I would like to start this issue with a little history review of Top Ag Cooperative and its predecessors. In 1918, a group of farmers in Okawville recognized the need to have a grain elevator in the area. The effort was led by William Grewe, Otto Hasheider, HH Brockmeier, Fred Brammeier, Fred Moehle and Julius Going to organize a cooperative. This effort proved to be successful and Okawville Farmers Elevator was officially chartered in August of 1919 after 240 shares were sold in the area. This makes the first roots of Top Ag Cooperative 100 years old!

This first board of directors for Okawville Farmers Elevator were elected with LT Ochs, Otto Hasheider, Julius Going, Fred Runge and Hy Holt serving in that capacity. In 1920 they hired their first manager, HW Doelling, and built the first elevator holding 15,000 bushels.

Top Ag is much larger than just Okawville! The early history of the Trenton Co-op is not nearly as clear. According to records I have found from 1995, there were no written minutes from the first 20 years of the cooperatives’ existence having ever been found. Though the original charter of the Trenton Co-op was found at that time and verified. It was dated October 4, 1920, just one year after Okawville was chartered.

There were 53 original members who invested $200 each, a lot of money in those days! The members of the first board of directors were Henry Kaufman, Carl Huelsmann, Charles Harpstrite, Edwards Phillips and Carl Schafer. Notations in later board minutes dated in 1941 suggest that Henry Saathoff and Roy Phillips were the past managers at that time. I’m sure that you recognize many of those family names in the founding of our great company!

I share this information with you because of the long 100 year history we have had serving your families! From the days of shocking, picking corn by hand, and when “horsepower” really meant horsepower - the need has been recognized in the value of a cooperative to serve our communities. Times may change and our challenges and problems may change, but the value your cooperative provides has withstood the test of time very successfully and will be here to serve you and the next generation in the future!

I’m sure some of you may ask why was my town not mentioned? It’s simply that I have never been presented those records, if they are in existence. While the name of the town may be different, much of the proud and resilient story will be the same. If you have that information, please share it with me and I will be

Continued on Page 2
Continued from Front Page

happy to share it in the future. Just the same, our story is a great story and we are proud to share it at this historical milestone!

Jake Greten
Seed & Warehouse Manager

Top Ag is excited to announce that we will be offering our wheat rebate program again, in which a customer can earn up to $15.00 per acre! Each year more growers are taking advantage of this productive offer. The program includes seed wheat, a fall fertilizer application, two passes of Nitrogen, a spring herbicide/fungicide application, a spring head scab fungicide application, and double crop seed beans. Call your sales agronomist for details and to see how to qualify.

With many prevent plant acres this year, cover crops are expected to be in high demand. Whether you are wanting to prevent erosion, grow some forage crops or increase the organic matter in your fields, Top Ag has many options to help you achieve your goal. Supplies are limited however, so please contact Top Ag and reserve your cover crop seed today.

Financial Details

Lloyd Strubhart
Credit Manager

Top Ag can help you with your financing for the 2020 crop season. Some of the finance companies that Top Ag offers for you to work with are Cooperative Finance Association (CFA) and Cooperative Credit Company (CCC). We also have special terms on seed financing.

If you would like to learn more about the financing and what we offer, just give me a call at 618.243.3360 or e-mail me at lloyds@topag.net.

Careers in Agriculture

Even though only 2% of the nations population are farmers, what we produce employs a much larger segment of the US population! However, less than one percent of the population claims farming as their occupation.

The remaining agricultural jobs can be segmented into seven areas: plant sciences, animal sciences, agricultural mechanics, agricultural business, environmental services, food science, and natural resources. In Illinois, food and agricultural product processing contribute significantly to the state’s economy.

There are almost 1 million agriculture related jobs in Illinois, making up over 13% of employees in the state. Illinois is one of the top ranking states in meat packing, soybean processing, dairy manufacturing, corn processing, feed milling, and vegetable processing.

1Community Agriculture Alliance; 2Illinois Ag in the Classroom
Agriculture ranks among the most hazardous industries. Every year, thousands of farm workers are injured and hundreds more die in farming accidents.

**Who’s at Risk?**
- Approximately 2,050,000 full-time workers were employed in production agriculture in the US in 2017.
- An estimated 893,000 youth under 20 years of age resided on farms in 2014, with about 454,000 youth performing farm work. In addition to the youth who live on farms, an estimated 266,000 youth were hired to work on US farms in 2014.

**Fatalities**
- In 2016, 417 farmers and farm workers died from a work-related injury, resulting in a fatality rate of 21.4 deaths per 100,000 workers. Transportation incidents, which include tractor overturns, were the leading cause of death for these farmers and farm workers.
- The most effective way to prevent tractor overturn deaths is the use of a Roll-Over Protective Structure (ROPS) with a seatbelt.
- Most farmworker injuries and deaths are caused by tractor incidents such as overturns, runovers, power take-off (PTO) systems, and unintended contact with tractor attachments or implements.

**Overturns**
Tractor overturns are the leading cause of fatalities in the agriculture industry, resulting in approximately 130 deaths per year. The majority of tractor overturn incidents take place when these farm vehicles turn on their side or tip over backward. These overturns come about very quickly, often in seconds, which leaves the operator little or no chance to get clear as the tractor tips or rolls. When operated properly, tractors are generally quite safe. Tractors that are old, in poor condition, lack safety guards and devices, or are driven in an irregular or risky manner can contribute significantly to unsafe or hazardous conditions.

**Roll-over Protective Structures (ROPS)**
An operator’s chances of surviving a tractor overturn without a serious injury are very good if the tractor has a ROPS and the operator is wearing a seat belt. A ROPS is a roll bar or cage frame that is designed to form a zone of protection around the operator if a tractor overturns. To prevent being thrown from a tractor, operators must wear a seat belt. A qualified dealer can retrofit older tractor models with a ROPS/seat belt system.

**Power Take-Off (PTO) Shafts**
- A PTO allows farmworkers to use power from the tractor’s engine to drive a variety of machines and implements. PTOs are useful, but they can pose a serious safety hazard. Operators and workers have come into contact with unprotected as well as protected PTOs. Safe operating practices for a PTO include:
  - All PTOs, including rear, mid- or side-mounted shafts, shall be guarded either by a master shield, or by other protective guarding.
  - Before servicing, adjusting, cleaning, or unclogging the equipment, stop the engine, disconnect the power source, and wait for the PTO shaft to stop, except when the machine must be running to be properly serviced or maintained.
  - Keep all guards in place when the machine is in operation.
  - Ensure that everyone nearby is clear of the machine before starting the tractor’s engine and engaging the PTO shaft’s selector switch.
  - Tie back and tuck in long hair and do not wear loose clothing.
    - A rotating PTO shaft can catch long hair or loose clothing.
  - If possible, avoid working alone around PTO-driven machinery.
  - If entanglement occurs, a coworker may be able to stop the PTO shaft in time to prevent more serious injury, or death.

*Articles courtesy of OSHA & CDC*
Grain Department

Not exactly sure where to begin on the grain market. Since the middle of May, corn made a December contract low of 363’6 on May 13th. We have seen the market rise to a contract high on June 17th to 473’0. However, since then, we have had a sharp retracting pushed along by the quarterly stocks report on June 28th, and the August crop report to a new contract low on September 3rd of 360’4. There has been a lot of debate on the planted acreage along with the harvested acreage, with the yield also coming into the fight. The slow start to the harvest will most likely keep this market quiet unless we see a weather scare of frost in the forecast. There are a lot of numbers to have a conversation about with the corn market: yield, acreage, carryout and demand, but it is going to take time for all of these issues to become clear. Possibly in the January crop report.

The soybean market saw many similarities in movement as the corn market within that same time period. Soybeans set a contract low on May 13th of 815’0, then ran to its high mark of 948’0 on June 18th. The market then began its fall, but was able to keep from making new lows by staying nearly 50¢ from the May lows. The soy complex has remained a hot topic on the China tariffs and the demand issue of soybeans. This market also will need either a weather issue or some positive news with China, but seems to be unlikely as both sides add new tariffs.

The wheat market is an exact replica of the corn market. We set the same lows and highs in this market on the exact same days as corn.

Top Ag had a great opportunity on September 3rd to help represent our agriculture business and community to House of Representative Charlie Meier and Rep. Sonya Harper, from Chicago. Representative Harper is the chairman of the Illinois House Agriculture Committee. The meeting took place at Okawville with a tour of our facility. We also had a formal presentation of what Top Ag Co-op brings to the region. Thank you to Charlie Meier for allowing us to represent the agriculture business to Representative Harper.

Non-GMO

Mike Fuhler
Grain Merchandiser

Fall harvest will be a little later this year, but it is getting closer. If you have non-GMO corn and soybeans to harvest, we do have a few programs available. For the non-GMO corn, we have an 18¢ per bushel premium with Buyer’s Call delivery periods of Feb/Mar 2020 or April/May 2020. For the non-GMO soybeans, there is limited space left on a Jan/Feb 2020 Buyer’s Call with a $1.50 premium.

Give me a call if you have any interest in these programs. I can be reached at our Trenton location; 618.224.7332 or toll free 1.888.508.3477. Have a safe and bountiful harvest!

Lumberyard

Dave Wilke
Lumberyard Manager

It looks like this fall is going to be busy as all carpenters are booked out months ahead. Do you have a project you are wanting to do this fall? We can help you find the right carpenter for the job! This is also a great time to get some of those larger projects done before winter – re-roofing, re-siding, and even new windows can help seal your home before the cold hits!

With lumber and sheet goods pricing staying steady this month without any large changes, this makes it the perfect time to start these projects as there is an ample supply of inventory.

We handle a lot of great items for all of your building and remodeling needs, including Central States metal. They have a wide range of steel panels that come in many different colors that are perfect for re-roofing, sidewall metal, or any other projects you have in mind. Just give us a call at 618.243.6137 and let us assist you in your project needs.
Do you have an android or iPhone? Download a QR scanner for FREE* in your app store and scan our QR Codes below! Some great free scanners are Scan and Scanlife.

*Standard Data Usage Rates May Apply*

We’re On The Web!

Like Us On Facebook!

Top Ag Events

- Daylight Savings Time
  - Sunday, November 3rd
- Thanksgiving Day—CLOSED
  - Thursday, November 28th

Upcoming Events

- Hills Fort Living History—Greenville
  - American Farm Heritage Museum
  - September 13th, 14th, 15th
- All You Can Eat Pancake & Sausage Breakfast—Pocahontas
  - Date TBD; 7:00am
  - $7 Adults; Children 12 & under $3
  - Gordon Masonic Lodge #473, Pocahontas
  - Benefits Pocahontas Gordon Masonic Lodge #473
- Mouse Race—Greenville
  - Saturday, September 21; Doors Open at 5:30; Races 7:00p
  - $20 Ticket or $25 at Door (Includes food and drinks)
  - Gun Raffle, Mouse Racing, 50/50, Silent Auction, Door Prizes
  - Mouse Roulette, Dice Wheel, Loaded Cooler Drawing & More
  - Purchase tickets from any BCSC member or at Pierron Top Ag
  - Benefits the Bond County Shrine Club and Shriner’s Hospital for Children
- Fall Family Festival—Greenville
  - American Farm Heritage Museum
  - Saturday, October 12th; 10:00a—2:00p
  - $6 per child
- Fall Vintage Market—Pocahontas
  - Sunday, October 13th; 10:00a—4:00p
  - Pocahontas Village Square
  - Yard Sale on the Square—NEW this year!
  - Vendors Wanted: www.treasuresonthetrail.webstarts.com
- Sausage Supper—Grantfork
  - Saturday, November 9th; 3:00p—8:00p
  - $11 Adults; $5 Ages 6—12; 5 and Under Free
  - Grantfork United Church of Christ Educational Building
  - Sponsored by Grantfork U.C.C. Men’s Fellowship
  - Carryout available at Adult Price Only
  - Package & Fried Sausage for Sale
- Christmas Light Wonderland—Greenville
  - American Farm Heritage Museum
  - November 29th—December 31st
  - Display and Little Red Barn Open 5:00p—9:00p
  - Friday & Saturday Nights Hills Fort & Train will be open

For Events & Information, Go To:
www.illinoisuouth.org/events
or
www.americanfarmheritagemuseum.com

Do you have a Recipe You would like to Share?
Please Send Them to: michelleh@topag.net

Happy Thanksgiving
Southern Fried Chicken

Serves: 4

Ingredients:
- 3 Eggs
- 1/3 C Milk
- 1/2 - 1 C Crystal Hot Sauce
- 2 C Self Rising Flour
- 1 t Black Pepper
- 1-2 1/2# Whole Chicken – Cut into Pieces
- Vegetable Oil for Frying In

Seasoning:
- 1 C Salt
- 1/4 C Black Pepper
- 1/4 C Garlic Powder
  - Mix all Seasoning Ingredients together for Step 3!

Preparation:
1. In a medium size bowl, beat the Eggs with the water. Add enough Hot Sauce so the Egg Mixture is bright orange.
2. In another bowl, combine the Flour and Pepper.
3. Season the chicken with the mixed seasoning.
4. Dip the Seasoned Chicken into the egg mixture and then coat well in the Flour Mixture.
5. Heat the Oil to 350° in a deep pot. Do not fill the pot more than 1/2 full with the Oil.
6. Fry the Chicken in the Oil until brown and crisp. Fry dark meat about 13 to 14 minutes; white meat around 8 to 10 minutes.

For easy clean up, I like to put the Flour Mixture and Seasoning Mixture each into a Gallon Size Ziplock Bag and toss the Chicken in to coat it.

Chili Seasoning

Ingredients:
- 4 T Mild Chili Powder
- 2 T Ground Cumin
- 2 t Salt
- 2 t Black Pepper
- 2 t Paprika*
- 1 1/2 t Garlic Powder

Directions:
Add all spices into the pot and allow to simmer. The longer the spices are allowed to simmer, the more flavor will be added.
You can also store in an air tight container for later use.

Top Ag Cooperative, Inc.

LOCATIONS & MANAGERS
Addieville– Jarid Henss P: 618.424.7736 F: 618.424.0057
Mascoutah– Wayne Laquet P: 618.566.8248 F: 618.566.8250
Okawville– Kevin Hartkemeyer P: 618.243.5293 F: 618.243.6345
Pierron– Dennis Wernle P: 618.654.9804 F: 618.654.5639
St. Libory– Ryan Holtgrave P: 618.243.5053 F: 618.243.6345
Trenton- Shawn Meier P: 618.224.7332 F: 618.243.6345
- Mallory Buescher-Transportation P: 618.224.7808
Lumberyard– Dave Wilke P: 618.243.6137 F: 618.243.6345

STAFF
Accounting
Rhonda Greten, Accounting Clerk 618.243.3390
Jennifer Trame, Staff Accountant 618.243.3297

Billing
John Thomas 618.243.3359

Feed
Duane Kampwerth (Trenton) 618.224.7332
Lucas Lehde (Okawville) 618.314.2596
Shawn Meier (Trenton) 618.698.3123

Grain
Scott Harre, Grain Manager 618.243.3357
Jacob Brammeier, Grain Merchandiser 618.243.3351
Mike Fuhler, Grain Merchandiser (Trenton) 618.224.7804
Brett Gilomen, Grain Merchandiser (Pierron) 618.654.9804
Beth Pothast, Grain Accountant 618.243.3350

Agronomy
Okawville
Willie Harriss, Agronomy Manager 618.534.8908
Andrew Rensing 618.795.2600
Brandon Buss 618.314.2841

Pierron
Josh Tebbe 618.520.0437
Dennis Wernle 618.960.8512
Ryan Schumacher 618.402.9037

Trenton
Doug Horstmann 618.578.3349
Tyler Gross 618.410.9467
Jake Greten (Seed) 618.224.7830

- Smoking Paprika really gives your chili a great smoky flavor, but any type will work well! **