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# Country Connection

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## Grain Scoop: Where Did The Bean Rally Come From!



By Kim Holsapple

As we were making our New Year's resolutions, it seemed as though there was no way we were going to be able to liquidate last fall's crop with any money left over for the bottom line. The USDA came out with the January 12th report and increased the U.S. bean carryout to 470 million bushels from an already burdensome supply of 445 million bushels. If there was any hope for a recovery in price, it had to come on the heels of a South American production issue. In the January report, underneath all the numbers there was one small glimmer of hope for the U.S. producer. That glimmer was a reduction in the Argentine soy crop of a mere 1 million metric tons. This reduction of 1 million metric tons (approximately 35 million bushel) was from the 57 million tons to 56 million tons. As you can see from a percentage standpoint it was hardly enough to move the supply demand needle, less than 2%. Then comes the February 8th monthly supply demand report, once again

Argentine bean crop got lowered by an additional 2 million metric tons but in the same report the Brazilian soybean crop was raised 2 million metric tons, so the total South American bean crop did not change. To make matters worse, the U.S. soybean export estimate was lowered by 60 million bushels because of our extremely slow export pace due to last year's large South American crop.

From February 6th to this writing the bean market caught fire and rallied over \$1.00 per bushel. How could this be? It was the perfect storm for U.S. producers. The commodity funds were carrying a very large short position in both corn and beans. As the rain in Argentina completely shut off, the crop dropped from the 56 million metric tons to estimates from our private sources of 45 million metric tons. This is an incredible 385 million bushel reduction in Argentina. Whether this size of reduction has actually taken place, only time will tell. This 385 million bushel reduction is equal to about 70% of our projected carryout. Easy math tells you that if all the reduction in Argentina production is replaced by U.S. bean exports then our carryout would go to a very tight 145 million bushels and prices should go much higher to start the rationing process.

Now from behind the scene! Brazil's soy production from December to February increased by 4 million metric tons with analyst talking about an addition 3 million metric tons, therefore increasing their production by 245 million bushels. A reduction in Argentina of 385 million bushels offset by an increase in Brazil of 245 million bushels now leaves a shortfall of 140 million bushels. There is talk that because of inflation concerns the Argentine farmer was hanging on to old crop beans of up to 100 million bushels, which become available to the market place as the producers become strapped for cash due to the short crop this year. Now there are only 40 million bushels of beans missing from the balance sheet. With the run up in prices we certainly haven't reduced the amount of beans to be planted in the U.S. As most people are telling me, we will see the U.S. bean acres larger than corn acres for the first time in many years. As of this writing, I am hearing of the worst western wheat conditions in many, many years. If this is true we should see abandoned wheat acres. If rains come and they always do, do you think these acres will sit idle? Not a chance! Milo and soybeans will be planted to many of these acres and with the chance to sell \$10.00 new crop beans out of the field, why wouldn't they?

The key to this whole conversation is that there has been a disruption of soybeans around the world, but the market reacted and now consumers and producers around the world will jump on this. It will have been taken care of by the time you read this and now we wait for the next disruption which should happen in the U.S. sometime during the growing season. How big and widespread is yet to be seen. As for me, a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush and \$10.00 beans will keep me going another year.



Stanley Joergens

## Safety For All In 2018

South Central FS and Total Grain Marketing LLC recently had it's bi-annual First Aid CPR training with our employees. We are required to have a Certified First Aid CPR trained person on site where First Responders are more than 10 minutes away. We knew it would be extra cost but decided that it would be a worthwhile venture to have ALL of our employees as Certified and trained First Aid CPR responders. Our employees were very acceptable to attend this training every other year because the training and knowledge of this topic is not only very important at work but very valuable at home and out in the community that our employees live and work in. Every time we do the training on this topic with our employees we hear stories of using what

they learned in the course at home or in their communities. The trainers explained the importance of response within the first few minutes at an accident scene where someone needs first aid or CPR. We were told that our response and repetitions that we learned and practiced in this course and by consistent training could be easier to remember at an event when we need to use those procedures. We must always ask if we can help them before proceeding but in instances that the victim cannot respond we must assume they need our help. It is very difficult to live with an accusing conscience if we did not offer assistance or perform first aid or CPR on a person when they are in need and that person died as a result of that negligence. Among our employees we have several that serve on local Fire Departments and assist EMT's in that capacity and to those employees we tip our hat in appreciation because of their commitment to our company and our communities to be on call 24/7 in the towns and communities that we live in and supply our agricultural services in.

In February we also held our annual Safety Training for all of our employees at South Central FS, Inc. and Total Grain Marketing LLC. The training is mandatory for our employees. There were over 400 employees attended the day long training covering various topics relevant to our company and the products and commodities that we handle.

The morning session group was both companies employees together started with a video titled "Leading Indicators": It's the Little Things! By Jeff "Odie" Espenship. Jeff narrated the story of himself as an Air Force pilot and Jeff discussed his experience involving shortcuts, snap decisions and complacency and how his experience relates to common workplace situations. Jeff explained that employees must always be aware of the little things and take action when they tempt us or our co-workers to perform unsafe acts. Then the group went through basic Fire Extinguisher training which gave everyone an understanding of the proper time and way to use a fire extinguisher and the proper time to not attempt to fight a fire that was larger than their capabilities. Next we had training on LP Gas Safety and how to take and respond to "I Smell Gas" and "Out of Gas" calls from customers. It was emphasized that if a customer smells gas in the house they must exit the house quickly and take their cell phones with them. And if they can safely do so, turn the gas valve off on the outside storage tank. After a short break the group watched a training video on Electric safety and dealing with dangers of overhead electric lines and how to avoid or work around those hazards both at the facility and out at the work or delivery sites. The group watched a motivational presentation by Brad Livingston entitled "Just a Second Ago." Brad explained how a decision of his to deviate from a safety procedure ended in the death of a co-worker and life changing injuries to himself and unimaginable grief and trauma to his family. Brad emphasized the importance of working safely every day and to maintain a "Safety Culture" at work and at home. After that presentation, one of the employees had all employees participate in some stretching exercises to prevent muscle pulls and strains. After that brief demonstration the group heard from Gabe Meador, Growmark Safety and Insurance specialist. Gabe went over some work place injury statistics in the system and our companies. The group also went

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# Location Spotlight

## Ashmore Grain Company

Ashmore Grain Company was started in 1956 by Earl Clapp. He started the grain business with three empty oil tanks that he used as grain bins. Since then Earl added several bins and a quonset which made storage capacity of 600,000 bu, 3 legs and dump pits.

Effingham-Clay FS purchased the elevator September 1st, 2005. Kyle Updegraff was our first manager at Ashmore. Kyle was followed by Jeff Redman who was hired in May of 2008.

Jeff was born and raised around Westfield. His duties include managing the everyday operations as well as buying grain from farmers. Jeff and his wife Kristy have 3 daughters Maya, Emmy and Tessa.

Michael Beeman is in charge of customer support as well as maintenance. He has been with TGM since 2007. Michael is engaged to Crystal Diltz and has a daughter Alison.

Our other full-time employee, Cory Diltz has been with us since 2014. He is in customer support as well and helps Jeff with whatever needs done around the elevator.

In 2008, TGM put up a new leg and overhead. In 2015 we put up a 500,000 bu bin next to our 14,000 bu per hour leg. In the fall of 2017 TGM started construction of a new office at the location.

Ashmore is located in a great area with several markets available. We can hit several truck markets as well as transfer to our CSX rail loading facility in Casey or our CN loading facilities in Charleston and Neoga. Because of the diversity of the land near Ashmore, we don't see the variability in volume from one year to the next, as we might see it in other locations.

Jeff passed his Series 3 exam in 2016 and Ashmore is now a branch office for Midco Commodities. Jeff has become one of the most respected managers on the TGM team and can help his customers with any marketing needs they might have. Stop in and see him and his crew and take a look at the new office. Hope to see you there this fall!





# Dicamba Use on Xtend Soybeans

## Best Management Practices

Non dicamba tolerant soybeans are **extremely** sensitive to dicamba. The off-target movement of any pesticide product is a violation of federal law and the Illinois Pesticide Act, regardless of whether yield is affected in the non-target crop. **Xtend soybeans must only be treated with one of the three approved dicamba products, which are Restricted Use Pesticides.** These BMPs are not a substitute for compliance with the product labels and websites that list approved tank mix partners.

**Follow these BMPs to support the stewardship of this technology:**

- If you plan to have your Xtend soybeans treated, plant them adjacent to other Xtend soybeans, adjacent to corn, or adjacent to non-sensitive areas **on all sides of your Xtend soybeans.** Communicate with your neighbors and know what they are planting.
- Plant Xtend soybeans at least mile from high value, sensitive specialty crops and mile from sensitive soybeans (Liberty, RR, Enlist, non-GMO) if possible.
- Discuss your anticipated planting date and location with your applicator, and identify on a map the locations of nearby sensitive soybean fields or sensitive specialty crops. Consult Driftwatch.org to identify nearby specialty crops.

- **Start with a clean system.** It takes only **1/20,000** of a labeled rate of dicamba to cause symptoms in sensitive soybeans. This is equivalent to 0.0011 fluid ounces of Xtendimax per acre, or 6.4 ounces of dicamba spray solution left in a 1000-gallon sprayer. No trace of AMS or nitrogen containing products should be present in your application system when you are applying dicamba products to soybeans.

- **If sensitive soybeans are adjacent to Xtend soybeans, early application of dicamba on soybeans is optimal (21-30 days after planting).** The application should contain an approved residual herbicide in the tank mix. Requests for later application or rescue applications when sensitive soybeans are adjacent may not be honored by the applicator.

- Use a minimum of 15 gal/water per acre or more, and a maximum sprayer speed of 12 mph. Consult the label/label websites for the correct nozzle and pressure combination. Pressure must be measured at the boom/nozzle. Use a drift reduction agent (**no AMS**) when required by the label. Applications are limited when maximum wind speeds are from 3 - 10 mph. Applications can only occur from sunrise to sunset; avoid when inversions exist at the field level

- Boom height should not exceed 24" above the crop canopy. Do not use sprayers (such as pull type

sprayers) that do not have a boom height adjustment.

- If sensitive soybeans have emerged adjacent to a corn field that you are planning to treat with dicamba, follow the nozzle, pressure, boom height and wind speed limitations that are outlined on the approved soybean dicamba products to mitigate off target movement of dicamba applied to corn.

- Keep a precise record of application as required by the label, including on dicamba applications made to corn. Document the condition of the crop and nearby crops before beginning the application.

- Specific recordkeeping requirements for the following items: name of applicator; applicator certification #; product name; USEPA registration number; total amount applied; application month, day and year; location of the application; crop or site receiving the application; proof of training; time of the application; receipts of the product purchase; a copy of the product label; documentation of the date that the applicator checked a sensitive crop registry or surveyed the neighboring fields; documentation of spray system cleanout; a list of the tank mix products used; the start and finish times of the application; the nozzle selection; the air temperature at the boom height (at start and finish); and wind speed and direction.

# Help your animals to look there best during the FAIR SEASON

2018 seems to be flying by and with that, we realize that we are coming up on every 4-H and FFA member's favorite time of year... FAIR SEASON! We all want our animals to look great throughout the year but we want them to look their absolute best on show day. The Farm Store at South Central FS has what you need to get your cattle, pigs, sheep, goats, rabbits, and horses in tip top shape for your day in the ring.

When deciding on a feed regimen for your show animals, several steps must be taken. First, take into consideration your animal's current feed situation. This is the key to smoothly transitioning your animal onto a more specialized show program. Next, build each animal a balanced feed program. Since not every animal will have the same needs, their feed shouldn't be the same either. A steer in good condition may only need to gain 2 pounds per day while a smaller, lighter steer may need to gain 3 pounds per day to make it to weigh in. Third, consider palatability and water intake. Nutritionally, you can create the best feeding program but if your animals won't eat it, it won't work. Water drives intake so make sure that your animals have access to clean, fresh water. Finally, be sure to monitor your animal's appearance on a regular

basis. The true test to deciding whether a feeding program is working is by seeing the results in your animal. Pay close attention to your animal's body condition and weight. In doing so, you can make the proper adjustments to your feeding program as show day approaches. It takes approximately 45-60 days for nutrition to make an actual change in your animal's appearance. Making changes within 30 days of show day can happen, but it will be a struggle and may not cause positive outcomes.

The Farm Store at South Central FS carries a wide array of show products including Honor Show Chow by Purina, Lindner United, Show-Rite, Kalmbach, Sullivan Supply, and Weaver Leather. We work closely with representatives from our companies to find the best program for you and your animals. We can also special order supplies that are needed for your animal to look its best including halters, collars, brushes, aerosols, foamers, shampoos and conditioners, and show sticks and whips. Whether you're searching for a new feeding program to help your steer win your rate of gain class or a new collar for your goat, the Farm Store at South Central FS is the place to be!

Morgan Wendling

# Spring Planting

Spring is just around the corner and so is all the preparation and work that goes into planting the crops of 2018. I am not sure about you but every year spring sneaks up on me. Usually my thoughts are, "I still have a couple of weeks before that needs to be done" only to realize that time has run out and it's time to "git er done."

In our past article we have mentioned that South Central FS has a team dedicated to Digital Ag. Therefore we would like to make a few suggestions to help your spring go a little smoother. So, as you check your tillage and planting equipment by making the necessary repairs and preparations, please take some time for the following:

- Copy old log files from the display and put them in a safe place for storage

- Create a new season for the 2018 crop year

- Remove any unused fields, farms or products from the display

- Add any new field, farms or products you will need for the new year

- Make sure your display has the latest firmware

- Inspect all cables inside and outside the cab for damage such as pinched or broken wires

- Make sure your display powers up and you have GPS for auto steer and planter control

Taking time to do a maintenance checkup may save you valuable time when you are ready to do field work this spring. It also assures

that you are ready to collect good viable data that is important in tracking your various operational changes throughout the spring. And remember if you need assistance or parts please give the South Central FS Digital Ag Partner Team (precision department) a call and we will be glad to assist you in getting ready for that spring rush.

Feel free to call:  
Heather \* 217-342-5092  
Ryan \* 618-780-9257  
Nick \* 217-343-1837

*I will leave you with a quote about farming from the first President of the United States; "Agriculture - is the most healthful, most useful and most noble employment of man." - George Washington.*



# Propane

**South Central FS will be offering the option of Budget Billing for your 2018-2019 propane needs!**

**Sign-up will be held in April of 2018.**

**The Budget Billing Program is an excellent program that will even-out your heating costs throughout the year. It is an 11 month payment program that spreads your heating costs out over the year, starting in May and ending in March.**

**We also offer automatic debit of your bank account for your monthly payment, which means no need to remember to write out a check each month, we will take care of it for you!**

***Please watch your mail for more information.***

**If you do not receive a packet in the mail by April 15<sup>th</sup> and are interested in signing up, please call Jim or Rachel @ 217-342-9231.**

## Importance of Early Season Defoliation Pest in Alfalfa

### Key Points:

- Alfalfa weevil is an important early season defoliation pest in alfalfa.

- Scouting should begin when pest degree days accumulate to 250 in the spring.

- Consider insecticide when 25-50% of leaves show feeding injury and with 3 larvae per stem.

### Identification and Life Cycle.

The alfalfa weevil (*Hypera postica*) is the most important early season defoliation pest of alfalfa in the Midwest.

Adult weevils are small brown snout beetles with a dark narrow stripe extending down the back. Adults become active in late March or early April and lay small oval yellow eggs inside the alfalfa stems. Eggs are laid in both the fall and the spring in warmer southern areas, but only in the spring in northern areas.

Larvae are very small (3/8" when mature), legless, and yellow-green in color with a white stripe along the middle back and a very distinctive black head capsule. Larvae feed for 3-4 weeks, then pupate for 1-2 weeks, and emerge as adults that feed for about one week before moving to sheltered areas for aestivation (summer dormancy).

During the summer season, all life stages of the alfalfa weevil may be found. Adults lay more eggs in

the fall and overwinter in the crown or areas of protective vegetation, such as woods, fence rows, and ditch banks.

**Injury.** Both adults and larvae feed on alfalfa foliage, but the larvae are responsible for most of the damage.

Early instar damage appears as pinholes in terminal leaves. As the larvae grow, they skeletonize the leaf and gradually move to lower leaves to continue feeding. After a cutting, larvae and adults may also feed in the crown and prevent timely regrowth.

Larvae in southern areas hatch from fall eggs in late March or early April after approximately 300 pest degree days (base 48°F) have accumulated and when alfalfa is about 8" in height. Larvae can cause significant damage to first cutting alfalfa in these warmer climates.

Areas farther north (north half of Illinois and most of Iowa & Wisconsin) rarely have to deal with alfalfa weevil damage to first cutting alfalfa because most of the weevil eggs are laid in the spring. Feeding by weevil larvae normally doesn't normally peak in these areas until about 575 degree days (base 48°F) are accumulated. First crop harvest in northern areas often takes place in time to reduce or eliminate the weevil threat.

**Scouting and Thresholds.** Begin scouting when 250 degree days (base 48°F) have accumulated.

Continue monitoring stands for damage through the end of June. Larvae can be counted by collecting stems and beating them against the inside of a bucket. As a static threshold, insecticide treatment may be advised when 25-50% of the stems show obvious feeding or there is an average of 3 or more larvae per stem, and when at least 7-10 days remain before the crop can be harvested.

Natural pathogens and parasitic wasps can keep populations in check, so be sure to also scout for and consider beneficial populations when making treatment decisions. Do not apply insecticide to alfalfa when in bloom to avoid damage to pollinator populations.

Control may be advised after a cutting if larvae and adults are feeding in 50% of crowns and regrowth is prevented for a period of 3-6 days. Other sources, like the Penn State reference below, advise the use of dynamic action threshold tables that adjust the static threshold in consideration of the market value of the crop and cost of an insecticide application. Refer to the FS Crop Protection Handbook or web application for specific product recommendations for alfalfa weevil control. Always read and follow insecticide label directions.

## Safety For All In 2018

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over Safety Phase #10 – Slips, Trips and falls and preventing workplace injuries. Joe Meinhart, CEO for South Central FS, Inc and General Manager for Total Grain Marketing LLC talked to group about the state of the companies and answered some questions that the employees had about the company and projects in process.

After lunch the group split up with the supply side meeting in one session and covering topics dealing with South Central FS, Inc products such as Anhydrous Ammonia and Hazmat along with other safety topics dealing with CDL requirements and load securement. The Haz Mat subcommittee then went through training dealing with Haz Mat requirements and training. Next Gabe Meador took the group through LockOut TagOut training and importance of following those guidelines for safety. While the supply employees were going through all that training, the grain and feed employees were meeting in a different room going over confined spaces, housekeeping importance

and policy, sweep auger safety and policy, bin entry procedures and safety and Fall Protection. John Lee from Illinois Grain and Feed conducted the grain training and concluded the training with a demonstration of a controlled dust explosion. John had a device that manipulated suspended grain dust and introduced an ignition source which ignited the grain dust. John got the attention of the entire group with his presentation and got more of their attention with the dust explosion.

South Central FS and Total Grain Marketing and its employees are very concerned with safety and we are all committed to keeping our facilities and employees safe for our concern and also our customers that visit our facilities and rely on our products and services. Our Safety Committee is very eager and diligent in working for safety and if our customers need any other information or training on our products that we supply for our customers, please feel free to contact us for those safety needs.

Stanley Joergens  
Safety and Compliance  
South Central FS, Inc

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