



Noland Farms, Inc.

Blue Mound, IL

2014 Volume 2

Greetings



Greetings from our family at Noland Farms! With summer in full-swing, we hope you have had the opportunity to take advantage of the season. In farming, we enter each growing season with excitement and optimism. Spring acts as the catalyst that sets a winter's worth of anticipation into action. All the planning and analysis of the crop plan begins as the first piece of machinery enters a dormant field...then the floodgates of activity open!

For rapidly growing corn and soybeans, the spring of 2014 transitioned into summer in a seamless manner. Although our crop plan is engrained with risk management

practices, we often joke that the weather ultimately has the ability to make us look competent in our job!

Throughout this growing season, favorable temperatures and timely rainfall has allowed for tremendous upside potential in crop yield. We feel blessed.

The drought of 2012 and adverse conditions of recent seasons remain fresh in our memories. Crop conditions remain very favorable, and the factors of supply and demand are at work. The crop is not "in the bin," but corn's yield potential appears very promising, and commodity prices have eroded to four year lows.



Seasonal Recap

We enter each spring anxious to implement operational adjustments aimed at improving our efficiency. Directly following a season's conclusion, we discuss potential "tweaks" for the following year's operations. The substantial rainfall and planting delays of 2013 were challenging, frustrating and a great learning experience for future seasons.

Our typical crop plan includes a sprayer applying herbicide with liquid fertilizer to a field prior to the crop being planted – we call this the "weed and feed" application. This spring, through a mutually-beneficial partnership with a local retail cooperative, we used our tanker to transfer product to the company's sprayer.

The reallocation of an operator, from spraying, allowed us to operate in extended shifts planting the corn crop in 7 days.

Following the completion of our corn planting, storms produced delays in field operations. With our crop already in the ground, we were able to shift focus to planting soybeans and sidedressing corn.

Operational changes were also implemented in our soybean program. We transitioned to planting soybeans in 15 inch rows through the purchase of a Kinze planter. Research has indicated that a yield advantage exists in row spacing narrower than 30 inches.

The narrowing of rows has also allowed us to reduce plant population, which correlates to a lower seed cost per acre for our family farm and landowner partners. The narrow row also allows the plant to canopy or "close the row" quicker, which aids in weed control and preserving soil moisture.

We anticipate that utilizing this narrow-row planter will allow us to increase yield with less plant population, essentially producing more with less.



A non-operational focus in our soybean program has been in our commitment to produce a soybean with an enhanced value. As farmers, we are essentially growing a raw commodity at the origination point for value-added products. Over the past five years, we have consistently increased the acres of contract seed production grown. Producing seed beans increases the workload associated with planting and harvesting each variety, but a bushel premium is awarded following a product quality inspection.

Maintaining product purity is vital, so a full "clean out" of the associated machinery and equipment is conducted through the harvesting of each variety. Following harvest, the varieties are stored on farm in grain bins and delivered to a production plant through a "buyer's call" format. The production plant processes and bags each variety for commercial resale the following growing season.



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News

In 2013, our family established the Noland Family Agriculture, Horticulture and Sciences Scholarship for a graduating student at Meridian High School in Macon, Ill. The next generation of young leaders shows great promise, and our association with the scholarship program has reaffirmed this belief.

We are pleased to share that the 2014 recipient is David Shroyer. David will be studying Agricultural and Biological Engineering in the College of ACES at the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana. David – learn, have fun and Go Illini!

A few unique opportunities were presented to members of our family this year. Through affiliation with Illinois Corn Growers Association, we were approached by the **Corn Farmers Coalition** (www.cornfarmerscoalition.org).

“The Corn Farmers Coalition is an alliance of family corn farmers from across the United States and represents tens of thousands of dues-paying farmers. The coalition formed in 2008 to educate policy-makers in Washington about how tech-savvy, innovative farmers are growing more corn every year – for food, animal feed, ethanol and exports.”

Grant, Logan, Hudson and Elizabeth participated as one of the feature farm families from across the country. Although standing in a corn field at 5 a.m. with two young children was a bit challenging (for parents, video and photo crews), we enjoyed the experience and strongly support the positive message being shared by the Coalition.

Grant is also one of four contributors to the “From the Field” section of the Illinois AgriNews for the 2014 growing season. He provides weekly comments regarding crop reports, agricultural issues and industry events for the central part of the state. The Illinois AgriNews focuses on a wide array of topics impacting local farm families and business. Topics include crop and livestock management, agribusiness and new products, market information and national and state political issues.

Our involvement in the Corn Farmers Coalition and Illinois AgriNews reflect our commitment to re-investing in our community and industry. An investment of time and willingness to serve often has greater impact than any monetary contribution.



David Shroyer, 2014 recipient of the Noland Family Agriculture, Horticulture and Sciences Scholarship.



 [View video at www.cornfarmerscoalition.org](http://www.cornfarmerscoalition.org)

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The current farmland market has provided exciting opportunities for those with current land holdings and individuals interested in purchasing a farm. We are excited to discuss investment opportunities!

Current operational updates
and new pictures
are available on
our website.
www.nolandfarms.com

