



# INSIGHT NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2026 | ISSUE #47

## WINTER GRAIN MEETINGS

**YOU'RE INVITED!**

**January 16**  
Prairie Meadows  
Des Moines, IA  
12:00 - 3:00 pm  
Guest Speaker

**January 30**  
Meskwaki Casino  
Tama, IA  
12:00 - 3:00 pm  
Guest Speaker

**February 10**  
Beardmore Event Center  
Bellevue, NE  
11:30 - 2:00 pm  
Guest Speaker

**February 11**  
Fairfield Location  
2081 Nutmeg Ave.  
Fairfield, IA  
12:00 - 3:00 pm  
Guest Speaker

**February 18**  
Millerton Location  
2268 Hwy J22  
Corydon, IA 50060  
12:00 - 3:00 pm  
Guest Speaker

### RSVP TO EVENT

Grain line: 515-974-4355

**HEARTLAND CO-OP**



### *Lunch Provided!*



- Market trends
- Analysis
- Product updates

## WINTER GRAIN MEETINGS

Winter Grain Meetings are scheduled to take place over the course of the upcoming two months. This annual event is a key opportunity for our dedicated grain team, to connect directly with farmers informing them about the latest trends and developments within the industry.

The meetings will be highlighted by the presence of a knowledgeable speaker, who will deliver an in-depth and valuable market analysis, offering insights that are crucial for anyone involved in the grain sector.

Participating in these meetings represents a significant and worthwhile investment of time for our members. The discussions and information shared during these sessions are invaluable, providing attendees with the knowledge and tools needed to navigate the evolving market landscape.

We encourage you to assist us in spreading the word about these meetings at your locations, ensuring that as many people as possible can benefit from the insights and expertise that will be shared. Your help is greatly appreciated and instrumental in fostering a well-informed farming community.

If a member would like to attend have them RSVP to the grain team 515-974-4355, or scan the qr code above to learn more.

# GRAIN DEPARTMENT

Article by Kade Mahler



Heartland Co-op has been the beneficiary of China coming to the table to buy US beans. Heartland alone will be shipping enough bean trains to the Louisiana gulf to fill two Panamax ocean going vessels destined for China.

The USDA threw the market a curveball for their final yield report of the year. Market was expecting a two bushel decrease in the national corn yield and the USDA actually raised the yield by half a bushel while increasing harvested acres on both corn and beans. Bean yield was left unchanged, but they did increase Brazil's bean yield.

On a positive note, they did lower Iowa and Illinois corn yields more in line with our thoughts, however, they took many states higher in the process. Iowa corn yield lowered from 216 to 210 vs last year at 211. We still believe this is overstated and Iowa is lower closer to 205. Farmers will likely remain rather absent on selling grain which should setup good opportunities for Heartland to market grain.

Also, government checks to the farmer get paid out at the end of February which will likely support the farmer being patient on marketing grain.

- Heartland Co-op's Export Opportunity: Heartland Co-op will ship enough US beans to fill two Panamax vessels to China from the Louisiana Gulf, thanks to China's purchase decision, boosting their export market presence.
- USDA Yield Report Impact: Contrary to expectations, the USDA raised the national corn yield by half a bushel and increased harvested acres for both corn and beans. Bean yield remained unchanged, but Brazil's was increased. The USDA adjusted corn yields for Iowa and Illinois, aligning with expectations, though Heartland believes Iowa's yield is overstated.

*"Heartland alone will be shipping enough bean trains to the Louisiana gulf to fill two Panamax oceangoing vessels destined for China."*



What location?

- Rhea
- Neola
- Guernsey
- Fairfield

Learn more about the location here



# AGRONOMY DEPARTMENT

Article by Jason Danner



Happy New Year's, we made it! I hope the new year resolutions are going good and still being enforced. With new year brings new opportunities but some are stuck looking out the back window. Farm Bill is still up for renewal, 2025 yields are still being discussed, and grain commodity prices still have everyone scratching their heads. 2026 is the year of our country's 250th birthday, again, we made it!

Wow, you can never guess the weather. December started out with back-to-back weekend snowstorms up to Christmas Day in the low 60's. January has been normal so far with no crazy cold or snow. Agronomy team has continued to spread dry fertilizer and apply lime whenever possible due to field conditions. The early December snow cover has kept the soil from freezing and the current swings in temps allowed thawing actions to help incorporate the fertilizer and lime off the soil surface.

Chemical prepay's have been steady as customers do their annual cash flows and work with their accountants to manage their risk of yearly taxes. Year-end prepay's are the best way to lock in your programs and products with the best prices of the season. Take Advantage and be ready for spring. Over the next couple of months, your agronomy team will be offering opportunities to learn more about value-added products, product placements, and most importantly mixing instructions.

Again, take advantage! Thank you, Be Safe!



- The new year brings fresh opportunities, but challenges remain with the Farm Bill renewal, 2025 yield discussions, and fluctuating grain commodity prices.
- December's snowstorms and January's mild weather have allowed the agronomy team to continue spreading dry fertilizer and applying lime, taking advantage of favorable field conditions.
- Steady chemical prepay's help customers manage annual cash flows and taxes, with yearend prepay's offering the best prices; upcoming opportunities to learn about value-added products and mixing instructions should not be missed.

*“ Year-end prepay's are the best way to lock in your programs and products with the best prices of the season.”*

# ENERGY DEPARTMENT

Article by Haley Schulte

Equipment Type	Rebate Amount	Efficiency Requirement
Tank Water Heater	\$200	20-100 gal; 0.64 UEF+
Tankless Water Heater	\$300	< 2 gal; 0.64 UEF+
Propane Furnace	\$250	95% AFUE or higher
Propane Boiler	\$250	85% AFUE or higher

“Thinking about upgrading your home’s heating or water system? Now is the perfect time!”



Thinking about upgrading your home’s heating or water system? Now is the perfect time! Thanks to our partnership with the Iowa Propane Gas Association (IPGA), Heartland Co-op customers can now take advantage of exclusive rebates on high-efficiency equipment installed on or after January 1, 2025.

Whether you’re looking to lower your monthly energy bills or keep your home cozy all winter, these incentives make the switch to propane even more rewarding

- **Propane Water Heaters:** Get \$200 back on standard tanks (20-100 gallons) or \$300 back for going "tankless" with an instantaneous model.
- **High-Efficiency Furnaces & Boilers:** Stay cozy and save more with a \$250 rebate on approved units (95% AFUE for furnaces; 85% AFUE for boilers).

Note: To qualify, units must meet specific energy efficiency standards (UEF 0.64+). Each Iowa household is eligible for one furnace and one water heater rebate.

Ready to start saving? [Click here for more information on the IPGA Incentive Programs!](#) Or Scan the QR code.



## Energy Department Contacts

**Adam Gardiner (Central)**  
515-371-9032  
[agardiner@heartlandcoop.com](mailto:agardiner@heartlandcoop.com)

**Mike Evers (Western IA)**  
712-621-0195  
[mevers@heartlandcoop.com](mailto:mevers@heartlandcoop.com)

**Jill Chapman (Western IA)**  
712-485-8080  
[jchapman@heartlandcoop.com](mailto:jchapman@heartlandcoop.com)

**Haley Schulte (Eastern IA)**  
319-360-1542  
[hschulte@heartlandcoop.com](mailto:hschulte@heartlandcoop.com)

**Nick Hyde (All over)**  
515-468-8964  
[nhyde@heartlandcoop.com](mailto:nhyde@heartlandcoop.com)



## CONSERVATION

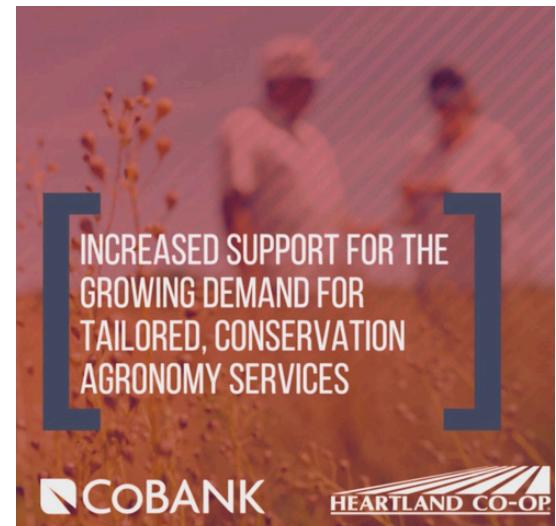
Article by Lydia English

This past summer, the conservation team closed out the second year of reporting for our sustainability-linked loan (SLL) with CoBank. The SLL rewards Heartland Co-op with a lower interest rate on its annual line of credit if the conservation team meets benchmarks in three target areas: cover crop acres sold, tile outlets treated by edge-of-field practices, and people receiving conservation outreach. This is a five-year partnership with annual benchmarks increasing over time. Notably, it's the first of its loan type for both Heartland Co-op and CoBank.

In 2024-2025, the conservation team met all three sustainability benchmarks, allowing the company to realize the maximum interest rate reduction outlined in our agreement. We facilitated 91,401 acres of cover crops, 56 tile outlets treated, over 11,000 people reached. In the first year of the partnership (2023-2024), we facilitated 74,828 acres of cover crops and 86 tile outlets treated.

This partnership is important for all of Heartland – when the conservation team meets all three benchmarks annually, it lowers costs for the company as a whole. If you're an agronomist who sells cover crop seed or cover crop application to your customers, please connect with Nolan Grove. We're currently collecting information on cover crop acres sold by Heartland to be able to report for Year 3 of the SLL partnership.

Curious to hear more about these programs? Contact the conservation team today!



Contact the conservation team if you have any questions about cover crop cost share.

Ruth McCabe- 515-418-8358

Emery Davis- 515-250-5243

Nolan Grove- 515-971-8278

Lydia English- 515-250-1511

## FEED DEPARTMENT

Article by Garrett Billington

# Announcement!!



It's finally here! The largest Heartland Co-op mineral promotion is going on now! We are very excited to see the response of our customer base as well as new customers using HL mineral for the first time. Heartland Co-op's mineral promotion is giving a timely opportunity to save big even as cattle prices remain some of the highest we have seen. With this significant discount, producers can invest in a high-quality mineral program without cutting corners, helping protect herd health, reproduction health, and overall performance. Taking advantage of this promotion now allows producers to lock in savings while continuing to maximize returns, proving that smart nutrition decisions matter even more when the market is strong.

While all this excitement is going on with the HL mineral promotion, we still weren't done meeting the needs of the customers. Heartland Co-op is excited to be adding Lindner Show Feeds to our already stacked lineup of show pig complete feeds and supplements, strengthening our commitment to delivering elite nutrition to the next generation of livestock exhibitors. This addition makes a proven, high-performing product line more accessible than ever for 4-H and FFA members across the state of Iowa, giving them the tools they need to compete at the highest level. By expanding access to trusted show feed solutions, Heartland Co-op continues to support youth exhibitors with the quality, consistency, and performance demanded in today's show ring.



*"It's finally here!  
The largest  
Heartland Co-op  
mineral promotion is  
going on now!"*

# HEARTLAND CO-OP 2025–26 PRIORITIES: INVENTORY MANAGEMENT & CONTROL



Effective inventory management is crucial for smooth operations, balancing stock to meet demand while avoiding financial inefficiencies. Success depends on clear processes and thorough training, with timely and accurate inventories. Processes should include a pre-inventory checklist, accessible training manuals, defined monthly meeting topics, and shrinkage monitoring. Mentor/mentee relationships between locations have also been established.

Departmental accountants will provide reports on missing purchase orders and receipts to locations. Timely receiving of all inventories with documentation submitted for payment is essential to keep costs accurate.

## SUCCESS



- Identify clear processes and ensure proper follow-up to facilitate correct execution, including comprehensive training.
- Timely and accurate inventories are essential. Success will be measured by timeliness, accuracy, and thorough documentation.

## PROCESSES



- Establish, train, define, and mandate the use of a pre-inventory checklist, which must be signed off by all parties involved in the inventory process.
- Create training manuals linked to the pre-inventory checklist and make them accessible on SharePoint.
- Define topics to be covered in the monthly LEM (Leadership and Engagement Meeting).
- Document the processes followed and track the extent of shrinkage occurring.
- Keep a record of who is reviewing the checklists.
- Pair mentor/mentee assignments and have them report their progress to the Regional Manager.
- Departmental accountants will provide regular communication to locations regarding missing receivings and open purchase orders.



Winter may be here, but the work doesn't stop. This is the time to get ready for when the season ramps up. Training, cross-team collaboration, and improving the small things now make a big difference later. That's what Growing in Excellence is all about.

Here's what our focus is right now:

- Learn and train – Take advantage of winter to sharpen skills and knowledge.
- Support our customers – Last year was tough. Farmers are counting on us for reliable service and solid advice.
- Take ownership – Excellence means doing your part and helping your team do theirs.

ONE Heartland isn't just a slogan, it's how we work together and serve our customers, no matter the season.

## Employee Anniversaries

### First 40 hours

Cody Bessent  
 Mary Bornhoft  
 Hunter Flanders  
 Sean Gibson  
 Valerine Jepchirchir  
 Joshua Lee  
 Stephen McDowell  
 Nicholas McVey  
 Brent Miller  
 Cole Radke  
 Koy Stanley  
 Courtney Strauser

### 1 year

Haley Schulte  
 Sage Hulshizer  
 Kimm Jeffrey  
 Steven McDowell  
 Megan McClain  
 Justin Webster

### 5 years

Nikki Atkins

### 15 years

Katherine Stillmunkes

### 30 years

Jason Westhoff

### 35 years

Dan Lauer