



## March 2019 Minnesota Grain & Feed Association Newsletter

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### A Farewell Message

As I face retirement and my final week of employment with the Minnesota Grain and Feed Association (MGFA), I look back to the many issues we've faced, the numerous challenges we've endured and the many fine people I have met along the way. It has certainly been an honor and a privilege for me to lead this fine association, with its rich 112 year tradition of service to its members and the industry as a whole.

The grain and feed industry landscape has changed dramatically in my 38 years in the position of Executive Director, with industry consolidation being the most obvious. When I started in 1981, there were 275 local grain elevator co-op firms and another 447 privately owned grain elevator and feed mill firms operating in Minnesota. Today, that figure is around 77 local co-op elevator firms with over 200 branch locations and



another 165 privately owned grain and feed firms in the State. We now have 52 unit train loading stations in Minnesota, a trend that began about the time I was hired to manage this association.

Even with declining membership and a corresponding decline in membership dues income, the MGFA has been able to continue its tradition of effective legislative and regulatory representation. In addition, the association continues to offer pertinent and timely information and education for members and industry as a whole. The MGFA Board has chosen Laura Lemke, a 13 year employee of the association, to succeed me in the position as MGFA Executive Director. Laura and I have worked as a team over the years so she is very familiar with the industry issues and challenges we continue to face and I am very confident in her ability to lead this association into a promising future.

I am looking forward to this next stop on my life journey and feel lucky I had the opportunity spend a 38 year career representing such a vital association and dynamic industry. With my wife, four grand kids, a cabin up north, an interest in travel, modest musical endeavors and a variety of hobbies, I suspect I will be occupied during this next adventure of mine. I've thoroughly enjoyed the experience and I want to thank you – the association member – for your support, involvement and trust in my ability to represent and safeguard your interests! Until we meet again, farewell.

“Every new beginning comes from some other beginning's end.” - Semisonic

- *Bob Zelenka, MGFA Executive Director 1981-2019*

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## **There's Still Time to Sign-Up for MGFA Grain Grading Schools**

We still have space if you'd like to participate in the Spring MGFA Grain Grading Schools next week. The Minnesota Grain and Feed Association hosts two grain grading schools each spring for those needing to brush up on their grading skills or for newly hired employees. Our schools are conducted by licensed grain inspectors in a practical, hands-on manner. The first grain grading school is scheduled for **Tuesday, April 2** at Jackpot Junction Casino & Hotel, Morton. This school will focus on the grading of corn and soybeans. Our second school is scheduled for **Thursday, April 4** at the Bigwood Event Center in Fergus Falls. This school will cover the grading of all three major grains – corn, soybeans and wheat. Each school will start at 9:00 AM and conclude by 3:00 PM with lunch included. Proper use of grading equipment will be demonstrated and each participant will receive a participation certificate.

Space is limited for each school, so we encourage early registration. The cost for the school is \$90/person for MGFA member firms. The non-member charge is \$100/person. The cost includes training materials, training personnel time, breaks and lunch. [Click here](#) for the registration form.

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## **March 25 – 29 is Stand Up for Grain Safety Week**

The NGFA and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) are hosting a major safety outreach effort, the “Stand-Up for Grain Safety Week” from March 25-29, to help raise awareness about grain handling and storage hazards, provide education and training, and convey safety best practices.

### ***A WEEK OF OUTREACH AND AWARENESS***

Join us each day this week for webinars focusing on safety:

Wednesday 3/27 @ 2 pm CDT: Fall Protection Strategies

### **REGISTER**

The number of fatal falls in 2017 was the highest in 26 years. Non-fatal slips, trips, and falls (STFs) continue to rank near the top for workplace injuries. Increasing the perception of risk is an often overlooked, but essential part of fall protection planning. This presentation will look at some practical solutions to raise risk awareness and combat common STF hazards; provide user-friendly ladder tips to

encourage safe use; and discuss the essentials of personal fall protection within the revised OSHA standard.

Thursday 3/28 @ 2 pm CDT: Lockout/Tagout

**REGISTER**

Lockout/Tagout is #4 on OSHA's Top 10 Most Cited Violations of 2018. In order for Lockout/Tagout to be successful, LOTO procedures should be aligned with the job tasks being performed. This presentation will provide a brief review of LOTO; discuss task-specific safe work practices which LOTO procedures may not address; and explore common obstacles (and solutions) to LOTO implementation.

Friday 3/29 @ 3 pm CDT: Machine Guarding

**REGISTER**

Machine Guarding makes OSHA's Top 10 Most Cited Violations of 2018 as well as has a starring role in incident rates of Fatal and Non-Fatal Occupational Injuries from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. This presentation will discuss the 5 Ws (who, what, when, where, why) and How of machine guarding - what needs to be guarded and when and why a guard is required. hypes (how) of guards; who (or what tasks) are affected by machine guarding, and where to look for machine guarding hazards in the grain handling environment.

ADDITIONAL HANDOUTS, VIDEOS & MATERIALS CAN BE FOUND [HERE](#)

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## Welcome to New MGFA Members

The MGFA would like to welcome two new members to the Association, **Kodiak LLC** and **Olsons' Custom Farm Services, Inc.** We appreciate your membership in the Association!

**Kodiak LLC**, founded in 1997, is a customer oriented, full service packaging company that can upgrade your marketing efforts by upgrading your packaging or creating new. They specialize in litho labeled containers, 100% PMS printing coverage and purchasing displays. They are experienced in packaging solutions for your company and are well known for their high output and efficiency.

**Olson's Custom Farm Services, Inc.**, with three convenient locations in Sebeka, Verndale and Staples, MN, is your first choice for all of your farming needs. They carry a wide selection of seeds, feeds, fertilizers and chemicals that will help you get the most from your fields. They also carry a complete line of livestock feeds for chickens, hogs, cattle, turkeys, ducks and even pet food. Olsons' also carries a variety of equipment that can help you during planting and harvest time. You can find a bale grinder, grain vacuum as well as billion seeders and fertilizer spreaders. You can retain their services in your field as well. Call them for more details.

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## Flooded Grain Must Be Destroyed, Not Sold

*There's a difference between rain-flooded and river-flooded grain*

Des Moines, IA - "Chapters in books and entire books will be written about this (Midwest March flood) tragedy," says Keith Glewen, an educator at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

In Nebraska, the state's governor has estimated the losses to the agricultural sector alone at \$1 billion. The damage covers states such as Nebraska, Missouri, South Dakota, Wisconsin, and Iowa.

### UNTOLD AMOUNTS OF GRAIN LOST

For farmers who have full grain bins flooded from bursting rivers, the question now is what to do with that stored crop.



Flooding is causing damage. A Fremont County, Iowa, farmer quoted in the Waterloo-Cedar Falls, Iowa, Courier newspaper on Wednesday, estimated about 390,000 bushels of stored soybeans and about 1.2 million bushels of stored corn are under water in that county alone.

As the Missouri River crests, even more corn stored in Iowa is expected to be damaged. At local cash prices for corn and soybean, that's about \$7.3 million farmers may be unable to replace, according to the Waterloo-Cedar Falls, Iowa, newspaper.

To make matters worse, the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration reports that above-average precipitation this spring could increase the flood risk across the country.

Unfortunately, federal policy states that the grain damaged from flooded river water has to be destroyed, according to Iowa State University experts.

Already rapid snowmelt this spring has caused instances of stored grain being covered with floodwater, according to an ISU released report, Thursday.

"According to current Food and Drug Administration policy, grain inundated by uncontrolled river or stream water is considered adulterated and must be destroyed. The current situation is one of river water flooding rather than of rain-driven pooled water in low ground, for which there are salvage options. River-based floodwaters can bring in many hazards and rapid spoilage," state the report's authors, Charles Hurburgh, ISU agricultural and biosystems engineering, and Dan Loy of the Iowa Beef Center.

Flooding affects both the stored grain and the storage structures. Try to move the grain before the flood reaches the bin, but stop using underfloor conveyors and legs once the water starts entering the pits, according to the ISU report.

## GRAIN AND GRAIN PRODUCTS

So, why the need to destroy the grain?

"Flood-damaged grain is adulterated grain because of the potential for many contaminants to enter through the water. This grain should be destroyed, never blended. Contact local Department of Natural Resources officials for the best disposal process in your area. The recent Food Safety Modernization Act has increased public awareness of food and feed related hazards," the ISU grain experts stated in the report.

They added, "Water coming up from tiles and pits is just as suspect because storm and sanitary sewers are usually compromised in floods. Even field tile water may contain animal waste products, high chemical levels, and other contaminants."

Corn will stay at about 30% moisture after the water drains off; soybeans about 25% moisture. The moisture won't travel more than a foot above the floodwater line, according to the ISU experts.

## SAVING GOOD GRAIN

There are some tips to saving some of the grain in the bin that may not have been flooded, but even that grain is suspect, according to federal regulations.

"Remove good grain on top of flooded grain from the top or side, not down through the flooded grain. The reclaim conveyors and pits under bins contain flood water, as well. Remove all the good grain before doing anything with the bad portion. The good grain is still suspect, which is why FDA must evaluate the situation on a case-by-case basis before the grain can be sold into any uses," according to the ISU grain handling report.

In addition, farmers are advised to not start aeration fans on flooded bins.

“Have the entire structure and related electrical components inspected by a qualified electrician, to verify that nothing is still energized, before taking action to salvage the grain. Use professional salvage operators that will take correct safety precautions for bin entry,” ISU grain handling experts stated.

## MOLDY CORN

It’s likely that mold is in rewetted grain. Warm, wet conditions are ideal for mold growth, according to the ISU report.

“Moldy grain is a safety hazard. Use precaution and wear protective equipment when working with moldy grain. Grain will be moldy by the time the water has receded,” ISU experts say.

Farmers are advised to not track or mix mud or gravel from flooded grounds into good grain during salvage operations. Toxins from those two elements are just as dangerous for the same reasons as the floodwaters.

- Article by Mike McGinnis, *Successful Farming*

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## **NGFA Members Discuss Trade, Industry Priorities at the 123<sup>rd</sup> Annual Convention**

Bob Zelenka, MGFA Executive Director and Laura Lemke, Assistant Director, along with more than 650 members gathered in Amelia Island, FL, for the NGFA’s 123<sup>rd</sup> annual convention, from March 17-19, where they discussed the nation’s trade environment, transportation and policy issues, and raised money for the National Grain and Feed Foundation, the association’s research and education arm.

Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue keynoted the convention in an energetic and impassionate address on March 18, commending the NGFA’s advocacy on maintaining trade agreements and pursuing new accords essential to the agricultural economy.

“The trade disruptions in 2019 were monumental, and your voice was heard,” he said, noting that NGFA’s membership is important to advancing free market policies. “Your voice is powerful and you’ve got influence. Your senators want to hear from you on how your farmers are doing.”

He recognized the importance of advocating for congressional ratification of the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) and commented that “steel [and] aluminum tariffs are on our mind and those have got to be resolved,” referring to Section 232 tariffs that President Trump imposed on Canada, Mexico and other U.S. trading partners.

Perdue also took time to praise the NGFA’s Committee Apprentice Program, which identifies future leaders of the NGFA and the industry. “The next generation is critical to the future of commercial agriculture because farmers and grain handlers are aging,” Perdue said. “Programs like NGFA’s [CAP] are excellent for our industry’s young people.”

Land O’Lakes President and CEO Beth Ford touched on another of NGFA’s long-range plan initiatives during her keynote industry leader remarks on March 18 when she highlighted the importance of agriculture’s communication with consumers. “We have to open up a dialogue and understand more where consumers are coming from,” she said, adding that consumers are making value-based decisions and her farmer members and key players in the agriculture supply chain need to know how consumers think about food.

During a Transportation and Trade Open Forum, Chief U.S. Agricultural Trade Negotiator Gregg Doud spent much of his time addressing the Trump administration’s negotiations with China. “I can’t tell you if we’ll be successful or not, but it won’t be for lack of trying. We’re working on this every single day to try to make this relationship better than it is – and make it enforceable.”

During the March 18 open forum, Doud also commented on the U.S. trade relationship with the European Union, noting “we have an extraordinary problem” between the U.S. and EU on agricultural trade. “It is shocking to me to see the direction that Europe is headed when it comes to the use of science and technology in agriculture,” he said, adding that the 28-nation bloc is being “non-science based,” and

“backward-looking” when it comes to agricultural technology. As the Trump administration attempts to begin negotiations on a U.S.-EU trade agreement, EU officials have continually refused to include agricultural issues. Currently, U.S. agricultural, food and bio-energy exporters are constrained from accessing this market because of tariff and non-tariff trade barriers, he noted.

Derek Scissors, resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute and chief economist for the acclaimed **China Beige Book**, said during a March 19 address that, while he believes the odds of the Trump administration securing a trade deal with China may be are high, he doubts whether it will be sufficiently enforceable and as such, not likely to last for more than two years. If an agreement is reached, Scissors said he expects it to include significant purchases of U.S. agricultural products that the administration will want to have front-loaded to benefit the president’s 2020 U.S. reelection campaign. For Trump, “there’s no deal without purchases,” he said.

During ceremonies, Bob Zelenka was honored with the NGFA’s Distinguished Service Award for recognition of his many years of service to the grain and feed industry.



## Job Opportunities

### Feed & Grain Location Manager - Crystal Valley Co-op

Be part of an organization that helps the world! If you possess the following attributes, then Crystal Valley would be an excellent fit for you!

- Commitment to doing what's right
- Solid work ethic
- Strong sense of ownership
- Passion for excellence
- Genuine respect for others

Crystal Valley is currently hiring for a Feed & Grain Location Manager in Vernon Center, MN. This position is responsible for the daily operations of the entire Feed/Grain location, including but not limited to: leading, managing and holding others accountable, inventory and quality control, facility and equipment maintenance, location logistics and customer service.

Candidates must have a minimum of five years of previous operations experience. The ideal candidate will have demonstrated experience building and maintaining a safe and positive work environment while maintaining a high degree of customer service and employee morale.

Candidates must have a valid driver’s license (Class A CDL preferred), meet the driver qualification standards set by the self-insured group in which the cooperative is a member and comply with Crystal Valley’s drug and alcohol policy.

For full job description and a comprehensive list of benefits, please visit the careers section at [www.crystalvalley.coop/careers/join-our-team](http://www.crystalvalley.coop/careers/join-our-team)

Crystal Valley is a full-service cooperative with 250 full-time employees in 14 locations serving the needs of livestock producers and crop farmers in south central Minnesota and northern Iowa.

### **Chief Executive Officer - New Vision Co-op**

Due to retirement, New Vision Co-op's Board of Directors is seeking qualified candidates for the position of Chief Executive Officer. New Vision Co-op operates in 19 locations in southwest Minnesota with 160 employees. The agronomy, feed and grain departments generate approximately \$400 million in annual sales.

The Chief Executive Officer manages employees and assets for the maximum benefit of New Vision Coop's member-owners as directed by the New Vision Coop Board of Directors.

### **Qualifications:**

Bachelor's Degree in a business discipline or related field .

Ten years of successful management experience in an agriculture environment (cooperative management preferred). .

Experience managing a business or large, complex operating department or division with profitable business growth. .

A proven track record of building teamwork and leading effective teams. .

Ability to conduct business analysis, trends and forecasting. .

An understanding of agricultural business operations and risk management. .

Proficiency in verbal and written communication.

Questions on this position should be directed to Tim Hansberger, New Vision Co-op Board Chairman at the contact information listed below.

If you are qualified and interested in applying for this position, submit your cover letter and resume to Tim Hansberger, New Vision Co-op Board Chairman by April 30, 2019.

Tim Hansberger New Vision Co-op Board Chairman

38438 210th St. Brewster, MN 56119

[t.hansberger@newvision.coop](mailto:t.hansberger@newvision.coop)

Phone: 507-329-2504

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## **Applications Being Accepted for the 2019 MGFA Scholarship Program**

Do you or an employee have a college-aged child who could use some financial support in their pursuit of a degree in agriculture? If so, your college student may be eligible to receive a scholarship through the MGFA's Commitment to Agriculture Scholarship Program. The MGFA is offering \$1,000 scholarships & is currently accepting applications for the 2019/20 school year for college students at either a 2-year or a 4-year college who have a minimum 2.75 GPA. Applicants must be the child of a current MGFA member elevator or feed mill employee who is in good standing with the Association. The student must be pursuing a degree in agriculture (preference will be given to those with a focus on agribusiness). The scholarship application is available on our website at [www.mgfa.org](http://www.mgfa.org) > About Us > MGFA Scholarship Program or you can contact the MGFA office for more information. The application deadline is **April 19, 2019**.

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## **2019 MGFA Convention Recap**

The 112th Minnesota Grain & Feed Association Convention & Industry Trade Show was held earlier this month with three fun & educational days at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel in Bloomington. The week began with a sold-out pre-convention St. Paul Gangster Tour and ended Wednesday with a packed room enjoying the words & stories from WCCO- TV's retired sports director, Mark Rosen. In between, attendees enjoyed a great line-up of speakers covering a range of topics including teamwork, leadership, the importance of

trust, new technology affecting the grain industry and a market outlook. Attendees also took full advantage of the jam-packed trade show to shop & learn about the products and services on display from our industry partners. Many also graciously supported the Silent Auction, which raises funds for the MGFA scholarship program. We recognized retiring general managers Tom Traen of Glacial Plains Co-op and Greg Schwanbeck from Ag Partners Co-op. We honored the very deserving Valerie Ahlers of AgVantage Software as the recipient of the 2019 MGFA Community Service Award. We also celebrated & honored the career of long-time MGFA Executive Director Bob Zelenka at a retirement reception. Finally, everyone enjoyed the stellar hospitality of our hospitality suite sponsors both Monday & Tuesday evenings. You can check out the photos on the Minnesota Grain and Feed Association Facebook page.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to attend the convention! We hope you will plan to join us again next year back at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel in Bloomington on March 3-5, 2020.

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