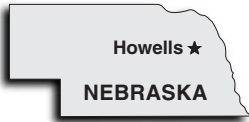


Private/Coop Partnership

BUILDING “THE BEST SWINE FEED MILL IN THE STATE OF NEBRASKA”



Central Plains Milling
Howells, NE • 402-986-1400

Founded: 2006
Milling capacity: 104,000 tpy
Products: Complete swine feeds, beef creep feeds
Number of employees: 7

Key personnel:

- Russ Vering, president
- Mike Tomka, production manager
- Eileen Gentrup, accounting

Supplier List

- Air compressor** Gardner Denver Inc.
- Automation system** ... Repete Corp.
- Bearing sensors** Rolfes@Boone
- Bin level sensors** Monitor Technologies LLC
- Bucket elevators** Hayes & Stolz Ind. Mfg. Co. Inc.
- Concrete contractor** Walker Foundations Inc.
- Contractor** Manufacturing Solutions Inc.
- Conveyors (belt)** Hi Roller Conveyors
- Conveyors (drag)** The Essmuller Co.
- Distributors** ... Hayes & Stolz Ind. Mfg. Co. Inc.
- Elevator buckets** Tapco Inc.
- Gates** Tom-Cin Metals Inc.
- Liquid tanks** Darlington International Inc.
- Magnets** ... Bunting Magnetics Co.
- Metal building** ... Behlen Buildings
- Millwright** ... Agra Erectors Inc.
- Mixer** Scott Equipment Co.
- Microingredient system** ... Sudenga Industries Inc.
- Motion sensors** 4B Components Ltd.
- Roller mill** ... RMS Roller-Grinder
- Scales** Tom-Cin Metals Inc.
- Screw feeders** Screw Conveyor Corp.
- Square bins** . Tom-Cin Metals Inc.
- Tower support system** LeMar Industries Inc.
- Weigh lorry** ... Tom-Cin Metals Inc.



New 104,000-tpy Central Plains feed mill in Howells, NE is operated as a partnership between Vering Feed Service Inc. and Frontier Cooperative Co. Photos by Ed Zdrojewski.

Privately-held Vering’s Feed Service in Howells, NE and Frontier Cooperative Co., a 3,000-member farmer-owned coop based in Brainard, NE found themselves with some common interests in 2006.

The result has been a joint venture – Central Plains Milling – and a new feed mill with a capacity of 104,000 tpy at the south end of Howells.

Russ Vering, who is president of Central Plains, notes that the old Vering’s Feed Service mill in downtown Howells lacked the capacity to meet local demand, primarily for swine feed, and had no room for expansion.

“We needed to do something,” he says. “The mill was rated at 110 tons in an eight-hour shift, and some days we were pushing 220, working late into the night.”

Frontier Cooperative, which operates

a small feed mill at Bellwood, NE, also was looking to expand feed production, says Randy Robeson, president and general manager.



From left: Randy Robeson, president and general manager, Frotier Cooperative Co.; Russ Vering, president, Central Plains Milling; and Eileen Gentrup, accounting.



The old Vering's Feed Service feed mill in downtown Howells is still available as a backup production facility if it's ever needed.

“When Russ and I met, we both knew that we wanted to build a feed mill,” Robeson says. Frontier moves an annual volume of 60 million bushels of grain, providing a reliable supply for Vering’s more livestock-heavy region, and a feed mill at Howells would provide a new outlet for the cooperative’s grain and a way to expand its territory northward.

“An important goal for us,” adds Vering, “is to provide better technology in Nebraska for livestock production. There are a lot of feed mills in Nebraska, but few of them have this level of technology for the production of high-quality swine feed.”

Vering already had a suitable site for the mill, adjacent to a 500,000-bushel steel grain elevator it was operating at the south end of Howells.

The partners were introduced to their contractor – Manufacturing Solutions Inc., Humboldt, IA (515-



Russ Vering utilizes a Repete loadout interface to load a predetermined quantity of finished feed onto a truck.

332-2605) – through Land O’Lakes/Purina Feeds. Vering says the company’s owner, Michael Heier, has a strong reputation in the Midwestern feed industry.

Construction on the mill began in the fall of 2007, and the facility began production in August 2008. The cost is confidential.

Mill Features

The Central Plains Milling facility is of steel construction on a 30-foot-x-30-foot footprint. The mill has a capacity of 50 tph, 85% mash

swine feeds and most of the rest cattle creep feeds. All operations are under the control of a Repete automation system.

A 7,000-bph overhead Hi Roller enclosed belt conveyor carries grain from an existing elevator leg to the mill structure. The structure includes 16 Tom-Cin ingredient bins with a total capacity of 750 tons and eight loadout bins holding 168 tons.

Incoming whole grains are ground to a consistent particle size on a 24-tph RMS roller mill featuring double-high 10x36 rolls. A second RMS roller mill is on order.

Feed is mixed in a Scott 3-ton single-ribbon mixer, with an average mix time of three minutes, though that time could be adjusted after conducting CV tests down the road. Liquids, minor ingredients, and microingredients also are added at the mixer, and the mill utilizes a 12-bin Sudenga microsystem.

Feed mill workers or truckers can load feed trucks using a loadout interface that operates a movable weigh hopper for accurate loads.

“Our Repete system allows us to bill according to actual production,” Vering comments. “We never average.”



Production Manager Mike Tomka monitors mill operations from a central computerized workstation.

Ed Zdrojewski, editor