

Growth Spurt

MARENGO, IL GRAIN ELEVATOR EXPANDS UNDER DELONG CO. OWNERSHIP



The DeLong Co., Inc.
Clinton, WI • 800-356-0784

Founded: 1913

Storage capacity: 35 million bushels at 19 locations

Annual volume: 58 million bushels

Annual revenues: \$1.15 billion

Number of employees: 300

Crops handled: Corn, soybeans, soft red winter wheat

Services: Grain handling and merchandising, agronomy, seed, feed, transportation, fertilizer

Key personnel:

- Bo DeLong, grain division manager
- Gregg Stade, regional manager
- Laurie Harp, merchandiser
- David Rockwell, superintendent

Supplier List

- Aeration fans**..... Sukup Mfg. Co.
- Bin sweeps**Hutchinson/Mayrath
- Bucket elevators**.....Union Iron
- Catwalks** Union Iron
- Cleaner** Magik Kleener
- Concrete**SKS Engineers LLC
- Contractor** The Scharine Group, Inc.
- Conveyors**Union Iron
- Distributor**Union Iron
- Electrical contractor**... Jakes Electric LLC
- Elevator buckets**Maxi-Lift Inc.
- Grain dryer** Sukup Mfg. Co.
- Millwright**.....Jobsite Fabrication & Repair
- Motion sensors**4B Components Ltd.
- Steel storage**..... Sukup Mfg. Co.
- Steel tank erection** ABC Bin Co.
- Tower support system** ...Union Iron



Aerial view of new construction at The DeLong Co.'s Marengo, IL elevator, which includes a Sukup 710,000-bushel steel tank, 4,700-bushel tower dryer, and 90,000-bushel wet bin. Aerial photo by Brian Thomas Photography, Rockford, IL.

In 2009, James Stade retired after selling his three northeast Illinois grain elevators to The DeLong Co., Inc., a domestic and international supplier of grain and feed products based in Clinton, WI.

James' son, Gregg, who grew up working for and learning the grain handling industry from his father, has managed the Stade Group of DeLong elevators at Marengo, Garden Prairie, and McHenry ever since.

Gregg Stade recalls that things are much different now than they were during his early years working for his father. "We started out in 1981 as a small mom-and-pop operation with about 250,000 bushels of storage," he says.

As the company began to grow during the '90s, "we were adding 100,000 to 150,000 bushels of storage every chance we had," says Stade, "and we'd often erect the tanks ourselves and even pour our own concrete."

Today, under DeLong Co.'s ownership, new projects are much larger, and no longer do the employees perform the labor themselves.

Stade says that Grain Division Manager Bo DeLong and the company's ownership are very aggressive when it comes to expansion. "The DeLongs are definitely not afraid to grow and seize new opportunities," he adds.

For example, in the fall of 2013, Stade spoke to Bo DeLong about the need for

additional storage, receiving, and drying capacities at the Marengo elevator (815-568-8312), in order to accommodate the growing needs of its customers better.

"I told Bo simply that we needed to keep up with the growing demands of our producers, or we risked losing their business," he explains. "Bo agreed, and we got to work right away."

In December, Stade contacted The Scharine Group, Inc., Whitewater, WI (800-472-2880), which was hired as the general contractor to build a standalone 800,000-bushel grain handling and storage facility adjacent to

Regional Manager Gregg Stade





Sukup 4,700-bph tower dryer to the right of a Sukup 710,000-bushel steel tank. Ground level photos by Tucker Scharfenberg.

the elevator's existing 2.7-million-bushel operation. "We've done a lot of good business with Scharine since the DeLongs took over in 2009, and they always come through for us," mentions Stade. Other project contractors:

- Jobsite Fabrication & Repair, Beloit, WI (815-263-0851), served as the millwright.
- SKS Engineers LLC, Decatur, IL (217-877-2100), did concrete engineering work.
- Jakes Electric LLC, Clinton, WI (608-295-2470), served as the electrical contractor on the job.
- ABC Bin Company, Appleton, MN (320-413-0312), performed steel tank erection.

Project Details

The project, which broke ground in April 2014, included a 710,000-bushel Sukup corrugated steel tank with outside stiffeners that stands 105 feet in diameter, 88 feet tall

at the eave, and 120 feet tall at the peak. It also included a 90,000-bushel Sukup corrugated steel wet bin with outside stiffeners that stands 42 feet in diameter, 73 feet tall at the eave, and 86 feet tall at the peak.

The larger tank is equipped with a Hutchinson/Mayrath 12-inch bin sweep rated at 10,000 bph and four Sukup 40-hp centrifugal fans that generate 1.11 cfm per bushel aeration through in-floor ducting. The wet bin has one 20-hp Sukup centrifugal fan to supply 1.15 cfm per bushel through full-floor aeration.

Inbound grain is received in one of two 300-bushel mechanical dump pits that feed a Union Iron 15,000-bph dry/wet leg equipped with Maxi-Lift 18x8 CC-MAX elevator buckets mounted on a 20-inch belt. The leg sends grain either to a Union Iron 6-duct rotary distributor or to a Sukup 4,700-bph, natural-gas-fired tower dryer. An 8,000-bph Union Iron dry leg equipped with Maxi-Lift 14x7 Tiger-Tuff buckets on a 16-inch belt carries dried grain to the distributor, which fills either the larger tank via a 15,000-bph Union Iron drag conveyor or the wet bin through a gravity-flow spout. An 8,000-bph Magik Kleener is utilized to clean grain prior to storage or loadout.

Grain is reclaimed underneath the tanks by one of two Union Iron 8,000-bph drag conveyors, which run through either an above-ground 7-foot-x-7-foot tunnel from the larger tank or a 6-foot-x-6-foot tunnel from the smaller tank. Also, a sidedraw spout on the exterior wall of the larger tank can be used to fill trucks. According to Stade, the project was completed in time for the 2014 harvest without any notable problems.

"We needed to improve our storage, receiving, and drying capacities, and that's what we did. We can hold more grain, and our customers can deliver it to us without ever waiting in line," he adds.

Tucker Scharfenberg, associate editor