



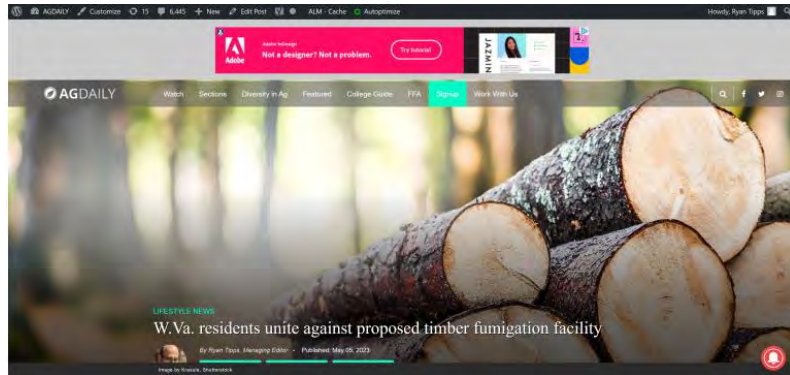
**ACN**

Agricultural  
Communicators  
Network

# **2024 Writing Contest Winners**

# Breaking News

1<sup>st</sup> place



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

2<sup>nd</sup> 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 Hansotis 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

3<sup>rd</sup> 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

1<sup>st</sup> 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.

2<sup>nd</sup> place



“Be Prepared”  
Lisa Foust Prater  
Successful Farming

3<sup>rd</sup> place



“Good Cheeses Make Good Neighbors”  
Steve Werblow  
The Furrow

# Editorial Opinion

1<sup>st</sup> place

2<sup>nd</sup> place

3<sup>rd</sup> 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

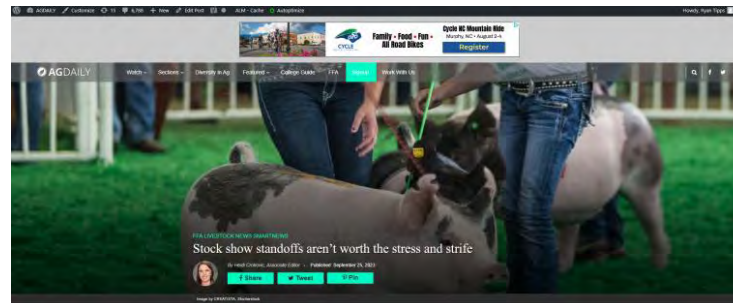
Connect with Jason:

[@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.



Mike Rankin  
Managing Editor

## Maintaining momentum

**M**OMENTUM 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.

“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

“Momentum”  
Mike Rankin  
Hay & Forage Grower

# Human Interest

1<sup>st</sup> place



By Jennifer Shike

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

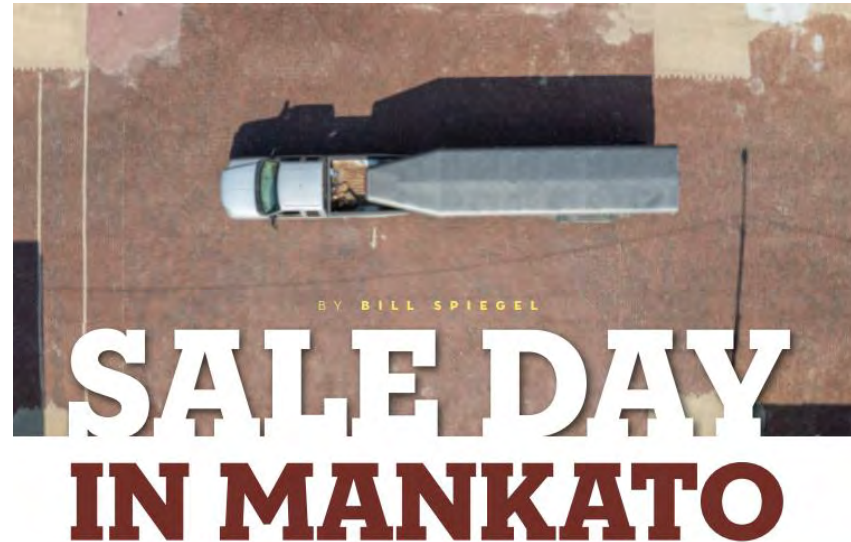
**T**here's no question it took a big leap of faith for three Iowa elementary school teachers to quit their jobs to open up a coffee truck in southeast Iowa in the spring of 2022.

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.

2<sup>nd</sup> place



“Sale Day in Mankato”  
Bill Spiegel  
The Furrow

3<sup>rd</sup> place



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

# Humorous Article

1<sup>st</sup> place

## Donkey madness



Mike Rankin  
Managing Editor

**H**ERE 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

2<sup>nd</sup> place



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

3<sup>rd</sup> 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

1<sup>st</sup> place



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

2<sup>nd</sup> place



**Rural vet shortage becomes dire**

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

3<sup>rd</sup> place



“Great Tech Hunt”  
Dan Miller  
DTN/Progressive Farmer

# On-Farm Production

1<sup>st</sup> 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

2<sup>nd</sup> 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

3<sup>rd</sup> place



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

# Personality Profile

1<sup>st</sup> place

2<sup>nd</sup> place

3<sup>rd</sup> 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 nudge 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—sustainable gardening. It's made for a very busy and fulfilling retirement for the 69-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. "As I 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 acres' homemade compost. "Soil scientists will say you can't do that because there's soil in compost. I filled buckets with manure, compost, punched a few drain holes and they grow 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 Idlecrest 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 who Nathan Idle, co-owner of Idlecrest Farms in Proseekt, 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," Idle 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

1<sup>st</sup> place

2<sup>nd</sup> place

3<sup>rd</sup> place

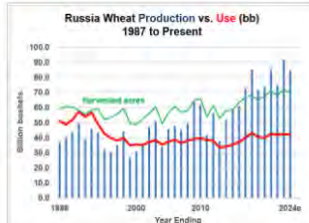
## Todd's Take

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”  
Holly Spangler  
Prairie Farmer/Farm Progress

## 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



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

“Are Russian Wheat Farmers  
Outcompeting the World or Is Something  
Else Going On?”  
Todd Hultman  
DTN/Progressive Farmer

# Technical Feature

1<sup>st</sup> place

2<sup>nd</sup> place

3<sup>rd</sup> place



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



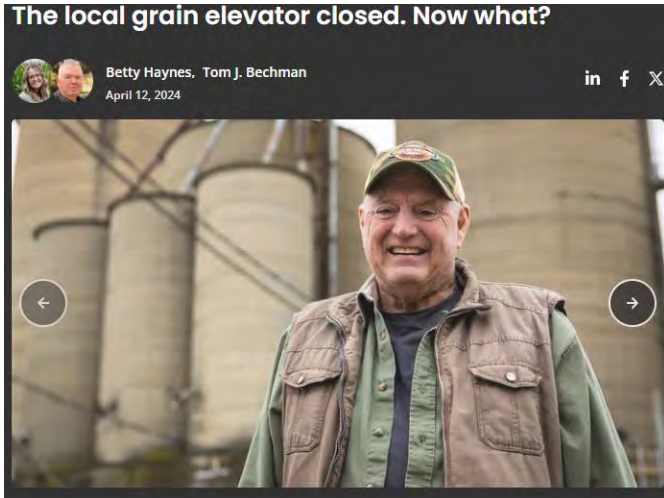
“Greens Get A New Flow”  
Martha Mintz  
for John Deere THE FURROW



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

# Team Story

1<sup>st</sup> place



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

2<sup>nd</sup> place



“Chaotic Weather”  
Chelsea Dinterman and Alex Gray  
Successful Farming

3<sup>rd</sup> place

## Prevent the tragedy of combine fire

Take precautions to prevent combine fires this harvest season, and be sure to talk covered.



+1 Curt Arens, Sarah McNaughton and 1 more  
August 31, 2023

6 Min Read



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

# Emerging Writer

1<sup>st</sup> place



“Future Grain Marketers of America”  
Cassidy Walter

2<sup>nd</sup> 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

3<sup>rd</sup> 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