



Farmers Coop
ASSOCIATION

Forest City - Leland - Kiester - Buffalo Center - Winnebago

101 Years Saluting Agriculture Every Day!

► **FLAT LINED**

If the local rain gauge was hooked to an EKG heart monitor, the printed readout would show DOA when it comes to moisture since October 15! If it hadn't been for the early October rains, chances are the Winnebago River would not be flowing this winter. Without snow cover in December, the frost goes downward threatening water lines. According to a local pipeline supervisor, the ground temp at four feet was dropping and only at 40 degrees on December 20. Hopefully the recent snow cover will slow that down.

Yearly averages of moisture for our five locations were 30.9 inches for 2017, 44.3 inches for 2016, and 36.9 inches for 2015. The cool August helped crops make up for the lower rainfall this year still making good yields!

► **SUCCESSFUL START**

BY RANDY MAIN



As I reflect back on the first half of our fiscal year, I would be able to summarize it with one word, "successful."

Farmers Coop Association has grown fall fertilizer tonnage more than 15 percent. We are almost to our seed sales goals for the year with plenty more sales to come. Chemical sales have exploded due to our competitive pricing. Our ammonia sales doubled from last year and it looks like 32 percent sales will be huge.

This has come from the efforts of working with our manufacturers, our employees, and you, our customers. We especially want to thank you for trusting us to provide you with your needs.

As we move into the new year, we will start to work on our plans for spring. This will include making sure our applicators are certified in all of the new requirements for dicamba beans, making sure our equipment is ready to go, and making sure we are ready to provide you with anything you need.

We are here to serve you. If there is anything we can do to help, please call any of our sales people at any of our locations.

I wish you all a Happy New Year!

► **KEEP YOUR EYE ON STORED GRAIN**

BY KINGSLEY JOHNSON



The last couple months have been busy for all of us. The holidays have passed and we have moved on to preparing for our spring season, planning our crops and the inputs we will use. As we move forward I would encourage you to remember to check your stored grain.

At this time of year, you should check your bins every three to four weeks for crusting, moisture migration, and molds. As temps warm up in the spring, you should increase the interval for checking bins to every one to two weeks.

Be sure that as you aerated the bins you cooled the entire bin uniformly. The University of Minnesota recommends cooling grain to 25 degrees in the winter and keeping it below 50 in the summer. If your grain is not cooled enough you can get moisture migration caused by the air rising through the warmer grain in the centers. As the warm air comes in contact with the cooler air it will cause moisture to condense, leading to possible spoilage.

We have been getting some grain in that was wetter than expected. Now would be a good time to check your bins or pull centers if you have not already done so.

► **HARVEST HOPE**

The evidence of difficult times in agriculture were proven in the results of this fall's Harvest Hope donations. Gifting was dramatically down to less than half of normal years. The local Food Bank and gifting to help local children with school lunches were the main recipients. Hopefully next year will be better for all.

► **WE NEED A GYM**

"The sons and daughters of Iowa farms are worthy of better treatment. The current training shed with a dirt floor is a building many farmers would not put their hogs in. If the Iowa legislature sees to it that we get a gym, Iowa State College will establish a record that is enviable."

*Iowa State University Agriculturist Bob Rollefson
Memorabilia - February 1909*

► **JANUARY REMINDER**

Now is the time to get the best pricing on fertilizer and 2018 inputs. Fertilizer price discounts end January 8 and chemicals January 15. Purchase \$5000 of inputs and take your family out to eat with one of the \$50 gift certificates Farmers Coop Association is offering! One per customer, please!!

► **NUMBER ONE PEST**

Without a doubt, the number one pest challenging our soybeans is the soybean cyst nematode (SCN). Rotation of crops used to eliminate the food source but now research is showing nematode eggs can stay dormant for five or more years. When testing for nematodes the female index (FI) needs to be identified as it shows the aggressiveness of reproduction. The higher the index usually corresponds to the higher the yield loss. Our local soil tests show you shouldn't buy soybean seed that isn't resistant to SCN. Hopefully the future will see new products to put the pest out of existence in soybean fields.

FOREST CITY

Address: 406 East K Street
Phone: 641-585-2814 or
800-483-6832
Fax: 641-585-2052

LELAND FEED MILL

Address: 609 B Street
Phone: 641-567-3341 or
888-676-7439
Fax: 641-567-3380

LELAND GRAIN

Address: 222 West Broadway
Phone: 641-567-3010
Fax: 641-567-3012

KIESTER

Address: 100 West Front Street
Phone: 507-294-3697 or
877-294-3697
Fax: 507-294-3540
Agronomy: 507-294-3427

WINNEBAGO

Address: 601 6th Avenue SE
Phone: 507-893-4800
Fax: 507-893-4305

BUFFALO CENTER

Address: 6401 Highway 9
Phone: 641-561-2800
Fax: 641-561-2216

▶ DOWN AT THE CARDTROLS



When sliding cards into the reader, slide them in slowly as there is a door on the back of the reader that has to open. A little trick if it catches is to turn the card a little to the right. Thank you.

With the severe cold weather, #1 diesel is in short supply. Clear Lake went empty on December 27 then Des Moines on December 28 which caused us to go to Minneapolis to keep the diesels running. It causes extra freight charges and valuable time in lines waiting. Diesel prices will not be going down anytime soon.

Winners of free fuel are **Mary Hanna, Swanson Trucking, and Jerry Alphs** at Forest City and **Greg Flaskrude** at Kiester.

▶ TREADING WATER

Most farmers are sitting on a lot of unsold grain. January doesn't promise to be too exciting with some cycle lows coming late month. Farmers have raised big crops and the world knows it. They say there is little inflation but farmers buying parts and supplies this fall will disagree. One farmer was encouraged to buy that 2017 new combine because the exact 2018 model will cost only \$17,000 more!

NAFTA will be the first show down for Trump's new trade negotiations which have benefitted agriculture. If NAFTA is changed economists say the big three that could take a hit will be pork, corn, and soybeans in that order.

▶ LP SALES WILD!

Coming off a 55 percent rise in fall sales, Preston Alphs, our new LP driver, has not seen any let up in volume. Make sure you check your tank often even if you are on keep full basis with Farmers Coop Association. The brutal temperatures are keeping furnaces running overtime. Please give us plenty of notice as there will be extra charges to fill an empty tank if they aren't on the keep full list, as those many times happen after hours and weekends!

▶ HEADLINE NEWS

Pick up any farm weekly paper or magazine and you'll find Dicamba products in the news. Regulations have been changed and tightened in most states including more schooling, monitoring, spray date cut-offs, and being required to present a "restricted license" to purchase and apply. Restrictions and rules make Dicamba a safer product but also may limit the days to spray depending on the weather and wind.

▶ WAIT A MINUTE HERE

So Americans have been told to get their flu shots. About a month ago, before any major flu outbreaks, Americans were told the flu shots were only 10 percent viable. Hold on here! Now if a farmer bought seed corn and when he took delivery he found out that only 10 percent of the seed would grow, what would happen? Never mind – we know what would happen and it wouldn't be pretty.



▶ VITAMIN PRICES SKYROCKETING

BY MITCH THORSON



Hope all had a safe and happy holiday season. We have gone from fall into winter rather abruptly to say the least. Might as well get it over with, right?

The biggest news in the feed industry is the big spike of prices of vitamins. Raw vitamin A prices have risen from \$8 per pound to \$150 per pound. Vitamin E has increased six times from its low price last summer. All other vitamins are in short supply, so price increases have been observed.

The reason for these vitamin price increases involves several factors. The BASF citral plant explosion last month has fueled higher prices and DSM purchased a competitor's plant which removes competition in the vitamin market. Furthermore, continued pressure by the Chinese government to reduce pollution has exacerbated the short supply. With a bag of raw vitamins costing over \$8000, we might need to have them shipped in with an armored truck. What does this mean to you, our customers?

With these increases the cost to feed a beef cow for one year went up \$5 to \$10. The cost to raise a steer feeder to finish is up about \$2.50 per head. For finishing pigs, the increase is about 90 cents - not quite as bad as first thought. These ingredients are very low inclusion but they are very essential for reproduction, growth, and maintaining good health and immune system function. We will continue working with our suppliers diligently making sure we supply our customers with cost effective diets for their livestock. So if you have noticed that your last bag of feed was a little higher than the previous bag, the skyrocketing prices of vitamins has been the cause. We truly are in a global market.

We look forward continuing working with our customers in the upcoming New Year.



Photo Credit: United Soybean Board

▶ A LOOK BACK

	JANUARY 1, 2018	JANUARY 1, 2017
Corn	\$3.09	\$3.13
Beans	\$8.78	\$9.19
Pump Ethanol	\$2.29	\$2.25
Pump Diesel	\$2.23	\$2.03
28% Nitrogen	\$184	\$298
Home LP	\$1.36	\$1.04
MAP	\$470	\$513
Hogs	\$58.17	\$52.44
Cattle	\$122.35	\$117.74
Farmland/Acre	\$7194	\$7003

STOCK PRICES	JANUARY 1, 2018	JANUARY 1, 2017
Winnebago	\$55.60	\$31.65
John Deere	\$156.51	\$104.05
Hormel	\$36.39	\$34.81
3M	\$235.37	\$178.57