

Serving the Suppliers

SWINE PRODUCER UPGRADES MILL GRAIN OPERATIONS FOR SAKE OF FARMERS, RAILROAD



Murphy-Brown LLC

Warsaw, NC • 910-293-3434

Founded: 2001

Hog production: 16 million head per year

Feed production: 5.3 million tons at 13 locations

Number of employees: 5,000

Annual sales: \$3 billion

Key personnel at Bladenboro:

- Joe Szaloky, vice president of procurement and business development
- Denny Lanier, senior regional operations manager-feed delivery and milling
- Keith Richard, feed mill superintendent
- Allen King, day shift superintendent

Supplier List

Bucket elevators..... Union Iron
Catwalks Union Iron
Contractors..... WL Port-Land Systems Inc.; Grain Dryer Sales & Service, Inc.

Distributor..... Union Iron
Elevator buckets Maxi-Lift Inc.
Grain dryer Brock Grain Systems
Leg belting..... All-State Belting
Millwright..... Jackson Industrial Construction

Motors WEG
Speed reducers Dodge
Steel storage... Brock Grain Systems
Tower support system.. Union Iron
Track construction..... Queen City Railroad Construction Inc.



Murphy-Brown's 535,000-tpy swine feed mill outside of Bladenboro, NC, with a new 110,000-bushel wet grain steel annex nearing completion at left. Photo by Lime Light Photography.

Like most businesses, feed milling lives or dies on relationships. For swine producer Murphy-Brown LLC, customer relationships are all internal – the company utilizes all of its feed production from 13 mills at its 450 hog farms nationwide to produce 16 million head annually.

But in feed milling, those relationships also extend to suppliers, including the farmers who deliver locally-produced grain in the southeastern states and the railroads that bring in additional grain supplies from the Midwest.

“We use about 18 million bushels of corn a year,” says Joe Szaloky, vice president of procurement and business development for the company, the pork production division of Smithfield Foods Inc. “Improving efficiency helps to build and maintain good working relationships with our suppliers.”

For Murphy-Brown's all important relationship with CSX Transportation, the company in 2013 expanded the railyard at

its 535,000-tpy feed mill west of Bladenboro, NC (910-863-2263), from a 65-car unit train capacity to 90 covered hopper cars. That's the largest unit train from the Midwest that CSX currently offers.

And for the grain producers in the southeastern part of North Carolina, in the summer of 2014, Murphy-Brown began construction of a 110,000-bushel steel annex to the north of its main slipform concrete mill and elevator designed mainly for receiving wet grain, with a larger grain dryer than the facility's existing 3,000-bph unit. That project was expected to be completed the second week of October 2014.

“We can lose grain to hurricanes in the fall,” Szaloky notes. “This helps the farmers get the grain out of the field before anything happens to it. We'll also be able to reduce our drying fee to the farmer.”

Railyard

At Bladenboro, Murphy-Brown operates a



Key personnel at Bladenboro from left: Allen King, day shift superintendent; Keith Richard, feed mill superintendent; Denny Lanier, senior regional operations manager-feed delivery and milling; and Joe Szaloky, vice president of procurement and business development. Photos by Ed Zdrojewski.

conventional ladder-type railyard that curves around the mill to the east and south. Since there is no loop track, the company relies on its own power, a



New steel annex includes a pair of 55,000-bushel Brock steel hopper tanks, 4,700-bph Brock tower dryer, Union Iron legs, and Union Iron support tower.

Shuttlewagon that can pull up to 20 full jumbo covered hoppers.

For the railyard expansion, Murphy-Brown hired WL Port-Land Systems Inc., Pittsburgh, PA (412-344-1408). WL Port-Land Systems, whose predecessor firm Wagester & Lease built the original feed mill at Bladenboro in 1995, brought in Queen City Railroad Construction Inc., Knoxville, TN (865-692-1902), to add 2,745 feet of track to the railyard, bringing the total to 6,871 feet. Queen City utilized new 131-lb. rail with wood crossties.

Denny Lanier, senior regional operations manager for feed delivery and milling, comments that the railyard now can accommodate up to 110 cars. "In addition to corn, we often bring in soy meal and other ingredients by rail," he says.

Steel Annex

For the steel annex project, Murphy-Brown hired Grain Dryer Sales &



Railyard serving the Bladenboro mill recently was expanded to accommodate 90-car CSX unit trains, up from 65-car trains.

Service, Seven Springs, NC (919-920-8717), as millwright on the project for an undisclosed sum. Construction began in June 2014 and was scheduled for completion the second week of October.

Storage consists of a pair of 55,000-bushel Brock steel hopper tanks standing 30 feet in diameter and 86 feet tall. The hoppers enable the tanks to be emptied by gravity, without the need for sweep augers. The tanks currently have no grain temperature monitoring or aeration. They empty onto above-ground 15,000-bph Union Iron drag conveyors running to the receiving leg.

Adjacent to the storage tanks is a 1,000-bushel enclosed double mechanical receiving pit, designed for trucks with two hopper bottoms. The pit feeds the 15,000-bph Union Iron receiving leg. The leg is equipped with Maxi-Lift Tiger-Tuff 16x8 buckets mounted on an 18-inch All-State belt.

At the top of the leg, grain is sent through a three-duct Union Iron swing diverter-type distributor. From there, grain travels via gravity chute to the new dryer or out a set of 7,500-bph Union Iron overhead drag conveyors running out to storage. Another 7,500-bph drag runs along a 140-foot-long, 10-foot-x-12-foot Union Iron clean span box truss to the feed mill.

The company also installed a 4,700-bph natural gas-fired Brock tower dryer, which is expected to replace the facility's existing dryer. As of *Grain Journal's* visit in early September, the dryer had not yet been fired up. Serving the dryer are Union Iron 7,500-bph wet and dry legs equipped with Maxi-Lift Tiger-Tuff 14x8 buckets on a 16-inch All-State belt.

Ed Zdrojewski, editor