

Farmers Cooperative Elevator Company of Hanley Falls



The Farmers Cooperative Elevator Company of Hanley Falls, FCE, was incorporated on January 1, 1998. It is the result of a number of consolidations & purchases that have occurred during the last two decades. Cooperative mergers occurred with the Farmers Coop Elevator Company of Cottonwood (est. 1917), the Farmers Warehouse Association of Echo (est. 1906), the Taunton Coop Elevator Company (est. 1912), including the branch at Minneota formerly known as the Minneota Farmers Co-op (est. 1893) and the Hanley Falls Farmers Elevator Company (est. 1912). The locations that became a part of FCE through purchases were Minnesota Falls and Granite Falls, which were bought from Harvest States in 1994 ; the Ghent location was purchased in 1995 & and the Montevideo location, established in 1912 as the American Society of Equity Coop Elevator and Trading Company, was bought from Montevideo Grain, LLC in 2004.

In the late 1800's and early 1900's the predominant crop of the time was wheat along with oats, flax, corn and barley. In the case of the Taunton Coop Elevator Company, formerly known as the Farmers Co-op Produce Company until 1922, the general nature of business also included the sale of hay, straw, fruit, vegetables, milk, cream, butter, eggs, livestock, cured meat and machinery.

These elevators did not escape the demise many elevators of today still suffer. The Hanley Falls Farmers Elevator Company burned to the ground in the fall of 1913. The stockholders purchased the Willmar Milling Elevator at Hanley Falls for \$1,200 and in 1914 built a 35,000 bushel elevator for \$6,165. In 1924, the Farmers Warehouse Association of Echo was greatly damaged in a fire but was immediately rebuilt. The Taunton Coop Elevator Company had a fire destroy an elevator and two annexes in 1967. The board of directors rebuilt a feed mill and warehouse at that location a year later.

Today, FCE is a thriving, multi-location cooperative. The FCE Board of Directors consists of nine members elected by approximately 2000 members. FCE has a work force of 52 full time employees, currently handles over forty million bushels of grain annually and grinds and delivers approximately 250,000 tons of feed per year. They will celebrate their 100th anniversary during the summer of 2012. Congratulations on reaching such a milestone!