

Total Grain Marketing

Grain Scoop

What About Corn Acres?

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April is one of my favorite months of the year! I know every winter has the same number of days, but this year has been the longest winter I can remember. Besides receiving grain out of the field in every month since September, there just hasn't been an open window since October to really get anything done. This is the time of the year where I attend a lot of meetings, and some of those include meetings in the Southern states. As I have stated in the past, I prefer to drive vs. fly, as there are too many things to see in this great nation that can't be seen from the air. During a recent meeting with a rail road in northern Florida, a fellow employee and I loaded up in the truck on a Saturday and headed south for a Monday meeting. We did not head southeast but went straight south to see if any field work was getting done in the boot heel of Missouri. This is a trip that I have done multiple times in March and I always see fieldwork done. From Effingham, IL to New Orleans, Louisiana we did not see one tractor running or a field that had been worked. It was saturated all the way down and appeared it would be for a few weeks even if the weather would have changed that day.

After visiting a couple of feed mills in southern Mississippi that we sell

grain to, we visited the city where the majority of the U.S. exports leave the country (New Orleans). But our stop there was just that, as we had to be in Mobile, Alabama the next morning to watch a TGM bean train get unloaded and put on a ship to leave the next day. I have been to export houses before but never had I seen our beans get directly loaded onto a ship headed for sea. This particular ship was a small one and held only 2 million bushels. It was to be loaded in two days. After spending time there we headed on to our meeting on Monday and Tuesday. Late Tuesday we started north for our return home on Wednesday evening. 2500 long miles in total but it was a good trip!

What I learned from the trip was corn acres that are normally planted in the delta were still idle. They need to plant early to get through pollination before it heats up in the south. Not going to happen this year. We are hearing that the Northern Corn Belt, Minnesota, Iowa and the Dakotas have more snowfall and a deeper frost than any time in history. They need to get planted early as the growing season is shorter and they have to reach maturity before the first frost. As of now that looks like a stretch. And the mid-west is



saturated with very little fall tillage done, so getting an early start here is not looking that good. All in all, it looks like getting the increase in corn acres this year is going to be a struggle. If we do get them planted, what is the chance of having the over trend line yields we have had the last few years? Not sure, but like always I trade an average crop until we can see something different. With conditions as of today, I would take the under bet and not the over but I will watch conditions closely. Hopefully we get one last rally and we can clean of those sales on both old and new crop!

I think my honeybees have made it through the winter, the wildlife seems to have made it through, and the fish should be waiting for some fresh worms so I think I will go get my shovel, get my pole and see if I can shake these winter blues. Hope you are all ready for a good spring!