



Ampride - Alta Vista - Manhattan - Onaga - Westmoreland  
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**JANUARY**

2012

[www.manhattan.coop](http://www.manhattan.coop)

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**ENERGY**

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**FEED**

Rod Bohn

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Rob Ashburn

**GRAIN**

Doug Biswell

**SEED**

Dave Stover

**Location Managers**

Alta Vista - Rick Lucas

Onaga - Robby McGowan

Ampride - Jerry Fenske

Westmoreland - Jeff Overbey

**Our Mission:**

To be your business of choice,  
anticipating customer needs,  
and growing a progressive  
company.

**"In Business For  
Your Business"**

**Management Notes**

**Darin Marti**

As always, the end of the year is a time of reflection and also a time to look forward. I like reflection time to relive the successes and learn from the failures. But since I cannot change the past, I really like to look to the future and try to be as prepared as possible to tackle those challenges that will come my way.

This past year was probably no different than others in the number of successes and failures for all of us including your Cooperative. It seems to be a continuing challenge to figure out where we as a company should fit into the ag business arena in our area. Where should we be spending our time and money to maximize the services and profitability for our members and this Cooperative and really the Cooperative system? Decisions that our neighbors make can affect the decisions that your board of directors makes in this Coop so it can become a guessing game.

Beyond all the economic and political issues, I suppose the most notable news event for us in 2011 was the weather. The extremes for not only this area but really the entire world have been incredible. Freshest in our minds is the most recent fall harvest. In August, we expected to receive ½ of an average crop. In the end, we were very pleased as grain receipts were 90% of a 5 year average and slightly larger than the 2010 crop. The northern portion of our trade area received rain so Onaga experienced

their 2<sup>nd</sup> largest crop out of the last 12 years. Conversely, the Alta Vista area was very dry and experienced the 3<sup>rd</sup> worst crop in the same time period. That is a substantial variation in 60 miles!

Your Cooperative was successful again in 2011 in that the company was profitable. Given that profit was not being achieved several years ago, we are grateful to be able to do so now. Profitability has allowed us to continue to update equipment and improve facilities to allow us to better serve our patrons.

Recently, your board of directors has been looking at the most strategic location to add more grain storage. With yields continuing to increase and the need for speed and space in the grain business we have felt that storage was a good investment for your Cooperative. It was the consensus of the board that Onaga is the next logical location for additional grain storage so they have approved the construction of a 300,000 bushel bin there. It was 5 years ago that a new 400,000 bushel facility was built there and now it is time to add on to it. This bin should be completed in time and will allow greater flexibility and efficiency in the Coop's grain handling process.

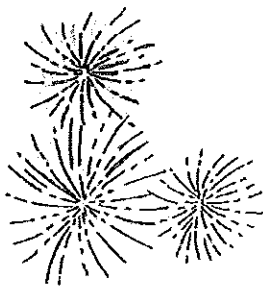
Projects such as this are only possible because you have continued to patronize this company. The entire staff certainly appreciates and thanks you for your loyalty and support and look forward to working with you another year.

**Thank you again and we wish you a very Happy and Prosperous 2012.**

## Grain Comments Doug Biswell

Another year in the books, and it certainly was a year that provided plenty of opportunity. Nearby corn futures had a \$2.30 trading range, nearby beans \$3.60 and Kansas City wheat also near \$3.60. Those are just the futures trading range; we have also had basis level swings that provided nice income potential for those of you that are hedgers. For example, if a grower did everything perfect, meaning that they sold the December corn futures high in that \$7.70 area, and waited to set their basis until it was at its best, which was near ten cents under the December futures delivered to one of our elevators in mid October that's equates to a cool \$7.60 cash corn. Of course it is easy to look back and do the right thing, my point was just to show what opportunities volatility provides. I don't think that there are very many of us that don't let our emotions play too big of a part in making business decisions. View these wild swings as opportunities not misfortune. World weather currently providing some opportunity to get some grain sold. Hot and dry conditions in parts of South America and the Former Soviet Union are threatening production potential. By the time you read this article conditions in those areas may have changed dramatically but we will be given plenty of scares this year to get some grain priced as profitable levels.

Thank you for your continued grain business and as always if you have any questions or comments please feel free to give me a call.



## Stover's Story Dave Stover

Happy New Year. This time of year I always seem to reflect on the past years happenings, and look toward the next year. I have noticed that the mood I am in at the time has a lot of bearing on the outlook for the next year. If it's been a bad day or so, the outlook is bleak. If it has been a good day, I am very optimistic. I guess that is human nature.

The reality is that neither I nor anyone can predict anything with complete certainty. So in our business, it is best to plan for a good season, because if you plan for a poor season, you are certain to have one.

We are planning some meetings around the territory. One meeting is on soybean performance issues. There will be a spray clinic toward the end of the month. In February, there will also be some opportunities to learn how to improve your profitability on your farm. Be looking for announcements coming soon.

Thanks to all the patrons who have worked with us on corn seed. It has made a poor supply situation a little better by knowing we have your needs covered. Soybean seed supply is good, and we have several STS varieties to choose from if double crop behind wheat is in your plan.

We look forward to working with you next year on all your crop production needs.



## Fuel Department Jerry Fenske

We are getting to the time of the year that fuel prices have generally fallen and producers start looking to contract the coming years fuel. Sometime between now and the middle of February is historically the lowest time period to get prices locked in. We will offer contract prices for our producers. If you are interested in contracting, please contact me with gallons and time periods you would like to contract. Fuel contracts can be great tools for planning expenses and easing the headache of market increases. We currently have a limited supply of assorted Mobil and Phillips oils for sale. I would like to clear many of these products from our inventory. Most of these items are in five gallon buckets or fifty-five gallon drums. Please call me for a list of products and prices.

Thank you to everyone who has supported us throughout this last year and continues to support us into the future.

