

Total Grain Marketing

Grain Scoop

Thanksgiving and Christmas

January 2020

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As always, I am writing this article 30 days before you are reading it, so I just celebrated Thanksgiving while I'm sure you are done with all the Christmas festivities. I guess it would only be fitting to look back at last year and see what we should be thankful for and what we should see this upcoming year.

As you all know, I have a very understanding wife of 42 years who was instrumental in raising our four daughters. Her career was spent in the classroom teaching children at our local school and the official proof reader of this article for which I am truly thankful. Three of my four daughters are married and have blessed us with six grandsons and four granddaughters, all of which live either on the farm or very close by. My youngest daughter will be getting married in August, so I can officially be called an empty nester!

This past year has to rank as one of the toughest years in my 45 plus years of handling grain. It started off with the second wettest spring in a hundred years if my sources are correct, and ending with the ground under my hunting boots as wet as the saturated spring soils. I think each one of us can plug in our own set of problems between May first and December first, with none of the stories being the same! We witnessed the most prevent

plant acres ever seen in TGM's territory times two. Not only did we have the most prevent plant acres in our territory, the U.S had a record 20 million acres. Can you only imagine how cheap prices would be if we would have gotten everything planted? We went into harvest with the least amount of contracted grain ever, which only makes sense! No one knew on August 1st if we would have 200 bu. corn or 20 bu. corn per acre. So don't feel like you were the only one that didn't get the crop marketed, as very few people did. The bushels received at TGM were down considerably from last year, and rightfully so. The crop just wasn't there!

So when will this market figure out the crop is not there? I will tell you the cash market already has! With basis levels at or near record levels, it's easy to see the crop is not hitting the marketplace. The crop just isn't out there! Few ground piles, empty commercial and farm storage, and record basis levels tell me the crop size is much smaller than the USDA is indicating. One might ask when the market will find this out. My biggest fear is they don't announce it until the June 30th stocks report, and we needed to make a marketing decision before that date. Last year it was the September 1st report that told as the previous year's crop was overstated. We can only hope it is discovered by



the statisticians, as it has been by the end users! The only thing that has moved bushels this year is the basis, and this is the best indicator we have as to the size of the crop. I'm hoping you have seen something north of \$4.00 for you as a Christmas present and maybe, just maybe we can see one bullish report on the final report in January.

Went hunting on Thanksgiving morning with my brother, nephew, and two son-in-laws's and got in to a covey of 30 quail. The biggest covey rise I've been into for years. Twenty-eight of them got away, so left plenty for next year. Saw three coveys and several pheasants on that traditional Thanksgiving morning hunt. So for this I am so thankful! Also, I am blessed to live in a part of the country that provides us with the memories I grew up with as a kid, which will never go unappreciated.