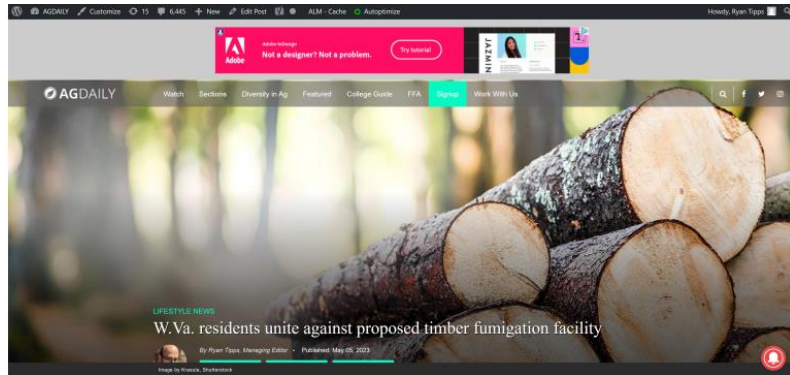




ACN
Agricultural
Communicators
Network

2024 Writing Contest Winners

1st place



“W.Va. residents unite against proposed timber fumigation facility”
Ryan Tipps
AGDAILY

2nd place

\$2 Billion Ag Industry Technology Agreement

AGCO, Trimble Sign \$2-Billion Deal

10/31/2023 | 7:10 PM CDT

By Dan Miller, Progressive Farmer Senior Editor



AGCO is already developing autonomous solutions like this tractor and baler with a goal to deliver a full-season system by 2030. (Provided by AGCO Fendt)

Trimble and AGCO Corp. are forming a joint venture by way of a blockbuster technology agreement. AGCO pays Trimble \$2 billion cash for 85% of its agricultural assets and technologies. The as-yet-to-be-named joint venture will be the exclusive provider of Trimble Ag's technology and will maintain the Trimble brand and Trimble retail channels. With regulatory approval, AGCO will own 85% of the venture; Trimble will own 15%.

The new tech partners are calling the agreement the largest ever of its kind.

"We are superhappy right now," AGCO CEO Eric Hansotia tells DTN/Progressive Farmer. "It's the biggest ag tech deal in history, and essentially, it combines Trimble's ag assets, everything they do in the ag industry, with [AGCO's] precision ag business."

Georgia-based AGCO (Fendt, Massey Ferguson, Precision Planting and Valtra) intends to grow its business around autonomy, precision spraying, connected farming, data management and sustainability. By 2030, it promises to deliver technologies that will give farmers full-season autonomous opportunities.

AGCO is also contributing JCA Technologies to the joint venture. JCA, of Winnipeg, Manitoba, in Canada, is a leading developer of autonomous agricultural systems and was purchased by AGCO in May 2022.

The agreement does not include Trimble's guidance technologies, but there is agreement that Trimble will channel that technology into the joint venture. AGCO's Precision Planting, AGCO OEM (original equipment manufacturer) and 100 other OEMs also will bring the newest AGCO-Trimble technologies to market. Moreover, Trimble's ag systems already reside on 10,000 pieces of equipment. Trimble Ag represents about 20% of Trimble's overall technology business.

“AGCO, Trimble Sign \$2-Billion Deal”
Dan Miller
DTN/Progressive Farmer

3rd place

Hard Winter Wheat Tour Day 1 Results

Day 1 of Winter Wheat Tour Shows Drought Stress

5/16/2023 | 9:31 PM CDT

By Joel Reichenberger, Progressive Farmer Senior Editor



A drought-stressed wheat field in Kansas was one of many seen in the state on Tuesday, the first day of the hard winter wheat tour. The tour continues Wednesday and Thursday. (DTN/Progressive Farmer photo by Joel Reichenberger)

COLBY, Kan. (DTN) -- Gregory Jordan can remember the last major drought on the property he now farms south of Beloit, Kansas.

Barely.

He wasn't yet 3 years old and some of his very first memories, just snapshots, really, include a TV crew coming into their central Kansas farmhouse to interview his dad, Michael, about the year's failed crop. And he remembers standing on the front porch, rubber ducky in hand, when the rain finally came.

That was 1989, and it was the last time the Jordan family abandoned a wheat field. This year, they've already given up on several. One was evaluated by an insurance agent at less than 2 bushels to the acre. They're waiting on the official word for several more fields, perhaps up to nearly a third of this year's crop.

"This is the first time for me," Gregory said, now 35 years old and in his 12th year back on the farm.

“Day 1 of Winter Wheat Tour Shows Drought Stress”
Joel Reichenberger,
DTN/Progressive Farmer

Economics and Management

1st place

Performance over pedigree

This farm succeeds with top talent on multiple leadership levels, trusting that the j bloodlines.



Mike Wilson, Senior Executive Editor
September 11, 2023

🕒 8 Min Read



“Performance over pedigree”

Mike Wilson
Farm Progress Co.

2nd place



“Be Prepared”

Lisa Foust Prater
Successful Farming

3rd place



“Good Cheeses Make Good Neighbors”

Steve Werblow
The Furrow

1st place

2nd place

3rd place

Editors' Notebook

Eagles and Expectations: 50 Years of the Endangered Species Act

12/28/2023 | 11:13 AM CST



By Jason Jenkins, DTN Crops Editor

Connect with Jason:

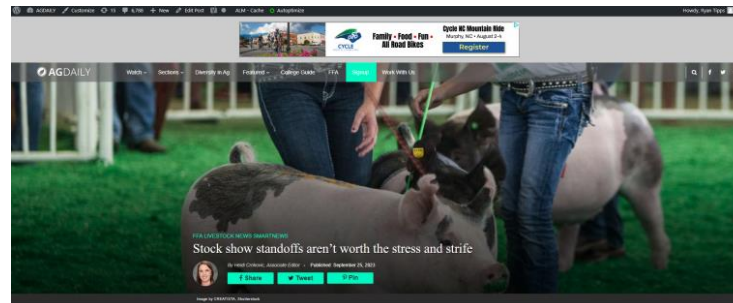
[@JasonJenkinsDTN](#)



JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (DTN) -- When I was kid, catching a glimpse of a bald eagle was always a thrill. Why? Well, it simply didn't happen all that often.

I grew up on a farm in Illinois near the Quad Cities, a region where the mighty Mississippi River uniquely flows from east to west. My best opportunity to see our feathered national symbol typically occurred during this time of the year -- when Old Man Winter tightens his grip on the Upper Midwest. As ice choked the rivers and covered the lakes to the north, the bald eagles that did exist would venture south in search of open waters on which to hunt. Occasionally, we'd see one.

“Eagles and Expectations: 50 Years of the Endangered Species Act”
Jason Jenkins
DTN/Progressive Farmer



“Stock show standoffs aren’t worth the stress and strife”
Heidi Crnkovic
AGDAILY

Maintaining momentum



Mike Rankin
Managing Editor

MOMENTUM is a wonderful thing. We've all seen how positive momentum can bring something or someone from the dregs of defeat or extinction to the top of the hill by merely exerting a little positive energy that, over time, manifests itself into a lot of positive energy. This occurs in all facets of life, including business entities, organizations, churches, politics, and sports. Success is rarely achieved without some degree of momentum, while failure is often the result of lost momentum.

Largely through the efforts of the National Alfalfa & Forage Alliance (NAFA), which was formed by industry leaders in 2006, federal alfalfa research funding has grown significantly over the past 10 years. It's been a study of the very definition of momentum. For example, the federal Alfalfa Seed & Alfalfa Forage Systems Research Program has grown from \$1.35 million allocated annually, which was a fraction of some other commodities

universities don't fill positions unless adequate research funding is available from outside sources. With new hires, additional students are being trained in alfalfa breeding, agronomy, pathology, and extension. Further, the USDA-Agricultural Research Service has been able to bolster its alfalfa research presence with permanent position funding at several locations across the U.S.

Initially, nearly all of the major alfalfa seed companies signed on to voluntarily collect the checkoff dollar per bag. In the past year, 26 alfalfa brands have actively participated in the program. They are to be commended for that decision in seeing the potential value in return to the industry, with little effort on their part. Given that it doesn't cost anything to participate, and every alfalfa entity benefits, it's difficult to understand why a company wouldn't be on board. Nonparticipation is extremely short-sighted, in my opinion.

“Momentum”
Mike Rankin
Hay & Forage Grower

Human Interest

1st place



By Jennifer Shike

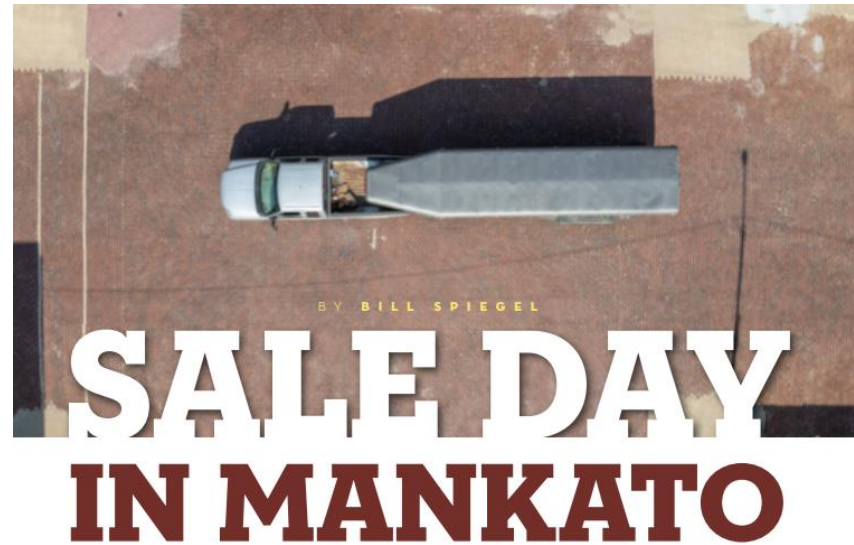
"If you're going to rise, you might as well shine."

There's no question it took a big leap of faith for three Iowa elementary school teachers to quit their jobs to open up a coffee truck in southeast Iowa in the spring of 2022.

Undeniably Naomi Gretter, Kari Berg and Sky Hahn had a lot in common. They were teachers and good ones at that. Their husbands raised pigs and farmed in Washington and Keokuk Counties. They were busy moms caught up in the "crazy life."

But baristas? Not really. They couldn't even make a latte. Still, Gretter of Harper, Iowa, couldn't shake the idea of starting up a coffee truck. She felt like she needed a change from teaching second grade — that there was something more.

2nd place



BY BILL SPIEGEL

SALE DAY IN MANKATO

3rd place



Turkey Red: The wheat that built Kansas



Jennifer M. Latzke, Editor
November 10, 2023

in f x



PHOTOS BY JENNIFER M. LATZKE

1/6

“Spreading Happiness...in a Cup”
Jennifer Shike
Farm Journal's PORK

“Sale Day in Mankato”
Bill Spiegel
The Furrow

“Turkey Red: The wheat that built Kansas”
Jennifer M. Latzke
Kansas Farmer Magazine / Farm Progress

Humorous Article

1st place

Donkey madness



Mike Rankin
Managing Editor

HERE we are — in the throngs of March Madness. I was never much of a basketball player in high school, being too slow and prone to fouling. I only “played” my freshman year and made the third string. I recall we wore different colored jerseys than the top 10 guys. It didn’t matter; we rarely got whistled in. Little did I know back then that my freshman experience wouldn’t be the end of my pathetic basketball career. A call for my hardwood services came again many years later.

“Do you want to be on the celebrity donkey basketball team?” asked the young caller on the other end of the phone. I didn’t think a county extension agent fell into the celebrity category,

owner pointed me to my donkey, a rather timid looking beast named Eeyore, but I would soon learn that looks and names can be deceiving.

At the sound of the whistle, my burro just stood in place. This was as I had hoped. What I didn’t anticipate was the referee running around with a little whip, which he used to hit the floor behind a donkey when it didn’t move. At the sound of his weapon striking the hardwood, my mount took off like it was the Kentucky Derby. Holding on for dear life and with no interest in finding the basketball, we raced to about half court. It was at this point that my steed went from 60 to zero in one second while simultaneously dropping its nose to the floor.

“Donkey madness”
Mike Rankin
Hay & Forage Grower

2nd place



“The \$100 road trip of a lifetime”
Holly Spangler
Prairie Farmer/Farm Progress

3rd place

9 Rules Parents Throw Out the Window During Fair Week



Fair life is rough.

“9 Rules Parents Throw Out the Window
During Fair Week”
Jennifer Shike
Farm Journal's PORK

1st place



“All Work and No Play Is No Joke”
Martha Mintz
for John Deere THE FURROW

2nd place



Rural vet shortage becomes dire

“Blood, vet and tears: The winds of change blow
to vet medicine”
Betty Haynes
Prairie Farmer

3rd place



“Great Tech Hunt”
Dan Miller
DTN/Progressive Farmer



On-Farm Production

1st place

View From the Cab

North Dakota Farmers Blend Farming and Teaching Ag

5/7/2023 | 5:00 AM CDT



By Pamela Smith, Crops Technology Editor

Connect with Pamela:

@PamSmithDTN



North Dakota farmers Chandra and Mike Langseth will report this season as part of DTN's View From the Cab series. (Photo courtesy of Langseth Farms)

DECATUR, Ill. (DTN) -- There's a practiced patience that comes from living in a state where snow still fills the ditch banks while all the rest of the farming world seems to be finishing planting season. Barney, North Dakota, farmers Mike and Chandra Langseth busy themselves during this itchy period by getting equipment lined up and ready.

Winters are long in the Dakotas, but the wheels were beginning to turn on Langseth Family Farms as the calendar flipped to May. Situated on the edge of the Red River Valley in the southeast portion of the state, the farm grows corn, soybeans and some alfalfa. Mike is employed full-time on the farm. Chandra pitches in when she's not tending her job as an agriculture assistant professor at North Dakota State College of Science in Wahpeton, teaching precision agriculture and agronomy courses.

The husband-and-wife team will report throughout this growing season as part of DTN's View From the Cab series.

This weekly feature focuses on crop growing conditions and takes a bird's-eye look at many aspects of farming through the lens of farming correspondents from two geographically diverse regions.

“View From the Cab”
Pamela Smith
DTN/Progressive Farmer

2nd place

Level up on soil health with livestock

Tom Cannon turned to no-till in the late 1990s after watching his wheat dry up and blow away in the

By Courtney Leeper Girgis | Updated on June 27, 2023

In This Article

- Getting started
- Corridors for cattle
- No livestock? No problem
- Seeking connections
- A Cattleman's insight



“Level Up on Soil Health With Livestock”
Courtney Leeper Girgis
Successful Farming

3rd place



How to actually get paid for carbon

“Farmers: How to actually get paid for carbon”
Betty Haynes
Prairie Farmer

Personality Profile

1st place

2nd place

3rd place



After retiring from NASA, Peggy Whitson joined Axiom Space.

FROM THE FARM TO THE STARS

Lessons learned on her family's Iowa farm helped Peggy Whitson become an astronaut and served her well in space.

A MISSION OF ABUNDANCE

Doing more with less has been a long-standing trend throughout Wayne Burleson's life. He's also driven to solve pretty much any problem that happens to mosey into his peripheral. It's hardly surprising then that his first Farmer-to-Farmer mission to Africa in 2008 resulted in him finding a new challenge to work—humanitarian gardening. It's made for a very busy and fulfilling retirement for the 80-year-old land management veteran.

"I've always felt physically and mentally pulled to people in need. In a Christian sense I feel like it's my destiny to make a difference even if I'm just a small cog in a

bigger effort," he says. The bigger effort he refers to is spreading his knowledge of compost and soils to help people in need around the world grow food without expensive inputs. "I've stumbled around trying to be helpful in Africa I got an education that modern ideas won't help there because they don't have the same resources we do," Burleson says.

"Unlocking potential, instead of defeat Burleson saw a challenge. He returned home intent on finding solutions just as he had when he was a range scientist helping producers double their production through grazing

strategies. He took minimalist gardening courses and worked to further simplify the strategies. Then he started growing food in 100% homemade compost. "Soil scientists will say you can't do that because there's salt in compost. I filled buckets with 100% compost, punched a few drain holes and they grew like crazy," he says. It was a critical discovery. "Anybody can make compost anywhere in the world just using household rubbish."

After his initial visit and another trip where he and his wife Connie spent 5 months living in Africa he learned African farmers were spending as much as 80% of their



For the Sake of Pig Care

By Jennifer Shike

Summer Doty hasn't saved anyone from a burning building or led an army into battle. She hasn't jumped into the path of an oncoming train or dismantled a bomb. Still, the work she does day in and day out at Isercrest Farms is proof that not all heroes wear capes.

Experts offer different definitions of heroism, but most agree it involves putting others first without the expectation of reward. That's why Nathan Ider, co-owner of Isercrest Farms in Prospect, Ohio, believes Doty defines what it means to be a barn hero.

animals her entire life. She began raising her own showpigs in seventh grade. Although, they never had more than six sows on the farm at a time, she says that number suited her family just

passion," Ider says. "She clung to it and turned it into a career she excels at. It's pretty unique to find something you truly care about and do it for a living."



“Peggy Whitson: From the Farm to the Stars”

Lisa Foust Prater
Successful Farming

“A Mission of Abundance”

Martha Mintz
for John Deere THE FURROW

“For the Sake of Pig Care”

Jennifer Shike
Farm Journal's PORK

1st place

2nd place

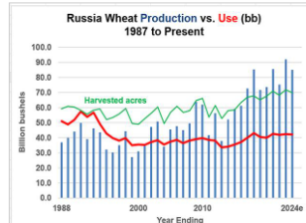
3rd place

Todd's Take

Are Russian Wheat Farmers Outcompeting the World or Is Something Else Going On?

9/15/2023 | 5:00 AM CDT

By **Todd Hultman**, DTN Lead Analyst
Connect with Todd:
[@ToddHultman1](#)



Russia has produced more wheat than it has consumed for 20 consecutive years and has become the world's dominant source of cheap wheat exports. Are Russian farmers truly outcompeting the world or is something else going on? (DTN ProphetX chart by Todd Hultman)

Back in the months leading up to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, I remember thinking that Russia's got a pretty good deal here. All they have to do is put troops near the border and just the threat of invasion scared the market prices of wheat and crude oil higher. Russia was making money without firing a shot and, for that reason, I wondered if Russia would actually invade or not. After all, the international uproar would be enormous. Did Russia really want to face the opposing sanctions that would certainly come from the U.S. and Europe?

We know now that Russia did invade, and even though taking control of Ukraine has become a much more difficult and expensive venture than anticipated, Russia's President Vladimir Putin shows no sign of giving up yet.

Aside from the war, Russia has gotten more of my interest lately in trying to understand just what they're up to in terms of agriculture, especially in the wheat market. Estimates from different sources vary, but according to USDA, Russian wheat exports hit a record-high 46.0 mmt



Dear farm wife: I see you

Long live the rural veterinarian

MY GENERATION

OPINION

BY HOLLY SPANGLER



445-2511. LONG AGO, I committed that number to memory. Those were the days well before phones in pockets, when I was a kid with fast legs who could be sent from the lower barn back up the hill to the house with a mission: Call the vet.

Near 35 years later, the feel of that number washes over me like an old friend. It's never good when you need a veterinarian. But when they get there? Relief. They'll know what to do.

When I was a kid and dialing up the Albion Veterinary Clinic, it was most likely



“Are Russian Wheat Farmers
Outcompeting the World or Is Something
Else Going On?”

Todd Hultman
DTN/Progressive Farmer

“Dear Farm Wife”
Holly Spangler
Prairie Farmer/Farm Progress

“Long live the rural veterinarian”
Holly Spangler
Prairie Farmer/Farm Progress

Technical Feature

1st place

2nd place


3rd place

HIGH-ALTITUDE HATCHING

A nurse cracks fowl problem bringing healthy chicks to fellow high-altitude farmers.

Christine Coburn wanted chickens and she wasn't going to let something as trivial as altitude and thin air stand in her way. Her stubbornness on the matter has resulted in a fine—and fancy—flock that has progeny thriving from Alaska to Hawaii to her local 4-H clubs. She had years of experience hatching and tending chickens on her acreage in Arkansas. It was a given she would continue when she and her husband Chuck moved to Colorado's San Luis Valley. Her first order of chicks was a disaster. "Of the 100 chicks I ordered half were dead on arrival. The rest were gone within a week," she says. The retired registered nurse quickly pinpointed extreme

rived in the low-oxygen environment. Hatching didn't work either. "I couldn't hatch anything. I couldn't order chicks in. But we wanted a self-sustaining farm. That was our dream," Coburn says. A debilitating medical condition keeps her husband from helping with physical tasks, but Coburn held firm.



“High Altitude Hatching”
Martha Mintz
for John Deere THE FURROW



BY MARTHA MINTZ

GREENS GET A NEW FLOW

Local Bounti stacks the greenhouse growing deck for max return.

Efficiency is a closely minded metric in any agricultural operation, but in greenhouses—especially vertical greenhouses—it's make or break. Local Bounti is a controlled environment agriculture (CEA) company that may have cracked the efficiency code. The Hamilton, Montana, based leafy greens (and more) company finds efficiency in distribution, resource use, and most critically in production per square foot. To consumers they tout their ability to deliver fresh lettuce products using 90% less water, 90% less land, covering the fewest food miles possible with a longer shelf life than field-grown greens. Investors may be more keen to know they've cut the time each plant spends in the actual greenhouse nearly in half while eliminating wasted greenhouse space. This is achieved using

house,” says Anna Fabrega, Local Bounti CEO. Time is yield in greenhouses. Turning over crops more quickly means more crops per year and greater return per square foot on the facility capital investment. Seedlings are germinated and grown in a high density, tightly controlled vertical environment. Refined recipes are followed to grow seedlings to exacting specifications. As they grow, plants are spaced appropriately for their size and stage of growth within the vertical system. As they reach target maturity in the vertical space, the crops are moved into the horizontal greenhouse for final grow out, utilizing traditional deep water culture hydroponic methods. Space is still economized with plants being kept in dense con-

Fabrega says, “We're able to be so precise it starts being more like a manufacturing facility than a farm. There will always be the art of the grow, though.” Their streamline system also allows for fast research. Multiple rounds of data are collected in just months—evaluating genotypes, inputs and growing techniques. **Smart growth.** Company founders recognized that to be an indoor agriculture success story they needed more than a great product. Success would hinge on obtaining unique funding, positioning facilities near customers and mastering unit economics before scaling up, Fabrega says. The 1-acre Montana facility has been the proving ground used to refine their systems and prove out scalable concepts since 2020. Local Bounti now has or is in the

“Greens Get A New Flow”
Martha Mintz
for John Deere THE FURROW

Electric, driver-optional tractor sparks interest

BY BETTY HAYNES

MONARCH TRACTOR MADE its Midwestern debut at the 2023 Farm Progress Show in Decatur. Monarch displayed two MK-V tractors, showcasing the machine's fully electric, driver-optional offering. Mark Schwager, Monarch Tractor co-founder and president, was on-site with several members of the Monarch team to answer questions. Schwager has over 15 years of experience in the electric vehicle industry and says he's excited to be on the forefront of electrification in ag.



MONARCH MK-V: The Monarch MK-V Tractor was showcased at the 2023 Farm Progress Show. The tractor is electric, driver-optional and data-driven with a 14-hour run time—the longest on the

The price. The MK-V retail price is \$88,998. The price is considerably higher than other 40-hp equivalent tractors. However, Schwager says the labor, fuel and maintenance savings equate to a payback period as short as 13 months. **The maker.** MK-V tractors are made in the U.S. They tout a farmer-first design, with more than four years of collaboration with farmers during early design and development. All tractors are designed in Livermore, Calif., and built in Lordstown, Ohio, in one of the nation's largest automotive plants.

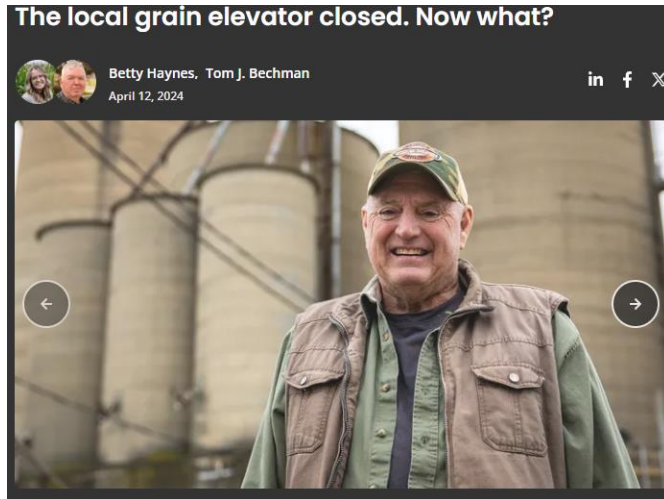
“Electric, driver-optional tractor sparks farmer interest”
Betty Haynes
Prairie Farmer

Team Story

1st place

2nd place

3rd place



“The local grain elevator closed. Now what?”
Betty Haynes and Tom Bechman
Farm Progress



“Chaotic Weather”
Chelsea Dinterman and Alex Gray
Successful Farming



“Prevent the tragedy of combine fires”
Curt Arens, Sarah McNaughton & Mindy Ward
Farm Progress

Emerging Writer

1st place



“Future Grain Marketers of America”
Cassidy Walter

2nd place

The Experts



From a Foreign Land

Last October, Arkansas Attorney General Tim Griffin made headlines when he ordered Chinese-owned Syngenta Seeds to divest 160 research acres in Craighead County, a rare show of enforcement of a state law restricting foreign ownership of U.S. farmland and adding fuel to a fire already catching across the country.

Foreign ownership of American farmland is likely to continue to be a hot topic of concern. As other states may follow Arkansas's lead and Congress debates national approaches, it's important to consider the context of this issue and

whether or not the heat is overblown.

A Bit of History

This issue goes back to the founding of our nation," says Micah Brown, staff attorney at the National Agricultural Law Center. "It was even in the Declaration of Independence as a reason for breaking away from the crown. They didn't like how the crown dealt with land ownership, especially alien land ownership."

According to Brown, the issue has been hot at various political flashpoints throughout America's history. The nation is in the middle of its fifth such

3rd place



Rural Route 2

Editor's Note by Bethany Baratta
bbaratta@iasoybeans.com

The Greatest Gift

It's not something you can buy online. You can't wrap it up in shiny paper, attach a shiny bow and gift it for Christmas. This year, our family's top gift comes in the form of our neighborhood.

My family has been blessed with amazing neighbors our entire lives. I grew up knowing this, but it becomes especially evident when your family deals with what seems like months of recovery from a

A few close to our family know the details of the injuries and recovery. There have been offers to help with our livestock and crops. Neighbors and friends have dropped off meals, and cards of well wishes are stacked on a pile on the kitchen island and lining the windowsill of my dad's hospital room. We're grateful for the support of our friends and our community.

While putting this issue together, I

“The Greatest Gift”
Bethany Baratta