



651-923-4496 | agpartners.net



On the HOME FRONT

Summer 2026 | Volume 16

A #FarmerStrong Publication

WE KNOW YOU ARE THE BEST CUSTOMERS- SO LET'S SEE IT!

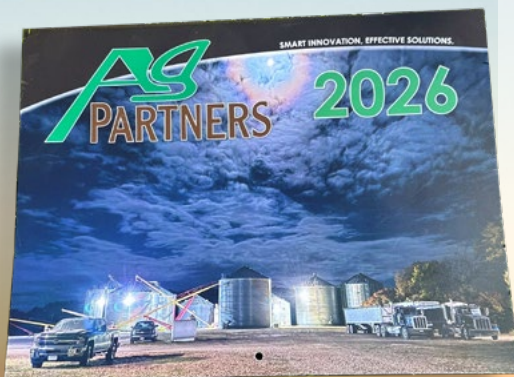
Share your pics for the
2027 Ag Partners calendar,
and don't wait too long!

LAST CALL

DEADLINE: AUGUST 31

All customers' ag photos welcome;
and snowy, wintery photos are
always in short supply.

Photos received after
August 31 will be kept for the
following year.



**Upload your
digital photos:**

[www.agpartners.net/
calendar-photo-submission/](http://www.agpartners.net/calendar-photo-submission/)

**OR E-mail
them:**

calendar@agpartners.net

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Ag Partners #FarmerStrong Links:

AGRONOMY	FARM SUPPLY	LOGIN	NEW CUSTOMER
FEED	GRAIN	CAREERS	
ENERGY	CASH BIDS	WEATHER	

30 YEARS FARMER STRONG
est. 1996

We're celebrating 30 years and hosting four Appreciation events! We wouldn't be here without you, so grab the family and join us for a fun night out. Together, let's kick back and share some food and conversation as friends and neighbors.

Whether you head to Ellsworth, Elgin, Le Center, or Gopher Hills, we can't wait to see you there!



For those wishing to golf, be sure to call Gopher Hills to reserve a tee time: 507-263-2507. Tee times start as early as 6:30 am.

Meals and golfing are on us. Carts are available from Gopher Hills for \$13/9 holes or \$20/18 holes.



CUSTOMER APPRECIATION DAYS

TUE
11
AUG

4 - 8 PM
Ag Partners
411 E Business Way
ELLSWORTH

WED
12
AUG

4 - 8 PM
Ag Partners
27594 Cty Rd 25
ELGIN

TUE
18
AUG

4 - 8 PM
Ag Partners
1273 W Derrynane St
LE CENTER

THU
20
AUG

ALL DAY
Gopher Hills
Golf Course
26155 Nicolai Ave
CANNON FALLS, MN

Golf: 6:30 AM - 8 PM
Meal: 11:30 AM - 7:30 PM

Ag Partners wouldn't be Ag Partners without YOU.
Join us for Customer Appreciation Days!

4 DAYS, 4 GREAT EVENTS AND YOU'RE INVITED!



WE'RE
SAVING A
SEAT FOR
YOU!




SPOTLIGHT: OUR ROOTS RUN DEEP

By Terra Wierson, Communications Specialist

We're not here by accident. Our 30 trips around the sun as Ag Partners has navigated not only the changing of the seasons, literally as well as figuratively. As a co-op, we have received the faith of our patrons and honest determination by hard working individuals, continuing to move the co-op forward

I believe it's not just where we are right now, or even the idea of the future. Our story begins well before 1996 with the foundation on which we've been built and we've moved through the decades putting trust in those guiding principles as a road map to the future.

We acknowledge the entrepreneurs, farmers and companies who built us. Many of you reading this have worked with, and fondly remember those individuals in the past.

A while back, I started thinking on this and wondered what that might look like

as a visual. With the help of archived co-op documents, some of my co-workers and the far corners of the internet Like a puzzle, I've been piecing together a co-op family tree.

As this takes shape, it somewhat resembles a corn stalk, braced by unique layers of roots, keeping our values grounded and giving us strength. What keeps us reaching toward the sky are our customers, evolving market needs, our department "branches," and the employees who care for them. When I say "us," I mean you, me, my co-workers, our members, our Board... the co-op as a whole.

The successes of Ag Partners has never been about any one person or generation. It's the result of all of us, past and present, making practical decisions and investments that strengthened the cooperative over time. Each generation built on the work of the one before,



creating opportunities that continue to benefit our rural communities today.

Agriculture will continue to evolve, and so will Ag Partners. New technologies, changing markets and new opportunities will shape the years ahead, but our purpose remains the same: helping our customers succeed and supporting the communities we call home.

Thank you for being part of our story. I'm proud of our history, excited about our future, and looking forward to the decades ahead.

...And I hope you enjoy 2026's Customer Appreciation Days!

LOOKING BACK: 30 YEARS IN THE AG COOPERATIVE BUSINESS

By Terry Kahle, Asst. Agronomy Department Manager

Thirty plus years ago, when I began my career with the cooperative (Hwy Ag Services), agriculture was a much different business. Looking back, it's remarkable to see how much our industry has changed while the values that define agriculture have remained the same.

In the early days, equipment was much smaller. We spread fertilizer with Airflow machines that were considered cutting-edge at the time, and trucks hauled products from one local location to the farm. Nearly every town had its own fertilizer plant, chemical storage facility, and seed warehouse. Local cooperatives were the heart of their communities, serving as trusted partners for farmers and gathering places where neighbors exchanged information as often as they exchanged handshakes.

Communication was a far cry from what it is today. There were no cell phones, emails, or text messages. If you needed to reach someone, you called the office or left a message on the landline. Plans were made in person, and everyone relied on

"While agriculture has embraced incredible innovation, the greatest constant has been the people."

teamwork, trust, and a little patience to keep things moving. Somehow, we always managed to get the job done.

Farm planning looked different as well. Field maps were spread across the desk, and crop plans were developed with paper, pencils, and years of experience. Decisions were built on conversations and relationships rather than computer screens and digital data.

The farms themselves have changed tremendously over the past three decades. Most operations included livestock, and crop rotations were much more diverse. It was common to see corn, soybeans, oats, hay and pasture all on the same farm. Today, many farms have become highly specialized, with entire operations dedicated to one or two crops. Technology, improved genetics and larger equipment have helped producers become more efficient than ever before, allowing today's farmers to manage far more acres than we could have imagined 30 years ago.

While agriculture has embraced incredible innovation, the greatest constant has been the people. I've had the privilege of working alongside dedicated coworkers and serving hardworking farm families who care deeply about their land, their communities, and the future of agriculture. The friendships built over the years have meant just as much as any accomplishment.

As I reflect on the past 30 years, I feel grateful to have witnessed the evolution of our industry firsthand. We've gone from paper field plans to precision agriculture, from landlines to smartphones, and from local facilities in nearly every town to larger regional operations. Yet the cooperative mission has never changed: serving our members with integrity, providing trusted advice, and helping farmers succeed.



Have you heard?

WE'RE MAKING A MAJOR INVESTMENT IN THE STEWARTVILLE AREA!

Exciting progress is being made on our new Stewartville agronomy facility as construction nears completion. It looks like we are tracking to bring the plant online this September. This investment reflects our ongoing commitment to providing exceptional service to our customers in southeast Minnesota while expanding our ability to meet the growing needs of the industry. The new facility will offer significant improvements in efficiency and capacity, including a fertilizer plant with three times the storage capacity of our current operation and a state-of-the-art liquid plant featuring automation technology that will enhance productivity. We are excited about the opportunities this new facility will create and look forward to continuing to serve the Stewartville community and surrounding areas with the same trusted service, backed by even greater capabilities.

Stewartville Agronomy Location Manager Pete Doherty says, "Our customers can expect the same great customer experience as well as some new added benefits including greater efficiency. As location manager, I look forward to having a greater capability of serving our current and future customers. This new plant will better allow us to continue serving the Stewartville area community as well as our neighbors. We're looking forward to a successful fall in our new facility for the co-op and growers!"



FROM PLANTING TO HARVEST

HOW CENEX PREMIUM DIESEL & LUBRICANTS SUPPORT YOU

By Dan Schmidt, Energy Sales, Southern MN



On today's farm, efficiency isn't optional. It's how you stay on schedule, manage costs, and protect your equipment investments. While technology and agronomy often get the spotlight, fuel and lubricants play a critical behind-the-scenes role in keeping your tractors, combines, and essential machinery moving reliably, season after season.

Spring planting: The dirt, and Mother Nature won't wait. When conditions are right, your equipment must be ready for grueling days. Cenex premium diesel fuel, the brand Ag Partners trusts, delivers reliable starts and powerful performance,

even through fluctuating spring temperatures. Formulated to reduce injector deposits and extend engine life, Cenex premium diesels, like Ruby Fieldmaster, are proven to restore up to 4.5% more power compared to typical #2 diesel.

Summer work: As crops emerge, the workload shifts but never slows. Tasks like spraying, mowing, baling, and chopping place steady, high demands on your machinery under peak temperatures and dusty conditions.

Fall harvest: This is when preparation truly pays off. Heavy

loads and long run times demand high-quality fuel. Using Cenex premium fuels and lubricants helps engines max out their capacity without giving out.

Together, from planting to harvest, Ag Partners and Cenex support every pass you make across the field. We deliver the high-performance fuels and advanced lubricants your machinery demands, helping your equipment hold up under pressure all year long.

YOUR AG PARTNERS ENERGY SALES TEAM

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Dan Schmidt

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dan.schmidt@agpartners.net

Dave Radtke

Energy Sales,
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dave.radtke@agpartners.net

Energy Dept. Direct Line

(651) 923-6004

ENERGY EMERGENCY:

After Hours: 651-380-4898
Dangerous situations may need: 911
Always call before you dig: 811



Feed Contracting: A Proactive Approach to Managing Feed Cost and Risk

By Eric Schultz, Feed Sales Manager

As we look ahead to the harvest season, livestock producers face the same challenge every year: balancing feed costs with profitability for the upcoming year. Markets can change quickly due to weather events, crop yields, transportation issues, and shifts in commodity demand. While no one can predict exactly where feed prices will go, contracting your feed needs in advance can help reduce uncertainty and minimize risk for your operation.

For livestock operations, feed represents one of the largest production expenses. Whether you're feeding dairy cattle, beef cattle, swine, or poultry, fluctuations in feed ingredient prices can significantly impact overall profitability. Waiting until feed is needed can expose producers to market volatility at a time when supplies may be tighter and prices less favorable. By securing all or a portion of your feed needs in advance, you can establish known costs and reduce some of the risks associated with unpredictable markets.

Ag Partners offers several contracting options designed to help manage the risks associated with volatile markets. We offer fixed-price, basis, and futures contracts on many of the commodities used as feed ingredients. We can also provide fixed-price contracts on custom protein mixes and pellets. Most contracts are written for 3-, 6-, or 12-month periods; however, we can customize contract terms to fit the needs of your operation. Additionally, we can place tar-

get-price offers if there is a specific price you are looking to achieve, allowing you to avoid monitoring the markets every day.

Our Feed Department works closely with producers to evaluate feed inventories, production goals, and market conditions to develop purchasing strategies tailored to individual operations. Every farm is unique, and contracting options can be customized to align with each producer's needs and risk tolerance.

Contracting feed is not necessarily about buying at the absolute bottom of the market. Instead, it is a risk management tool designed to provide cost certainty and improve budgeting. Knowing your feed costs months in advance allows you to make more informed decisions regarding livestock inventories, marketing plans, and overall financial management. In many cases, having a predictable feed budget is more valuable than trying to outguess the market.

A common approach is to contract a percentage of anticipated feed needs rather than 100 percent of requirements. This strategy

allows producers to lock in a base level of feed-cost protection while maintaining flexibility to take advantage of future market opportunities. The appropriate percentage varies by operation, but securing a portion of projected feed usage can be an effective way to balance risk and opportunity.

As harvest approaches, now is an excellent time to review your feed requirements and explore contracting opportunities. Historically, the period just before or during harvest has often provided favorable opportunities to contract feed needs for the coming year. Taking a proactive approach today can help reduce uncertainty tomorrow, allowing you to focus on other important priorities, including animal performance and the long-term profitability of your operation.

If you would like to discuss feed contracting options or current pricing, please contact your Ag Partners Production Consultant or the Goodhue office. We're here to help develop a feed purchasing plan that supports the success of your operation.



General Feed Line & Orders: 651-923-6001

SAFE, STRATEGIC, QUALITY GRAIN PRESERVATION

by Greg Siems, Area Grain Manager, Stewartville

Grain elevators dot the landscape of America's heartland. Most people see them without a second thought. Farmers may see reminders of harvests past or the one yet to come. But what role do they serve in our food system?

Grain elevators bank and preserve grain in times of surplus, and move it in times of need. Because most grain is delivered during harvest, preserving the quality of these perishable products is the elevator's most important responsibility in order to meet food supply demands all year.

Like farmers, our responsibilities include marketing, grain conditioning, storage and logistics. Every farming operation has its own financial goals, storage capacity and risk tolerance. While we cannot make marketing decisions for you, your local grain buyer can help explain market conditions and go over available tools and options that fit your operation.

Our grain team begins preparing for harvest almost as soon as the previous one ends. We evaluate what worked well, identify areas for improvement, schedule maintenance and prepare facilities for the next crop. While harvest may seem as simple as delivering grain and repeating the process until the fields are empty, for us it represents the culmination of a year's worth of planning and preparation.

Everything we do is focused on serving our customers safely and efficiently. Our goal is simple: every employee and every farmer who visits our facilities should return home safely each day. Safety procedures can sometimes feel inconvenient. Wearing a safety vest, completing a confined-space permit, or locking out equipment takes extra time, but those measures exist for a reason. They help prevent accidents and protect lives.

The same principles apply on the farm. Every operation should have a clear safety philosophy and a commitment to following it. One practice that is non-negotiable at Ag Partners, and throughout much of the grain industry, is avoiding top-entry into grain bins without strict oversight and established safety procedures. If there is one safety lesson worth taking to heart, it is this. Too many tragedies begin with the thought, "I just need to do one quick thing."

What was expected to take seconds can become a life-altering or life-ending decision. Grain can engulf a person faster than most realize and no task is worth that risk.

The same mindset applies when working on powered equipment. Before performing maintenance, ensure energy sources are properly isolated.

Injuries involving augers, belts, and other equipment often occur because lockout procedures were not followed or assumptions were made about whether equipment was safe to operate.

We all share the same goals during harvest: bring in the crop efficiently, operate profitably, and make it home safely at the end of the day. Ag Partners Grain Department focuses on keeping facilities running reliably throughout the season, and when breakdowns occur, we address them safely and efficiently.

As harvest approaches, please take an extra minute to isolate equipment before working on it and carefully consider the risks associated with entering grain bins. If you have questions about safety programs or procedures, our grain operations team is always happy to share what we have learned. And, as always, let our grain buyers help you with a marketing plan for the next season.





We'll moisture test your silage samples for you.

*** WATCH FOR OUR BURN DOWN DAYS IN SEPTEMBER ***

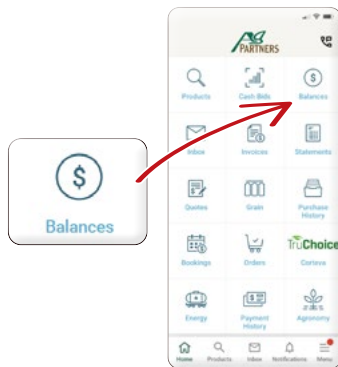


Streamline Your Contracts
eSign Anytime, Anywhere
with the Ag Partners app

connect.agpartners.net

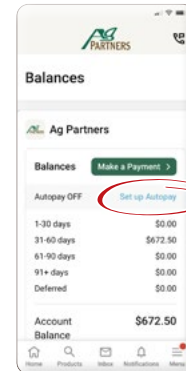
SETTING UP AUTOPAY USING THE AG PARTNERS APP

connect.agpartners.net



1 From your home screen, click/tap the **Balances** button.

2 On the Balances page, click/tap **Set up Autopay**.



IT'S THAT EASY!

QUESTIONS?
CALL AG PARTNERS
507-357-6868
OR USE THE  CONTACT BUTTON
IN THE APP.

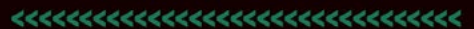


**HELP WANTED:
SEASONAL
GRAIN**

AG PARTNERS
[AGPARTNERS.NET](https://agpartners.net)

**Temporary Help Wanted at
Ag Partners Grain Facilities.**

Call for more or visit our
website:
agpartners.net/careers.



Bellechester . . . (651) 923-4453
Cannon Falls . . . (507) 263-4651
Elgin (507) 876-2222
Eyota (507) 533-4222
Goodhue (651) 923-4496
Lake City (651) 345-3328
Lewiston (507) 523-2188
Pine Island (507) 356-8313
Stewartville (507) 533-4222
Traverse (507) 931-2112
Viola (507) 533-4222
Wanamingo (507) 824-2231

**AG PARTNERS
WILL BE
CLOSED FOR
LABOR DAY,
MONDAY,
SEPTEMBER 7.
PLEASE KEEP THIS
IN MIND WHEN
ORDERING FEED OR
PLANNING FIELD
WORK.**

Please call your local
Ag Partners if you have
any questions.

**OUR TOWN AND
COUNTRY ACE
HARDWARE STORE
WILL BE OPEN
7AM-1PM**

Recipe Corner: *Cucumber Tomato Salad*

- 3 cucumbers, peeled and sliced ¼-inch thick
- 3 tomatoes, cut into wedges
- 1 onion, sliced and separated into rings
- 1 cup water
- ½ cup distilled white vinegar
- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- ¼ cup white sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt, or to taste
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, or to taste



1. Whisk water, vinegar, oil, sugar, salt, and black pepper together in a large bowl until smooth.
2. Add cucumbers, tomatoes, and onion; stir to coat.
3. Cover the bowl; refrigerate for at least 2 hours.

*"A good way
to use all
that garden
produce!"*



To submit your recipe for the summer issue of Home Front, e-mail to editor:
Terra.Wierson@agpartners.net. Enjoy!

**SAVE THE DATE FOR A STEWARTVILLE
AGRONOMY CENTER
OPEN HOUSE,
TENTATIVELY MID SEPTEMBER**



Goodhue General: 651-923-4496
Feed Orders: 651-923-6001

Energy Line: 651-923-6004
By location: agpartners.net/about