

From the Ground Up

AN AG PARTNERS PUBLICATION IN GRATITUDE OF OUR CUSTOMERS | WINTER 17



All Kinds of People.
One Common Goal.

Working
to be Your
**TRUSTED
ADVISOR.**

Finding Profitable
Solutions.



The Sundblad family generates power for their farm through a wind and solar system. pg 10.11

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Who's on Your Team?

Ag Partners' purpose is simple – Helping Producers Prosper. To this endeavor, Ag Partners focuses on five key values: Safety, High Integrity, Innovation, Results and Teamwork.

- **Safety** – Investing time and capital to train our employees and improve our facilities to reduce risks.
- **High Integrity** – Ag Partners' team members stand behind their commitment to our customers and each other.
- **Innovation** – Providing new and unique solutions to Iowa producers. You will see this through new grain marketing solutions, increased pelleting capacity, and improved recommendations for your fields.
- **Results** – Driving great customer service and improving the opportunities for our customers.
- **Teamwork** – Attracting and retaining a great team to deliver on our purpose.

“Ag Partners is committed to providing the expertise, innovation and service you require.”



troy upah

The Ag Partners' team performed superbly this fall. All efforts were very much in line with the purpose and values of Ag Partners. The team's efforts with grain receipts, fall fertilizer application, on-time fuel delivery and even piling grain outside align well with our service goals. We realize not everyone made the same commitment this fall. In today's ag industry, it is critical that you have the right team supporting your operation. Ag Partners is committed to providing the expertise, innovation and service you require. We understand the role you expect us to play. We must provide the key components needed in your business around agronomic recommendations, grain marketing solutions, energy supplies and the potential for other income opportunities from increased feed demand.

Look for more announcements this winter and spring as we increase our commitment to our customers and Iowa through additional industry partnerships and vital facility investments. One area we'll work on is reducing the costs and risks of grain piles to ensure we're meeting your long-term needs. Thank you for continuing to choose Ag Partners as a key part of your farming operation's team!

Ag Partners Acknowledged as Leader in Precision Ag

Ag Partners was named the 2016 Crop Adviser/Entrepreneur of the Year by the PrecisionAg Institute. This prestigious award, now in its tenth year, recognizes outstanding people, programs and organizations that make a difference in the precision ag industry through its PrecisionAg Awards of Excellence. Each year's winners have devoted their careers to the technology that improves crop production stewardship, agronomy and efficiency.

“Our agronomy and precision ag departments offer very unique and innovative solutions that provide increased customer profitability. We are extremely honored to receive this award, and look forward to further innovation in precision ag to help our customers.”

-Troy Upah • Ag Partners CEO

We were honored for being an innovator through our InSiteCDM program, as well as our leadership in the precision ag arena through partnerships and a forward-thinking approach. From information obtained from customer fields, our unique crop data management program helps producers make their operations more efficient and cost effective. Our IntelliCore Nutrient Management System combines intensive and repeatable grid soil sampling by our crop advisers and soil analysis from a certified laboratory. We believe measuring soil fertility levels

is a smart, first step in any crop system and is vital to helping producers maximize yields and nutrient efficiency. A leader in the industry, Ag Partners started variable rate fertilizer application and crop protection more than 20 years ago, making us one of the first to provide this practice in the area.

Four members of the Precision Ag team were proud to accept the award at the InfoAg Conference this past summer in St. Louis, Missouri. Attending were – Tyler Jorgensen, Clint Sires, Stacy Bellcock and Bruce Baier. Pictured here: / to r: Stacy Bellcock, Tyler Jorgensen, Clint Sires, Rhonda Burnside, Brett Peelen, Bruce Baier and Derek Haupt.



Precision Ag to Decision Ag

Whether you call it *Precision Ag*, *Site Specific Ag*, or *Farming by the Inch*, technology has changed how we farm starting with the first GPS systems. Since the first commercially available yield monitor was introduced by AgLeader in 1992, we have tried to make sense of the data collected by various monitors, sensors, and humans. Decisions from the information's analysis have led to innovation in management of inputs in order to increase profitability and yields.

The InSiteCDM program is a crop data management system that enables us to gather, analyze, and make decisions to improve yields and input efficiency. The members of this program met last February for the annual InSiteCDM Customer Forum in Sioux City. The forum's purpose is to review the results of the previous year's growing season and learn from industry experts. During breakout sessions on seed, management and fertility, we discussed the group findings and suggestions to improve profitability through increased yields and inputs management. Speakers from CNH, Winfield, DuPont/Pioneer, Monsanto, John Deere, Agriculture Clean Water Alliance, and others have spoken on issues that will affect us now and into the future. Due to the program's success and value it brings, we have outgrown the facilities in Sioux City. This year's forum will be in Sioux Falls, South Dakota at a larger venue.

Along with hosting the forum, the Ag Partners Precision Ag team will focus on improving our green RX nitrogen prescriptions, analyzing infield research blocks, examining new imagery products, and continuing our crop management evaluations. We continue to make great strides on enhancing nutrient management, which partners with increasing yields through infield research.

Ag Partners' efforts through our InSite system of intensive soil sampling, variable rate applications, and site specific management recommendations help support sustainable practices. We completely endorse the Iowa Nutrient Reduction Strategy's objectives to reduce field run-off of nutrients into water resources. Even though much of the nitrogen in the water is from naturally occurring organic matter, we need to do a better job at identifying rates, products, and application timing to reduce the chances of what we apply affecting ground and surface water. Phosphorus loss, for the most part, comes from actual soil particle movement through erosion. In many cases this erosion can be prevented with reduced tillage, installation of waterways and buffer strips, and by adding water control structures. We also see where excessive phosphorus levels may even contribute to "soluble phosphorus" which can move into underground tile lines and flow directly into streams, rivers and eventually the Gulf of Mexico. Ag Partners wants to help us make a solid effort to look at our own operations to identify ways to preserve soils and slow water movement from our fields.

“ During our InSiteCDM forum, we host industry experts to discuss timely issues affecting all producers.”



bruce baier



Stay Focused on the Opportunity

An early view of the 2017 marketing year suggests a bearish picture, yet there is still room for healthy skepticism. After a controversial U.S. election, global markets remain unsettled. What happens to the dollar? Will the economy gain ground? How will our trade relationships hold up under this new regime? Some large-scale economic concerns influencing the market include South America's weather, Chinese soy demand, OPEC slashing oil production, and commodities overtaking stocks as a speculative safe haven.



“ Our goal is to work with you on a disciplined and diversified approach to grain marketing.”

Finding Profitable Solutions

Obviously the market presents many challenges and opportunities. From capturing those better price opportunities to managing downside risk, Ag Partners works with you to offer a variety of marketing tools. Below we list four different types of market offerings - ProPricing and the Pacer, Market and Premium Family of products. We believe every customer should have some form of diversified mix of these products. Have you taken advantage of advances in precision farming, GPS, N P & K and chemistry combinations for your operation? Then ask yourself if you have done the same when it comes to marketing your grain. Our hope is that you take a look at these diverse tools and ask your marketing service rep if any of them fit your farming operation. We believe we have solutions for all producers' marketing needs.

ProPricing. These contracts use market averages and experienced hedging experts to establish grain prices, relieving some of the pressure of marketing. The services of hedging experts can prove invaluable in a volatile market. ProPricing contracts offer automatic execution of chosen strategies, flexibility to choose delivery periods and timely performance updates.

Pacer Family. The market average should be the first consideration when marketing grain. Pacer allows you to select the averaging period you want and gives you the control to price out at any time. The choice is yours whether new crop or old, grain in the bin or in the field. **Pacer Ultra** provides you with a floor price at or above current market levels along with choosing the averaging period.

Market Family. Markets are constantly moving. **Focal Point** allows you to sell your grain and re-establish future price risk. Specifically, you establish an initial price on a selected futures month and then re-price at a later date, so you can participate in a potential futures price movement. **Minimum Price** allows you to choose a floor price, maintain upside and retain the control to price out at any time.

Premium Family. If you need to boost prices, **Premium Offer** pays you a premium for your grain above and beyond the cash price. This is done in exchange for a firm offer to sell additional grain for deferred delivery at an established price. With **Floor Plus**, you have the advantage of a floor price with the upside for a minimal investment when combined with a firm offer. If the market closes above your floor, you receive the entire “plus” improvement. This contract stands alone in its offering. **Daily Floor Plus** establishes future reference price by pricing an equal portion of your bushels every day during a specified pricing period at a “plus price” – usually above today's current market.

Ag Partners features these top-of-the line risk management products to help make the best sales decisions for your crop and bottom line. Contact your area marketing service representative for more information.

All Kinds of People : One Common Goal.

Pat Conway
32 years
Hartley area



" I like helping customers reach profitable levels on their production and being able to offer them alternative marketing plans for their crops."

Dennis Zeigler
12 years,
3 as MSR
Albert City area



" I enjoy the one-to-one contact with our producers. I want to find the best options when it comes to marketing their crops."

Tom Edwards
8 years
Royal & Sutherland areas



" I work to put together solutions for our Ag Partners customers; to help bring more value to their bottom line."

Jim Porter
10 years
Alta & Fonda areas



" I enjoy being able to offer effective solutions to help farmers reach their marketing goals."

Ken Van Donslear
43 years
Alton, Hospers & Maurice



" I appreciate the relationships I have with customers, especially the trust they put in me both in a business and personal sense. I enjoy giving helpful advice to the customer, and the relationship with other grain merchants."

Marty Wilson
4 years
Ellsworth area



" I take satisfaction in helping our customers reduce the amount of uncertainty in grain marketing and watching it pay off for them."

Jonathan Friedman
1 year
Hartley, Sheldon & Emmetsburg areas



" I enjoy helping customers put together a marketing plan and then seeing it come to fruition. There is no better feeling than knowing you've helped someone and they see the value in the service you've provided."

Jim Totten
26 years
Albert City area



" I want to help customers understand the market and develop a marketing plan that works for them."

The Evolution of Chemistry

Early in my career, I was told by my mentor that Mother Nature always finds a way to adapt. At the time I wasn't sure what this meant, but my opinion has changed over the last four years.

How many of you remember the advent of Roundup ready crops? This new product meant button weeds, sunflowers, and cocklebur didn't stand a chance against Roundup. While it was the beginning of an easier way to control weeds, it was also the front side of weed resistance, or Mother Nature adapting. Pre-emergent products were quickly replaced with a one-pass all-in-one contact killer. The \$40/acre grass control programs were replaced with a \$15/acre treatment that encompassed all weed species. Life was great ... or so we thought. Fast forward to today, the \$40/acre chemistry programs are back and not providing 100% control. Waterhemp resistance to glyphosate and reportedly PPO style chemistry are common topics at any chemistry meeting, and further proof that Mother Nature adapts.



mike conover

“I want to help set up your acres for the best chance of success.”

In my opinion, troublesome weeds are easier to control in corn crop vs soybean acres. Soybean acres present an entirely different growing environment; therefore we must manage the acre differently. I am not aware of any chemistry program that is 100% effective controlling tough-to-kill weeds. What I can speak to is how to set up your acres for the best chance of success.

Overlapping residuals is a common term used today, and rightfully so. We MUST overlap our chemical products to provide the most active ingredients continually throughout the growing season. The best chance for success is never having to deal with the weed. Approximately three weeks after your initial application of residual product, you need to be out there with another residual chemistry application. The key to this program is to continually treat the soil versus treating the plant. The life cycle of a waterhemp plant is different than most plant species. With waterhemp, there is a second flush of germinating plants in late May to early June when most residual products have lost their efficacy. Another tool that just gained EPA registration for the fight against waterhemp in soybeans is Xtend from Monsanto. Chris Klumpp addresses the Xtend system in this newsletter.

Palmer Amaranth was confirmed last summer in many Iowa counties. This weed is similar to waterhemp but grows at a much more aggressive pace. Early control is essential to managing this weed but early identification is challenging. Palmer is easier to identify as it begins to flower with its foliage more dense than waterhemp. Palmer has been reported to grow at a rate of 4" per day and have a stalk up to 4" in diameter or larger. This is a pest we don't want to get away from us, and Ag Partners' Sales Agronomists are ready to put plans together to help you maintain control of your acres.



Finally, I want to mention the consolidations taking place with the primary manufacturers. Dow/DuPont, Syngenta/Chem-China, and Monsanto/Bayer have all announced that they will merge their companies in some fashion. Time will tell how each of the new companies may look and what will be offered in terms of products. Rest assured, Ag Partners will be positioned with all companies to take full advantage of new and more effective products.

The Xtend Cropping System

My goal is to help clarify some of the confusion around the Xtend Cropping System for soybeans. It is important for you to know some of this information may change before the application season, so be sure to keep current if you intend to use the Xtend system in 2017.

Seed - The genetics available for 2017 are yielding very close to the RR2 products we're planting today. As an industry, we're somewhat limited on the genetic diversity and amount of agronomic characteristics we need for some fields. Be sure you can get the genetics that fit your agronomic needs before you try this system.

Dicamba Herbicides - The EPA will require only approved herbicides for this system. If you use any dicamba products not approved, you'll be 100% responsible for any off-target damage. The new herbicide will contain technology to significantly reduce the risk of off-target movement due to volatility. This is why you must use only approved dicamba herbicides designed for the Xtend system.

Spray Tips - The herbicide label will require spray tips that deliver ultra-coarse droplets. Today there is only one ultra-coarse spray tip approved, however we expect more tips to be added to the label before application season. If you plan to spray your own fields, you will most likely need to purchase a set of these new spray tips.

Tank Clean-Out - This will be important as you switch back to a non-dicamba application. The label will require a triple-rinse for all sprayers. Applicators using a sprayer with a poly tank will need to make sure they don't take short cuts as dicamba can get hung up in the tank itself.

Application Timing - This system is designed to be used early. For post-applied applications, the timing is up to and including R1 growth stage (beginning bloom). The label will say apply to weeds less than 4" tall. This will be very consistent with how we applied dicamba to corn back in the 1990s. This new system can offer up to 14 days of soil activity after application. I highly recommend adding another residual herbicide to the mix to get to crop canopy. You will need to check the label to find an approved tank mix herbicide.

Wind and Buffer Zones - The herbicide label will require all applications be made when the wind is more than 3 mph and less than 15 mph. If you apply in wind speeds outside the 3 -15 mph window, you're 100% responsible for any off-target damage. The label will state that you shouldn't apply the product when wind greater than 10 mph is blowing toward a non-target sensitive crop. When applied at the 22.0 once rate, a buffer zone of 110 feet will be required when you have a sensitive crop downwind from the applied field. Non-crop areas such as roads and ditches can be considered part of the buffer zone. The width of the buffer zone increases as the rate of herbicide increases, so be sure to check the label. For this first year, I would assume everything except corn to be sensitive crop.

In summary, this appears to be a great option if you are struggling to control Roundup-resistant waterhemp. I recommend it for fields where we've had issues controlling waterhemp in the past, along with overlapping residual herbicides. If you have any questions about this new system, contact your Ag Partners' Sales Agronomist.

“The Xtend system appears to be a great option for Roundup-resistant waterhemp.”



chris.klumpp



An Efficient Style OF FARMING

When you have passion for something, you find the time to work on it. To make it happen. That is exactly what Phil Sundblad did. Phil has not only run his farm operation but also pursued a strong interest in rural energy, notably renewable alternatives like wind and solar power.

In 1982, Phil began farming with his father Dean whom had been doing business with Alceco, prior to Ag Partners being formed in 1997. Phil and his wife Brenda have two sons, Luke and Craig, who help with the corn and soybean operation when they can. Luke is also an over-the-road trucker, and Craig attends Iowa Lakes Community College. The Sundblads have looked to Ag Partners through the years to help with all aspects of their farm – from seed and fertilizer to delivery of grain to Albert City. Starting with grid sampling in the 1990's, Phil has been more than willing to adopt technology with our precision ag services. The early stage of keeping field data with a yield monitor turned into auto-steer capabilities and variable rate planting. For the last six years, Phil has taken advantage of InSiteCDM to help make decisions based on his field data and pooled data from fields with similar characteristics.

Speaking to the importance of technology to help farmers be innovative, Phil looked at other resources for the future. He attended a couple of meetings by the Iowa Farm Bureau on wind energy. He was excited about the clean, green source and realized the potential financial benefit. Phil, along with 10 other producers in Northwest Iowa banded

together to look at putting wind turbines on their own farms. Crosswind Energy LLC was then formed. The group ended up leasing land in Palo Alto County and, in the summer of 2007, Crosswind's turbines were operational. Corn Belt Power Cooperative in Humboldt purchases all the power generated. Phil, President of Crosswind, and the original nine members will soon be celebrating 10 years of production from their energy farm.



Ten ag producers, including Phil Sundblad, formed their own company to construct a wind energy farm. The group will recognize the farm's 10th year of operation in June of 2017.



Pictured are Craig and Phil Sundblad.

The Sundblads have adopted this inventive system to generate electricity for their home farm, which also includes solar capability.

“As electricity prices continued to rise, it was just smart to have renewable energy alternatives like wind and solar power,” states Phil.

The system includes solar trackers that rotate and follow the sun and a 100-foot tall wind turbine. The entire system was

installed by a local company, Wind and Solar Specialist (WASS) out of Alta.

With what he has implemented thus far, it's obvious that eco-friendly solutions are important to Phil when it comes to modern agriculture and its sustainable nature. And it's not just about benefitting his farm. Because of the economics involved, projects like the Crosswind Energy farm lead the way for future possibilities which include the idea of creating alternative fuels. There is no sign of Phil's passion for rural energy and innovation slowing down. All of us in the industry look forward to what the future holds.

Today's Ag Trends

Agriculture Clean Water Alliance: As a founding member of the ACWA, Ag Partners is aware of our dual mission to help farmers improve agronomic performance in the field while supporting environmental performance beyond the field's edge. We work together toward that end.

The Raccoon and Des Moines Rivers play a role in drinking water sources, sport fisheries and paddling destinations, therefore, they are important indicator streams. Their course takes them through one of the world's most fertile agricultural regions. The Raccoon River is the primary water supply for Des Moines. Its watershed drains

land from 17 counties and 2.3 million acres, 6.4 percent of Iowa's total land area. Agriculture is dominant in the basin with over 80 percent of the land area in production. Since 1999, our agribusinesses consistently collect data along these waters. Neither we, nor our farmer customers, want the products intended for improving crops to instead end up in our local and downstream waters.



“Every day we ask ourselves, what do we need to do to help our customers prosper?”

brent low

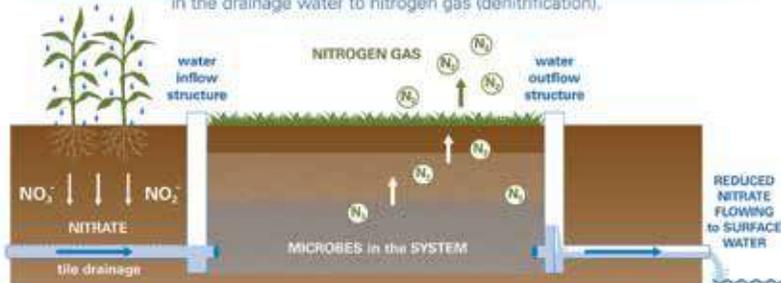
Thus was born the ACWA, a nonprofit organization funded by member dues based on a percentage of our annual nitrogen fertilizer sales. While monitoring remains ACWA's cornerstone, its mission now includes reducing nitrogen and

phosphorous loss from fields. This led to a partnership with the Sand County Foundation to demonstrate **bioreactors as an innovative practice to reduce nitrate transport from tile drainage**. The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has approved an interim standard for bioreactors as an eligible cost share project based in part on our demonstration. The ACWA monitoring data, collected and analyzed regularly for over a decade, has:

- Characterized conditions in upstream waters and identified geographic uniqueness.
- Shown the value of tailoring solutions to the issues and conditions in each watershed.
- Helped target projects and been valuable in obtaining resources for implementing remedial strategies.

What is a woodchip bioreactor?

Drainage water diverted through a buried trench filled with woodchips. Naturally occurring microbes use the wood chips as a carbon source and convert nitrate in the drainage water to nitrogen gas (denitrification).

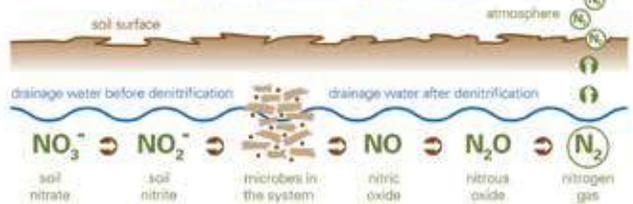


Reprinted with permission from Iowa State University Extension and Outreach.

Denitrification

Denitrification occurs when microbes living in the system use the woodchips as a carbon source to convert nitrate to nitrogen gas.

THE PROCESS: NITRATES to NITROGEN



Benefits of a woodchip bioreactor

- Nitrate removed through denitrification.
- Bioreactors placed at edge of field.
- Does not impact current land management practices.

Since 1999, ACWA members have invested more than \$1 million in water quality monitoring in the Raccoon and Des Moines Rivers and their tributaries. Over 10,000 samples were collected by more than 100 certified samplers. As well as commitment to ensuring Iowa's water quality, Ag Partners is committed to sustainable agriculture.

Sustainable Agriculture: "Sustainable agriculture" is legally defined as an integrated system of plant and animal production practices having a site-specific application that, over the long term, will:

- Satisfy human food and fiber needs.
- Enhance environmental quality and the natural resource base upon which agriculture depends.
- Make the most efficient use of nonrenewable and on-farm resources and integrate, where appropriate, natural biological cycles and controls.
- Sustain the economic viability of farm operations and enhance the quality of life for farmers and society

The basic goals of sustainable agriculture are environmental health, economic profitability, and social and economic equity. We are using technology and data to efficiently apply crop inputs, identify better management practices, and increase soil health which enables us to continue supplying a growing population.

Economics: Agriculture economics have changed, but what has become more evident is the world's demand for food continues to increase. Through our crop data management program, known as InSiteCDM we work with producers to economically capture the highest bushel potential on each gridded acre. Investments vary on each and every farm based on the farm's potential derived from a formulation developed between each grower and his advisor. Right investments on the right acre = maximized ROI on each acre.

Big Data: Big data is a term that describes the large volume of data – both structured and unstructured – that inundates a farmer on a day-to-day basis. But it's not the amount of data that's important. It's what farmers do with the data that matters. The marketplace is a buzz with data. Every company says it has a precision ag platform and/or software with proprietary algorithms that will make you more money. Ask the company how many years of experience it has in this space? The answer likely will be two-three years ... maybe. Then ask Ag Partners. Our answer - over 15 years analyzing and guiding farmers' decisions based on science, not marketing fanfare.

Consolidation: Economics are driving change throughout the whole industry. The challenge is: Who should we partner with that has the financial and intellectual capital to support our needs? Ag Partners has very strong affiliations with the three largest distributors, and all major manufactures in agriculture. Due to our size, and more importantly, our customer support, we get first-to-market offers. This allows us to provide unique products and services. We cannot stop consolidation, but Ag Partners has the staying power to be your partner of choice.

Trusted Advisor: While Ag Partners is not perfect, we wake up every day thinking, "what do we need to do to help our customers prosper?" Our sales agronomists work through the steps in the chart (figure 3) to make sure we exceed your needs. Each topic denoted has four-to-five sub-points that go into each recommendation made for our customers' operations. We strive each day to earn the right to do business with you!

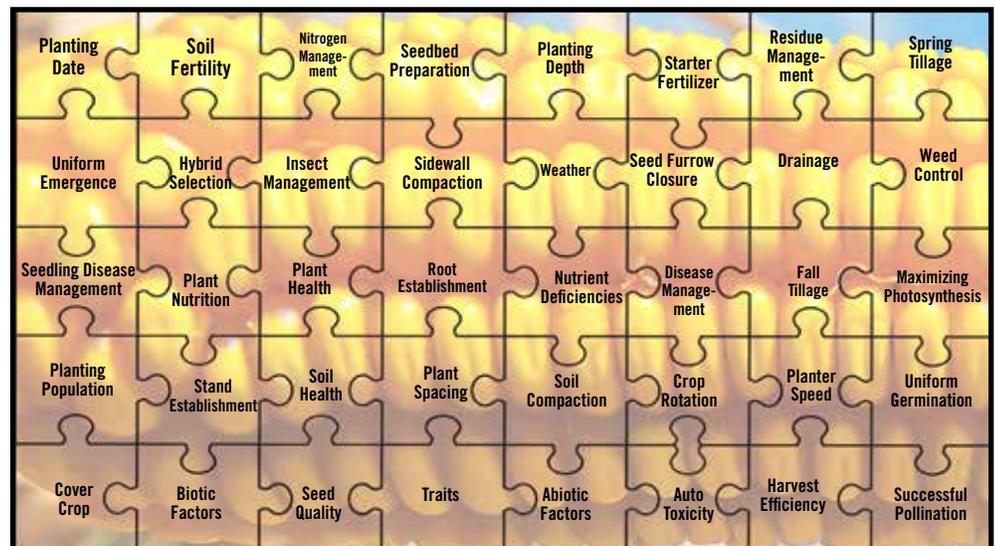


Figure 3

PAVING THE WAY WITH

Capital Improvements

Over the past several years, Ag Partners has spent considerable time and effort evaluating what changes we can make to better serve you. We have looked at our assets and proposed spending capital in strategic areas. Our company has approved investing in upgrades and, in some cases, new mills.

We recently completed a multi-million dollar expansion at our Sheldon location. This expansion gives us the capability of doubling our mash production with a new six-ton mixer. The new mixers are high speed and allow us to shorten our mix times to three minutes or less. This is a huge advantage for throughput. We also added a new pellet tower which can house two separate pellet lines. This addition features the latest technology in pelleting and allows us to use

various ingredients to lower feed costs. Along with a mixer and pellet mill, we added a new receiving bay which allows us to unload all ingredients, except corn, without restricting our loadout system. This addition improves our efficiency and helps us maximize our capacity.

Our Ellsworth location has added two new mills over the past six years. These two additional mills have allowed us to stay ahead of the feed demand in this area. Utilizing the latest technology and equipment has established us as the preferred partner in central Iowa. We have the capacity to manufacture over one-million ton at this location. To ensure the system can stay ahead of the mixer, there is over 2700 ton of ingredient storage. The mills include four pellet machines with the capacity of 180 ton per hour. Included

are two grinders and three roller mills that provide processed corn for either mash or pellets. There is over 2000 ton of finished feed loadout storage over two loadout bays with independent weigh systems.

We have prioritized upgrading or installing pellet capacity at our core locations. This is due to several advantages producers see in feeding pellets over mash feed. Recent studies have shown growth rate is increased by 6% and feed efficiency improved by 6-7% when feeding pellets rather than meal. When converted to dollars, this is substantial. Just the improved feed efficiency would result in \$4-\$5 per pig savings! In addition to performance benefits, there is intrinsic value associated to feeding pellets - better feed adjustment, space and flow, less feed waste, less pig sorting and the potential for greater energy due to available starch. You can understand why many in the industry want milling capacity that includes pelleting when you start adding up the benefits of pellet feed.

scott lovin



“Our Sheldon feed mill features the latest technology in pelleting.”



Pellet Feed vs Mash Feed

- Improved rate of gain with growth rate increase of at least 6%
- Feed efficiency improved by 6-7%
- Less feeder adjustment
- Less feed waste
- Less pig sorting
- Potential for greater energy due to available starch

Manure a Balancing Act

While manure is an excellent source of nutrients for your crops, there are several factors that should be considered when calculating the nutrient availability and manure’s value. Normally the crop’s nitrogen needs, crop rotation and yield history are used to calculate the rate of manure that can be applied to a field. The crops’ phosphorous (P) and potash (K) needs may, or may not, be met completely with the manure application. Below are the nutrients required for a 210 bushel/acre corn grain crop and a 65 bushel/acre soybean crop. The P and K removal rates are even higher if the residue is removed from the field. It’s important to make sure all of the crops’ nutrient needs are met when applying manure.

Crop Nutrient Removals for 210 bu/acre corn and 65 bu/acre soybeans (ISU PM 1688)

| | | | |
|---------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Corn – Grain Only | 241# N | 67# P | 46# K |
| Soybeans | | 47# P | 78# K |
| TOTAL | 241# N | 114# P | 124# K |
| Soybean Credit | -50# N | | |
| Grand Total Needed | 191# N | 114# P | 124# K |



The nutrient content of manure is variable from the top to the bottom. Things to consider when using manure:

- Is the manure analysis a representative sample of the actual manure your field will receive?
- The nutrients may not be 100% available the first year – depending on the type of manure, application method and temperature at the time of application.
- How will the manure be applied – knifed-in or surface applied? Tanks, umbilical cord or spreader?
- Timing of application – too early in the fall could result in loss of nitrogen due to denitrification; too wet could cause soil compaction issues; and too late in the spring could delay planting.
- Manure is not a consistent product in storage or as it is applied – agitation is important for the nutrients proper mixing.
- There’s no guaranteed analysis on the actual nutrients being applied per acre.
- Several beneficial micronutrients are present in manure.

With all these variables, how do you determine a fair value for the nutrients in the manure? This can be a balancing act, but countless arrangements are made every year. Several factors will play into your final agreement, for example: *Who pays for the application? Who determines who will apply the manure? When and how will the manure be applied? What rate will be applied per acre? When and how was the manure sample pulled? Who pays for the manure sample? Is the price determined on the availability of the nutrients or the amount listed on the sample results? What form of nitrogen are you using for pricing? What date and businesses are you using for the commercial fertilizer prices? What percent of the commercial fertilizer price will you use? Will you have to supplement commercial fertilizer to meet your crops’ nutrient needs?*

These and many other details will play a part in your negotiations. Most growers do not charge for the micronutrients in the manure, so you essentially are getting those free. Your final consideration will be the ending cost/acre for the manure nutrients compared to applying commercial fertilizer.



Contributing to the Common Good.

In every community we do business, we are proud to provide products and services to help ag producers prosper. But we believe our role in these rural areas requires more of us than “business as usual.” We reach out and contribute our time and financial resources in our local neighborhoods and towns. Ag Partners wants to support a strong sense of community for our customers who are also our fellow citizens, neighbors and friends.

We again contributed to a variety of organizations and events this past year through our LocalMotion program –

Fire and Emergency Medical Services

Ag Partners is always proud to help all emergency service organizations in our communities.

Fonda Ambulance was awarded funds to be used toward the replacement cost of a power cot. A power cot provides safer mechanisms for lifting of the patient and for all emergency responders.

The **Alta Fire Department** was a recipient of a donation that will assist with the cost of a new skid unit for the fire department’s rescue truck. The rescue truck is used to put out grass, field and small brush fires.

The **Hartley Ambulance** crew was able to purchase a new hard cover computer for use in the ambulance. The new computer allows them to process reports immediately and maintain state records.

A donation was used to help equip a new brush fire pickup truck rig, which assists at grass and field fires, for the **Le Mars Fire Department**.

Enhanced Library Services

Sac City Public Library received LocalMotion funding for arts and crafts-based programs to be used this upcoming summer. Director Kim Nelsen said the goal is to introduce the community’s youth to the elements of color, design, peer collaboration and layout.

A donation went toward the purchase of a new iMac computer for the **Webb Library**. Patrons will now be able to access the IowaWorks website, as well as other employment websites, and information databases.

Education and More

Sioux Central Community School’s STEM Club received a donation for club projects. The STEM club was formed to enhance science, technology, engineering and math skills among nearly 40 elementary school students.

Alta School District used LocalMotion funding to purchase cardio/aerobic equipment for the new fitness center in Alta. The center benefits all community members.

A donation was used to start a backpack program at the **Storm Lake High School**, to provide supplemental food for those in need throughout the community.

The **Clay Central-Everyly FFA** chapter received a donation to help with the expenses of attending the National FFA convention.

LocalMotion funds helped a **Siouxland Ag in the Classroom** employee attend the national convention and for the program’s organizational costs.

Gehlen Catholic Schools in Le Mars used a donation to help update its physical science curriculum, which includes agriculture, chemistry and physics.

Fun at the Fair

Buena Vista County Extension received a donation to help with the purchase of whisper quiet fans for the BV County Fair. The fans are needed so 4-H youth can show livestock without animals being scared from too much sound.

A donation was provided to help build a new wash rack to be used for all livestock during the **O’Brien County Fair**.

Dream of Home Ownership

Siouxland Habitat for Humanity received a donation toward the cost of building a new home in Alton, Iowa for a mother and son. Habitat for Humanity’s home ownership program is made available to those who qualify based on three criteria, including need, willingness to partner and ability to pay.

Appreciating the Arts

The Fonda Arts Center building received a face lift with some new exterior siding. Last fall the Arts Center presented its very own version of the show Hee Haw. Many Fonda regulars and people from around the area participated in an afternoon of wacky humor and nostalgic enjoyment. Pictured (left to right) are Mary Mohr, Anne Reiff and Cheri Wernimont.



Annual Run, Rock & Roll

Ag Partners again served as a sponsor for **Village Northwest Unlimited's** summer benefit event in Sheldon. Village Northwest Unlimited (VNU) is nationally recognized as a premier provider of services to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and other brain conditions. We have been a proud supporter of VNU for the last 16 years. We also provide employment opportunities for several people served at the Village.

Vision Program for Children

Peterson's Lion Club received a donation to help purchase a special digital program for use in the Iowa KidSight Program. The program is a joint project of the Lions Clubs of Iowa and the University of Iowa Children's Hospital. It's dedicated to enhancing the early detection and treatment of vision impairments in young children through screening and public education.

AG PARTNERS IN the Digital Age

I always enjoy telling today's high school students stories about what technology was like when I was in high school, just because of how quickly things have changed in under two decades.

When I was in high school, cell phones became extremely popular, and I was lucky enough to have been gifted a Nokia phone. After the cell phone trend went on a while, there became talk about using your phone to send text messages. My phone at the time had a tactile keypad, meaning you had to hit one button a number of times to get the right letter you wanted to use. In other words, if you wanted to send a text message, you had to work for it. 'No one will text, it would take too much time to send a message! It would take less time to just call the person,' I thought to myself at the time. I had convinced myself this trend would just not catch on. How wrong I was.



beth_wischmeyer

“ If you have a suggestion about how we can better communicate with you, get in touch with me at 712.843.5253.”

A 2015 piece in the *Chicago Tribune* reports smartphone users are sending and receiving five times as many texts compared with the number of phone calls each day, according to the International Smartphone Mobility Report. In total, it's estimated Americans spend about 26 minutes a day texting. That compares to spending about six minutes a day on voice calls. As usual, technology advanced according to the needs of society, including full keyboards on smartphones that take less time to complete a text.

At Ag Partners, we're committed to finding the best ways to communicate with our customers to keep them informed both on what we're doing, and the products and services that will help them. About a year ago, we created social media accounts on Facebook and Twitter, and our followership has been growing since then. These mediums are valuable to share videos, links to stories on our websites, announcements and news of interest.

Through our website, agpartners.com, we also have the ability to communicate via email or text messages. If you would like to sign up to receive communication from us, please click on the "Sign Up For E-Communications" button on the homepage. From there you can select what type of communication you want to receive – either email or texts - and from which of our departments.

As technology evolves, we will keep a close eye on the best ways to communicate with you. We understand people like to communicate in different ways, so our goal is to meet people where they are, whether that's through the website, a text message, social media, or a letter in the mail. Ag Partners hopes you will connect with us in whatever format works best for you.

**Connect
With Us:**

web: www.agpartners.com

email: bwischmeyer@agpartners.com

Find us on Facebook & Twitter too!



Eager to Serve Your Energy Needs

Based in Alton, Ag Partner's energy department offers top-quality Cenex® products to our customers. We understand propane and fuel prices can be a topic of concern among farmers. That's why our goal is to be a cost-effective, efficient choice for you. Our team works to add customers and keep our routes full for more economical deliveries. The more farms we can add to a route, the more timely our service also.

Our typical delivery area is generally within 45 miles of Alton. We're also interested in adding customers beyond that delivery area and establish new routes. We just want to ensure it's cost effective and makes sense for you.

Our energy department features –

- Delivery with our growing fleet of refined fuels and propane trucks.
- Farm diesel tanks in 2,000-gallon and 1,000-gallon sizes.
- 1,000-gallon, 500-gallon, and 250-gallon propane tanks to purchase or rent for on-farm storage. We also offer 125-gallon tanks to support residential LP gas fireplaces.
- Contracting programs for propane, either a keep-full or will-call program. Customers who choose keep-full are always in a position to reduce yearly expenditures because we'll automatically fill tanks when the price is lower.
- A summer-fill program prepares our customers before winter and carries the option of delayed billing until Sept. 15. Summer fills allow us to accept more gallons from our suppliers, accumulating credits that enable us to draw bigger loads in peak seasons.
- Cenex® Ruby Fieldmaster Premium Diesel® when you're in the field and Roadmaster XL® Premium Diesel or Winterized Premium Diesel for on-the-road vehicles. We also offer contracting programs for diesel.
- Six cardtrol locations including – Albert City, Sheldon Truck Shop, Brad's Service in Sioux Rapids, Varina, our Alton grain facility and one located downtown in Alton.

“ We offer top-quality Cenex® products. Our goal is to be a cost-effective, efficient choice for you.”



marlin uittenbogaard

Contact me to discuss your options when it comes to your energy needs – our team is eager to keep you up and running.

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Arlen Kleinwolterink and Jim Van Gorp,
members of the Legion Post 329,
stand near the veterans memorial.

Honoring Veterans American Legion Post 329 in Orange City was able to do landscaping at a veterans memorial in Orange City with a donation from LocalMotion. The memorial, which was constructed several years ago, features the names of many local veterans from World War II to present day.