

New Year, New Storage

FARMERS COOPERATIVE INCREASES STEEL STORAGE FOR NINTH CONSECUTIVE YEAR



Farmers Cooperative Association
Varna, IL • 309-463-2061

Founded: 1930

Storage capacity: 10.7 million bushels at two locations

Annual volume: 13 million bushels

Number of members: 600

Number of employees: 4

Crops handled: Corn, soybeans

Services: Grain handling and merchandising

Key personnel:

- Jay Junker, general manager
- Tim Grebner, assistant manager
- Christine Schumacher, office manager
- Ross Schakow, operations manager

Supplier List

Aeration fans.....Chicago Blower

Aeration system ...Decatur Aeration

Bin sweepsHutchinson/Mayrath

Catwalk.....Grain Flo Inc.

ConcreteM.B.I. Construction

ContractorGrain Flo Inc.

Control system.....KDJ Sales & Service Inc.

ConveyorsGSI

Electrical contractor ..KDJ Sales & Service

EngineeringSKS Engineers LLC

Grain temp. cables ...Rolfes@Boone

Grain temp. system.....Safe-Grain Inc./Canary Systems

Level indicators.....VEGA Americas

LinerGeneral Rubber/Tandem Products

Millwright.....Grain Flo Inc.

Motion sensors4B Components Ltd.

Speed reducersDodge

Steel storageGSI

Steel tank erectionWieber Steel Erection

Tower support systemGrain Flo Inc.



Farmers Cooperative Association, Varna, IL, in late summer 2016 added a GSI 788,000-bushel corrugated steel tank (bottom left) to increase the facility's corn and soybean storage capacity to approximately 10.4 million bushels. Photo courtesy of Grain Flo Inc.

As corn and soybean yields continue to grow, so will Farmers Cooperative Association in Varna, IL. That's the philosophy General Manager Jay Junker shared during *Grain Journal's* visit in early March, and it explains why the coop has added steel storage for nine consecutive summers. (*Grain Journal* featured two past projects at the coop in the January/February 2011 issue and January/February 2007 issue.)

"As long as we remain profitable, we're going to continue adding storage, because we know yields aren't going down, and weather is having less of an impact," says Junker, who has managed the northwest-Illinois coop for 27 years.

Junker mentions that he prefers steel storage



Jay Junker

to temporary storage, because "I'm a stickler for grain quality, and we just don't have the manpower to maintain a pile like I would want to.

"If we have the money, we're always going to choose steel storage – they're fixed assets, and nowadays they last for 25 years," he explains.

2016 Project

Farmers Cooperative's latest expansion, in late summer 2016, consisted of building a GSI 788,000-bushel corrugated steel tank.

The \$1.6 million contract was awarded to Grain Flo Inc., Heyworth, IL (800-842-4875), which has served as general contractor on every major project at the coop since Junker became general manager in 1989.



Farmers Cooperative's new GSI 788,000-bushel steel tank is equipped with four Decatur Aeration 60-hp fans and a 15,000-bph GSI reclaim conveyor. Ground-level photos by Tucker Scharfenberg.

"They do great work, of course, but they also are always available for emergencies or repairs. I know I can call them at 2 a.m. during harvest and have someone out to help us."

Also hired for the project was SKS Engineers LLC, Decatur, IL (217-877-2100), which provided structural design for the foundation, which was built by M.B.I. Construction, Effingham, IL (217-868-2824); KDJ Sales & Service, Mackinaw, IL (309-359-3611), which did the electrical work; and Wieber Steel Construction, Altamont, SD (605-874-8247), which erected the tank.

Tank Details

The new flat-bottom, outside-stiffened tank measures 105 feet in diameter, 98 feet tall at the eaves, and 126 feet tall at the peak. It is equipped with four Chicago Blower 60-hp centrifugal fans, as well as thirteen 2-hp roof exhaust fans, providing 1/8 cfm per bushel of aeration through 8-inch-thick recessed trenches beneath the tank floor.

Also included in the new tank is a 12-inch Hutchinson/Mayrath zero-entry bin sweep, 13 Rolfes@Boone temperature monitoring cables, VEGA Americas level indicators, and an AgriDry 25,000-bph grain spreader (the facility's third AgriDry spreader).

"The spreader has been nice," says Junker. "Our FM concentration has definitely decreased in a big way."

The new tank is filled by an overhead 25,000-bph GSI belt conveyor that runs from an existing GSI 25,000-bph receiving leg, and the tank empties into a GSI 15,000-bph drag conveyor in a 5-foot-x-5-foot above-ground tunnel.

"This turned out to be a very easy project, and we're awfully happy that we decided to do it. M.B.I. laid the foundation in mid-August, and it was finished by October in time for harvest," he says.

Junker mentions that during a visit in February Grain Flo plotted space for three additional tanks, and that he expects to build at least one this summer.

Tucker Scharfenberg, associate editor