

Hold It When You've Got It

NEW STORAGE IN A BUMPER CROP YEAR LETS COOP TIME THE MARKETS



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

Founded: 1893
Storage capacity: 9.1 million bushels at two locations
Annual volume: 12 million bushels
Annual revenues: \$6 million
Number of members: 600
Number of employees: 9
Crops handled: Corn, soybeans
Services: Grain handling and merchandising

Key personnel:

- Jay Junker, general manager
- Tim Grebner, assistant manager
- Christine Schumacher, office manager
- Ross Schackow, superintendent

Supplier List

Aeration fans.....Decatur Aeration
Bin sweepsHutchinson/Mayrath
Catwalk.....Grain Flo, Inc.
ContractorGrain Flo, Inc.
ConveyorsGSI
Grain temperature system.....Safe-Grain Inc.
Level indicators.....BinMaster Level Controls
Millwright.....Grain Flo, Inc.
Steel storage.....GSI
Tower support systemGrain Flo, Inc.



Aerial view of the main Farmers Cooperative Association elevator in Varna, IL, with two new 700,000-bushel tanks bottom center at far right and left of a row of three. Aerial photo by Philip Parker Jr., Urbana, IL.

Like much of the central part of the country, farmers near Varna, IL harvested a remarkably good crop during 2014. Yields of 220 bushels per acre were not uncommon for corn, and soybeans may have done even better, with yields of 58 to 60 bushels.

It also was a very good year for adding grain storage, says Jay Junker, who has been general manager at Farmers Cooperative Association in Varna (309-463-2061) since 1989.

"It was so difficult to move grain at harvest," he says. "We are an exclusive truck house and had a monster problem trying to find trucks."

At the same time, he says, "carry is back in the markets. You can get beat up trying to move grain in the middle of harvest in a year like this past one."

With both of its elevators right in Varna, 2014 was an especially good year to have new upright storage, Junker adds. In 2014, the market had

so much carry in it that if a country elevator had the space, it wasn't much trouble to draw the grain and hold it.

To make sure that Farmers Coop had the



Jay Junker



GSI reclaim conveyors end in an incline up to blend grain stream into the sidedraw spout for truck loading.

space, the company added 1.4 million bushels of upright storage, bringing the overall total at the main elevator at 603 S. Main St. to about 9.1 million bushels overall.

The cooperative hired Grain Flo Inc., Heyworth, IL (309-473-2512), to build

a pair of GSI 700,000-bushel tanks near the southwest edge of the property for a cost of approximately \$2 million. Grain Flo is a GSI dealer.

“We’ve used Grain Flo nearly forever,” Junker comments. “They’re dependable. They always get to you in a timely fashion, when there’s a breakdown.”

Construction in 2014 began in February and was completed around Oct. 1. “The second tank was done 10 days early,” says Junker.

Storage Addition

The two new GSI tanks stand 105 feet in diameter, 85.6 feet tall at the eaves, and 113.2 feet tall at the peaks. They are outfitted with outside stiffeners, 14-inch Hutchinson sweep augers, BinMaster high-level switches, and 24-cable Safe-Grain Safe-Track grain temperature monitoring systems.

A set of four 60-hp Decatur Aeration centrifugal fans provide 1/7 cfm per bushel of aeration through in-floor ducting, with the assistance of 13 roof exhausters.

Grain is carried out to the new tanks



Ground level view of two new GSI 700,000-bushel tanks at far right and left of row. Photos by Ed Zdrojewski.

from existing equipment via 25,000-bph GSI belt conveyors. They empty onto 8,000-bph GSI reclaim drag conveyors housed in above-ground tunnels and returning to existing grain handling equipment. The tanks also are equipped with sidedraw spouts for truck loading.

Junker says the site has plenty of room for adding more upright storage, as the need arises. However, in 2015, the cooperative will focus on grain handling equipment and has plans to install a new receiving pit and 25,000-bph leg.

Ed Zdrojewski, editor