY: MORE THAN A COOPERATIVE

“I tell you what, the elevator in Ocheyedan has done a lot for the town and for the people that are working there. It [Managing the co-op] was a very good experience, and I didn’t have the technology or equipment they have now, but I was happy with what we had. I don’t know what the town of Ocheyedan would’ve been like if it didn’t have the elevator business—that’s the truth.”



Ocheyedan Grain Bin
Polaroid Circa 1916.

CAPITAL: SOLID FINANCIAL PROGRESS

“When I left, we [CEA] had no long term debt, we didn’t have any short term debt, and we had over \$1 million in the bank. When I took over, there was \$2 million in long term debt on that east elevator. I never borrowed any money, I paid off the existing debt every time it came due, and I had it all paid off when I retired.”



Click Hellinga at his desk.

Ocheyedon Coop Elevator has banner 1991-92 years

By Ray Miller
It was a very good year for the Ocheyedon Cooperative Elevator. The banner year was up from last year, and the elevator was a banner year for the cooperative. The banner year was up from last year, and the elevator was a banner year for the cooperative. The banner year was up from last year, and the elevator was a banner year for the cooperative.

Hellinga to resign from CEA effective November 1

After serving 32 years with the Ocheyedon Cooperative Elevator Association, Manager Clarence Hellinga announced his resignation to the membership during Saturday's annual meeting. The resignation is effective November 1, six months into the cooperative's fiscal year.

Retiring Hellinga closes books on successful career

Clarence "Click" Hellinga closed the elevator's books on a successful career. The elevator man took a job in the field of the Ocheyedon Cooperative Elevator Association in September, 1961. That week, after 10 years and one month as general manager, Hellinga will retire.

THE AMBIGUOUS Cost of Lumber

UNVEILING THE TRUE EXPENSES OF CONSTRUCTION.

While the U.S. imports around 80 percent of softwoods from Canada, we did not see what would seem like an obvious price hike in lumber. Actually, we saw the opposite. Which may leave you scratching your head on the principles of supply and demand. Lumber prices dropped, in fact, they fell by 10 percent in 2023.

“Events like wildfires usually don’t have as much of an impact on our lumber sources as you might think,” states Dave Helms, CFE VP of Lumber. “Lumber prices have mostly to do with supply and demand. When prices soared during the pandemic, it was from the complete breakdown in the supply chain, which every industry experienced. It unfortunately happened during a time when construction had a lot of momentum. And that’s why prices went so high—everyone wanted and needed lumber but were having a hard time getting it. Right now, lumber prices are actually very favorable.”

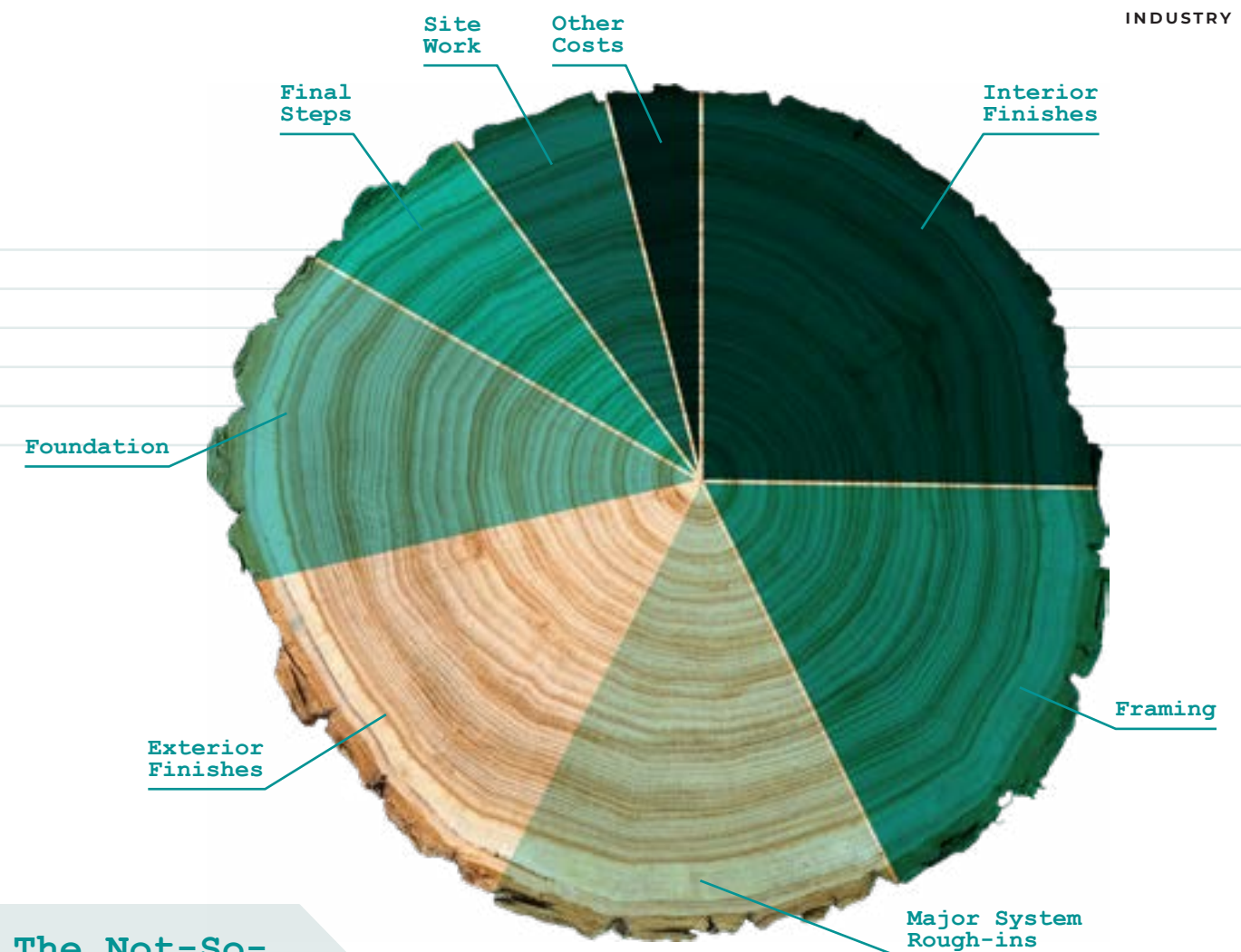
What’s not so favorable, as Dave shares, are high interest rates, which are bringing construction to a halt in some parts of the country. Dave

explains lower lumber prices now compared to a couple of years ago are outcomes of high interest rates slowing down new construction and the demand for lumber.

If natural disasters aren’t affecting lumber prices and thus construction costs, what does impact the price of new construction? As Dave explains, “Lumber is a raw material, and therefore a traded commodity. The price is going to fluctuate with supply and demand. It’s the building materials like roofing, metal siding, windows and doors—once those prices go up, they stay up.”

In the past four years, many of those building materials, like siding, have risen anywhere from 20 to 40 percent, and most will not go back down. While inflation seems to have put a damper on the construction industry as a whole, Dave shares that CFE Lumber hasn’t been hurt.

“We are fortunate to be in an area where building is still strong. Our partnerships with construction cooperatives allow us to mitigate fluctuating prices and ensure our customers get the best prices possible.” Dave continues, “However, we are looking forward to seeing lower interest rates to open things up a bit more. They say six percent interest is the magic number, so fingers crossed that happens soon.”



The Not-So-Obvious Costs

According to Forbes, on average, it costs \$214,040 to build a home in Iowa. This figure can rise up to over \$360,000 if you include land costs, excavations, permits and other expenses. The National Association of Home Builders estimates the actual cost of construction is around 75 to 80 percent of the total cost of a home build. As you plan your budget for a new build, don’t forget to include the following, as they can put a large dent in your investment:

Land Purchase - If you already own the land, you’ll be saving yourself a big expense that can be a large cost in a project.

Construction Site - Is it a ready-to-build site or does the land still need clearing? Do utilities such as water, sewer and electric need to be installed? Does the location

have easy access to supplies and resources? Will there be traveling costs to bring the appropriate workforce to the site? These are all factors to consider.

Site Work - These are the fees associated with building permits, inspection fees and any engineering plans, which can quickly add up to thousands of dollars.

Project Schedule - Adding time to the duration of a project will add costs. With this in mind, a strong project manager can make all the difference in keeping your build on schedule and within budget.

Quality of Plans & Specs - Poorly drawn plans or vague wording can inevitably cause confusion and mistakes, generating more costs.

Final Steps - Don’t forget about that curb appeal! Landscaping, driveways and outdoor structures such as porches and patios enhance the home.

Contingency - It is advisable to include at least a 10% contingency towards unforeseen costs in your building budget.

All these costs may seem overwhelming and daunting, but CFE is here for you. We work with many credible contractors that you can rely on. From drafting to estimating your costs and supplying materials, you can rely on CFE to help build your dream, within your budget. <<



Have You Heard? You Need to See!

If you haven’t swung through the cities of Hartley, George or Ocheyedan lately, it’s time for a road trip! Three CFE Lumber stores have recently undergone makeovers. Not only have they renewed their displays and product options, but they have also added a new product line: Milwaukee Tool, a leading manufacturer of heavy-duty power tools and outdoor equipment.

Come see our refreshed lumber stores today!



LEARN MORE

To read more and view referenced resources, scan this QR code.

CENTER STAGE

WITH CFE IN ASHTON

A HIGH LEVEL VIEW OF ONE OF CFE'S LOCATIONS.

Each of CFE's locations are unique, with varying services and facilities. However, one element is consistent across all: each location has great people who care about their members and the work they do. Here are some details about our Ashton location.



ASHTON

THE TEAM:

- Jordan Dammann, *Location Manager*
- 7 Full-Time Team Members
- 1 Part-Time Team Member
- 1 Agronomist

KEY SERVICES:

- Grain & Agronomy, including: liquid fertilizer plant with 24-hour pick-up

BEST KNOWN FOR:

This location is all about its connection to the Union Pacific railroad system. Depending on the year and yields, Ashton can load 110 rail cars with about 4,000 bushels per car within nine hours. That's around 440,000 bushels going out on rail at one time.

When a train comes in to load, it's all hands on deck. Whether it's a Sunday or a Monday, three o'clock in the morning, a holiday or snowing and blowing, if a train comes in for loading, the team at Ashton rallies together to get the work done. When the team is not loading grain out on rail, they are sending it out on truck to local feed mills and ethanol plants.

WHAT MAKES THEM SPECIAL:

"Teamwork makes the dream work..." "The team that works together, stays together..." There are many cliches about teamwork. All of them hold true when thinking about CFE's Ashton location.

Whether it's because of the essential teamwork needed when loading trains, truck or the longevity of employees, this group shows up for one another and cares about helping the location thrive. Loading trains has the potential to be hazardous, which means they need each to be on alert and watch each other's backs.

When not loading grain, the Ashton crew enjoys an infectious camaraderie. Perhaps it's because six of them have been working together for over 15 years. In fact, one co-worker retired after 47 years, only to come back to work part-time. If you're in the area, stop by and say hello, and you will understand what makes the Ashton team one you can count on. <<

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WEATHERING Summer

RECOGNIZING AND TREATING MUD AND HEAT STRESS IN CATTLE.

For farmers, the most concerning factors are usually the factors out of their control—such as weather. Inclement weather conditions are as significant for cattle as they are for corn, albeit in different ways.

Temperature changes cause similar impacts, as extreme heat puts both livestock and crops at risk for heat stress. However, moisture poses vastly different scenarios. As we head into a season with more predicted potential rainfall than we've seen in the past couple of years, mud and heat stress are important factors for livestock producers to keep in mind.

Misfortunes OF MUD

Mud is an ever-present obstacle, particularly after heavy rainfall or thawing snow. Mud can make feedlot conditions a mess as it is, where there is less vegetation to absorb water, compared to pastures. While it may seem like a minor annoyance, for cattle, mud can be a major problem, causing a range of issues from discomfort and lameness to more serious health complications.

When cattle trudge through muddy terrain, they expend more energy with each step, leading to fatigue and reduced feed intake. North Dakota State University Extension has found that as mud depth increases to between four to eight inches, feed intake can decrease up to 15%, and when mud is up to 24 inches, feed intake can plummet up to 30%.

Muddy conditions provide an ideal breeding ground for bacteria and pathogens, increasing the likelihood of infections and disease. Prolonged exposure to mud increases the risk of foot and hoof problems, such as abscesses and hoof rot, which can significantly impact cattle's mobility and overall health. Calves are especially susceptible, as they have increased direct contact to mud, including on their mother's udders.

Taking THE HEAT

As summer temperatures rise, heat stress emerges as an additional strain on cattle. Unlike humans, cattle cannot sweat very well, making internal body temperature regulation challenging in hot and humid conditions. Raised internal temperature can result

in a cascade of physiological responses, including elevated heart rate, respiratory distress and dehydration.

Heat stress not only compromises cattle welfare but also has economic implications for farmers. Reduced feed intake and diminished reproductive performance can lead to decreased milk production, weight loss and lower fertility rates, ultimately affecting the profitability of livestock operations.

An Oklahoma State University study is currently evaluating the impact of genetics on stress tolerance in cattle. This research will help producers understand how to select genetics that provide efficient growth without predisposing the animals to excess stress. Reducing stress throughout the cattle's lifespan, including stress from events such as weaning and moving across pastures, will help reduce the impacts of cumulative stress from other events that are more difficult, such as heat stress.

Time for ACTION

While mud and heat stress are persistent challenges, certain

conditions can escalate them from manageable inconveniences to life-threatening emergencies. High humidity heightens the impact of heat stress by impairing cattle's ability to eliminate heat through evaporative cooling. When coupled with inadequate ventilation and limited access to shade and water, this can quickly lead to heat exhaustion and heatstroke. Likewise, heavy rainfall or flooding can exacerbate mud-related problems, trapping cattle in waterlogged pastures or feedlots, exposing them to infections from bacteria that thrive in the excess moisture.

If cattle are noticeably restless or spending increased time standing, they may be experiencing symptoms of heat stress. Reduced feed intake is another important sign to watch for; cattle experiencing heat stress typically consume around half of their usual feed intake. Additionally, cattle may have increased respiration, excessive salivation or breathe with their mouth open and tongue protruding.

In these situations, quick action is key to protecting your livestock. You may need to provide supplemental shade and ventilation, bring in your local veterinarian for additional care or relocate your cattle to higher

ground. Misting or spraying cattle with water is a quick fix to help them cool down before these bigger steps can be taken.

No matter where the cattle are located, make sure plenty of water is available when temperatures are high. Water intake usually doubles during summer compared to cooler months, and the importance of hydration increases during exceptionally hot times.

Supplemental SUPPORT

Feed additives and supplements can also help cattle withstand challenging conditions. Electrolyte supplements are commonly used to replenish lost fluids and minerals during heat stress, helping maintain hydration and electrolyte balance. Cattle commonly lose sodium, potassium and magnesium through perspiration, and supplementing these minerals can help cattle maintain healthy levels through high heat. Additionally, feed additives such as probiotics and prebiotics can improve digestive health and nutrient absorption, mitigating the negative effects of muddy conditions on feed efficiency.

Besides changing your feed rations, adding water to dry rations can have dual benefits. First, the cool water is more appealing to cattle, increasing the likelihood of them consuming more feed during conditions where feed intake is significantly lower. Second, this helps the animals consume more water, which is especially important in combating heat stress.

Mud and heat stress are dangerous challenges for cattle producers, with implications ranging from decreased productivity to death, in severe circumstances. By understanding the factors contributing to these stressors, implementing proactive management strategies and leveraging the benefits of supplements and feed ingredients, farmers can protect their cattle and the productivity and profitability of their operations. <<





A Classic Comfort



In honor of CFE's 125th anniversary, we're sharing a blast from the past with this recipe from the first issue of The CFE Views. Enjoy this classic comfort meal from John and Rita Schmidt.

John and Rita Schmidt farm in partnership with John's brother and nephew, Doug and Kevin, near Ocheyedon. In addition to a corn and soybean operation, they raise a stock cow herd and have a cattle finish barn and hog barn.

Barbeques

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 lb. hamburger
- 1 cup celery, chopped
- 1 cup onion
- 2 Tbsp. green pepper
- ½ cup ketchup
- 1 can tomato soup
- ¼ tsp. garlic salt
- 1 tsp. sugar
- 1 tsp. salt

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Boil celery, onion and pepper in a little bit of water.
2. Brown and drain the hamburger.
3. Add celery mixture and other ingredients.
4. Simmer for 1/2 hour.
5. Serve on a bun with your desired toppings.

DON'T LOSE TO EVERYDAY STRESS

Everyday stressors from environmental or feed changes to handling and socialization can impact beef cattle's health and productivity. This stress can lead to reduced feed intake, fertility and productivity — just to name a few of its effects. **But it doesn't have to be this way.**

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References available upon request.

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