



March 2023 MGFA Newsletter



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MGFA Schedules the First of Two Spring Grain Grading Schools

The Minnesota Grain & Feed Association will be sponsoring two grain grading school this spring in Morton, MN & a second school up north with location & date to be announced soon. These schools are conducted in a very practical manner by licensed grain inspectors. Our first grain grading school will be held on Tuesday, April 11 at Jackpot Junction Casino Hotel, Morton (507-697-8000). The focus at this school will be on the grading of corn and soybeans. The school will begin at 9:00 AM and conclude by 3:00 PM (lunch included). Proper use of grading equipment will be demonstrated, and each participant will receive a participation certificate.

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.

To register, complete the registration [form](#). Please return the form, along with a check to the Minnesota Grain & Feed Association. Cancellations will be accepted up to 48 hours prior to each school. After that date a full refund cannot be guaranteed. We encourage pre-registration so we can ensure meal counts, material availability, etc.



March 27-31 is Stand Up 4 Grain Safety Week

The annual Stand Up 4 Grain Safety Week is this week, March 27-31, 2023.

NGFA, the Grain Handling Safety Council, the Grain Elevator and Processing Society, and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) form the Alliance that hosts Stand Up 4 Grain Safety Week. NGFA encourages each of its member companies to participate in this week's sessions and share their own "Stand Up" events with the Alliance. The 2023 Stand Up 4 Grain Safety Week features a hybrid "kick-off" event, virtual daily learning sessions on new focus topics, Spanish language sessions on selected topics, and a bonus session on emerging health concerns in agriculture. Sessions are 10 a.m. CDT daily with Spanish language and bonus sessions at 2 p.m. CDT Tuesday through Thursday. All virtual sessions are FREE over Zoom.

Learn more at StandUp4GrainSafety.org and use #StandUp4GrainSafety on social media. NGFA also has many resources on topics that can help you organize a brief safety training session, a company-wide event, or a simple safety reminder on ngfa.org/safety.



STAND UP
GRAIN SAFETY WEEK
March 27 - 31, 2023
**Small Changes,
Big Impact**

A week devoted to
safety.
**What's
your plan?**

Everything you need -
Training, resources,
promotion & more.
**All
FREE!**

Visit
StandUp4GrainSafety.org

  
#STANDUP4GRAINSAFETY





Legislative Update

This week in the Minnesota Legislature, both the Senate and House agriculture committees have taken up their respective omnibus agriculture finance bills, SF 1955 and HF 2278. Public testimony was heard Monday in the Senate and Tuesday in the House with MGFA Executive Director Laura Lemke testifying against the grain indemnity fund appropriation on both days. Yesterday, the Senate voted to approve SF 1955, and it was referred

to the Senate Finance Committee for further action. Today, the House will hear amendments to the bill, discuss and vote on HF 2278.

In the Senate, the bill seeks to establish a grain indemnity fund using \$15M of taxpayer funds to fully fund the account this year, repeal the grain bonding program for grain buyers & warehouses (except for 1st time licensees for their first 3 years of operation), repeal the statutory \$7.5M threshold requirement for reviewed or audited financial statements for grain buyers & warehouses and re-instate the acceptance of compilation financial statements for financial reporting to MDA.

Producers will pay a grain indemnity premium of not more than 0.2% on their first sale of grain to a grain buyer. Grain buyers must collect the grain indemnity premium from each sale and submit it to the MDA twice a year or face civil penalties. It also establishes an opt-out clause for producers & allows for a refund of the grain indemnity fund premium.

The language also appropriates money to the commissioner to pay claims, issue refunds, and administer the grain indemnity program; describes when a producer is eligible for payment, the claim process, and limits on payments; authorizes the commissioner to petition for a court order and to take legal action to recover claim payments.

The House version mostly reflects the Senate version, however it differs in that it asks for a \$5M appropriation, which would automatically trigger a collection of the grain indemnity assessment on producers effective July 1, 2023, until the account balance reaches a minimum of \$9M. The House version also does not repeal the \$7.5M threshold for reviewed or audited financial reports for grain buyers & elevators.

One provision of the legislation MGFA is tracking closely is the voluntary opt-out clause. The current bill language would have all producers paying the grain indemnity fund assessment at the time of sale. If a producer wanted to opt out of the indemnity fund, they would complete a form, submit it to MDA & receive their refund. However, there has been push-back by a producer group & legislators who complain this process isn't voluntary if producers must first pay in & later request a refund. They would prefer producers be able to opt-out *at the time of sale*, essentially making grain buyers responsible for determining who is in & who is out. A scenario such as this would be a nightmare for grain buyers to track & certainly add to the industry's workload for administration of this program. MGFA opposes any changes to the legislation that places opt-out responsibility on grain buyers.

We will keep updating you on further information as the legislative session progresses.



Explosion and Fire Damages Hoffman Grain Elevator Friday Night

Crews from 10 area fire departments, including Alexandria, responded to a fire at the grain elevator in Hoffman Friday night.



According to the Grant County Sheriff's Office, several 911 calls were received at about 7:50 p.m. on Friday, March 24, reporting an explosion and fire at the elevator.

Fire departments from Hoffman, Barrett, Elbow Lake, Herman, Alexandria, Morris, Donnelly, Chokio, Cyrus and Kensington responded to the blaze. Ambulances from Lake Region and Hoffman were also on scene, however no injuries were reported, according to the Sheriff's Office.

Deputies from Grant and Douglas counties secured the scene, and the Minnesota Duty Officer and State Fire Marshall were contacted.

The cause of the explosion and fire is unknown at this time and the incident remains under investigation, according to the Sheriff's Office.

The City of Hoffman, in a post on its Facebook page, was asking people to stay away from the scene Saturday because of debris in the streets.

Hoffman is located about 20 miles west of Alexandria in Grant County.

Source: The Echo Press



Russia Says Cargill Will Cease Exports of Its Grain

Global commodities trader Cargill Inc has told Russia's Agriculture Ministry that it will stop exporting Russian grain from the start of the next exporting season, which begins on July 1, the ministry said on Wednesday.

"The cessation of its export activities on the Russian market will not affect the volume of domestic grain shipments abroad. The company's grain export assets will continue to operate regardless of who manages them," the agriculture ministry said in a comment to Reuters.

A spokesperson for Cargill's Russian unit declined to comment.

Earlier the RBC business daily reported that the company's Russian unit had notified Agriculture Deputy Minister Oksana Lut in a letter that it would stop exporting grain in the new season.

According to the RBC report, Cargill will export 2.2 million tonnes of Russian grain in the 2022-23 exporting season, or around 4% of Russia's total grain exports.

Source: Reuters



MGFA Members Gather in St Cloud for the 116th Annual MGFA Convention & Industry Trade Show

Minnesota grain and feed industry professionals, co-op directors, exhibitors & sponsors met mid-March in St. Cloud at the River's Edge Convention Center to celebrate the 116th Annual MGFA Convention & Industry Trade Show. Although attendance was lower than we would have liked to see, attendees enjoyed a variety of speakers covering important topics including the state of the ag industry & the upcoming Farm Bill, strategies to retain your employees and the feed industry's role in an ASF outbreak, as well as a market outlook & a couple excellent keynote speakers as well.

At the Annual Meeting, members re-elected three current board members to serve another three-year term. The Board members re-elected included: Bob Heim, District 2 director; Mark Herberg, District 3 director & Brian Yager, At Large director.

Over the course of the convention, attendees also enjoyed the industry trade show with a great mix of industry members & companies representing 50 different vendors; evening hospitality suites hosted by our industry friends and spouses appreciated a visit to the unique Haehn Museum & Whitby Gift Shop at St Benedict's Monastery.

The Silent Auction event held during the trade show was also a success with a nice number of items to bid on and yielded over \$2,000. All funds raised will go toward supporting the MGFA scholarship fund. Thank you to all of the bidders & donators!

Over the years, the MGFA Convention has experienced declining participation by both attendees and vendors in the trade show. In response, the MGFA Board of Directors & staff will be assembling a committee to explore the future of this event. We hope when you are contacted for your input you will share your thoughts & opinions with us as we work to make this the best event it can be and still meet the needs of MGFA members.



Applications Now Being Accepted for MGFA's Commitment to Agriculture Scholarship Program

In an effort to financially assist students pursuing agriculture degrees at institutions of higher learning, the Minnesota Grain and Feed Association established a scholarship program, which is funded by generous donations from industry members and friends. The MGFA annually awards up to three \$1,000 scholarships to successful applicants.

Applicants must be:

1. The child of an elevator or feed mill employee whose employer is a current MGFA member, in good standing with the Association, OR
2. An employee/intern of an elevator or feed mill whose employer is a current MGFA member, in good standing with the Association

The student must be pursuing a degree in agriculture (preference will be given to those pursuing a degree in agribusiness) and have a minimum GPA of 2.75. The application for the 2023-24 Commitment to Agriculture Scholarship is available on our website. The deadline to submit an application is **April 22, 2023**.

If you know of a student who would be interested in receiving a scholarship, please share this information & encourage them to apply. Information can also be found on the MGFA website at www.mgfa.org.



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Address:

1407 1st St. NE
New Prague, MN 56071

Ph: 952.758.3999

Fax: 952.758.3997

[E-mail Us Now](#)