



PRIMELAND



# Primeland Perspective



By Ken Blakeman  
General manager, CHS Primeland

## Keeping your cooperative sound, safe

Changes in agriculture, markets, the economy and the environment in which we operate continue at a rapid pace, even during a global pandemic. Your cooperative needs to address these challenges and make its own changes on your behalf to keep CHS Primeland financially sound and able to best serve our customers.

In recent months, we've made three major changes:

- Selling the St. John, Washington, facility to another co-op
- Shutting the Peone, Washington, location
- Consolidating management in the Camas Prairie region of Idaho

### Making needed changes

St. John, with its retail store, agronomy plants and fuel business, was underperforming, and we just couldn't get the efficiencies we needed. Fortunately, we were able to negotiate a good deal for the community and keep this location in the hands of a co-op when we sold it to Four Star Supply, Inc., based in Pullman, Washington. St. John had become a better fit for their cooperative than ours; we'll also continue to do some business with Four Star.

Peone, Washington, became yet another victim of urban sprawl. As the city of Spokane encroached on surrounding farmland, the location was no longer viable for us. We made the difficult decision to close the location and have put the 10-acre site up for sale. However, we will still serve producers in the area from our Rockford location. It may look different

— direct delivery to farms, fuel tanks on farms — but you'll receive the same products and services. Rory Eggers, our salesperson in the area, now works from home, his pick-up and Rockford and continues to call on customers.

In the Camas Prairie, we made the decision to consolidate several locations under one manager and hire Joel Wasem to fill that role. As area location manager, he's based in Grangeville, but oversees eight grain and four agronomy facilities in the region. A major goal for the area is to drive efficiencies in our operations, provide cost-effective solutions for producers and eliminate duplication, which can be a challenge when we have locations about every 15 miles. Please join us in congratulating Joel on his new role.

### Coping with COVID-19

Everything I've mentioned, and more, has taken place during the coronavirus outbreak. As we saw what was happening in March, we really modified our operating procedures to create the safest environment for our customers and employees. Here are just some of the steps we've taken:

- Limited customer interaction at the Lewiston location, which was basically empty for all of March, April and part of May.
- Reduced the number of meetings and activities, using tech resources to move them online.
- Ramped up sanitizing, social distancing and reduced the handling of paperwork.
- Opening very purposefully and creating a new normal in how we interact with each other and our customers.

Our customers are our owners, and we have a deep connection with you, especially during this stressful time. Thank you for being so respectful of the precautions we're taking and for your patience and cooperation as we've changed how we work together.

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By Russ Braun  
manager, Grain Division

## Be prepared to capture market rallies

Drive through the countryside, and this year's crop looks great, with strong stands and potentially higher yields. Unfortunately, great-looking crops are being seen worldwide, especially in Russia and Australia, where improved conditions have resulted in higher-than-expected yields. That means prices will be mediocre to substandard, and growers will be holding their grain in storage.

There are a couple of things you can do as we enter harvest:

- Clean all your grain-handling equipment and bins so you'll be ready to store your crop.
- Avoid using Storcide, the pesticide and growth regulator that prevents insect infestations. Currently, several countries are refusing grain exposed to Storcide, and more may follow their lead.
- Have a marketing plan so that you can capture small market rallies and sell grain when you *want* to, not when you need to. We can help you develop one, just give us a call.

## Meet Joel Wasem



Joel Wasem joined CHS Primeland in 2012 as a custom applicator driver. Four years later, he accepted the position of location manager for Grangeville. And now in

2020, he's been named area location manager, not only continuing to oversee the Grangeville operations, but also a total of eight grain and four agronomy facilities on the Camas Prairie in Idaho.

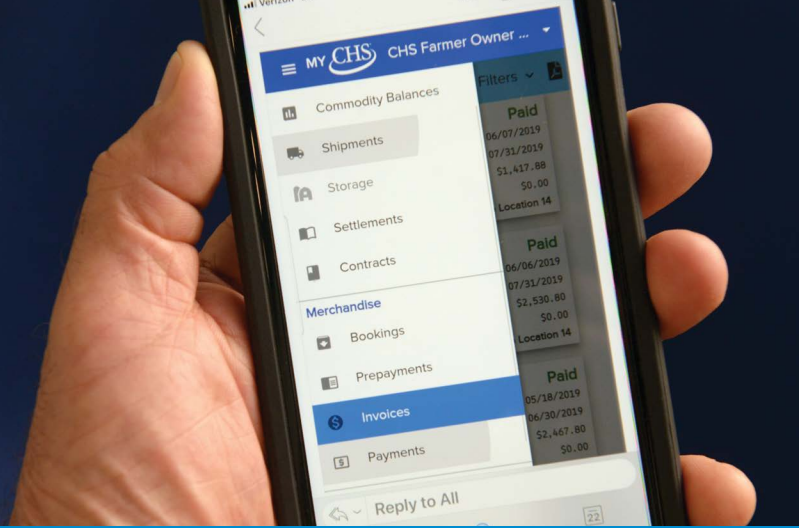
The territory served by these locations covers about 100,000 acres, planted primarily with soft white wheats, hard red winter and spring wheat, barley, canola and pulse crops.

Joel says he's focused on upgrading agronomy facilities and using the Port of Wilma hub plant more, with local facilities providing convenient, more-efficient service for customers. In grain, the emphasis is upgrading elevators.

"Four years ago, we built the Nezperce facility, which expanded expanded our territory. With its higher-speed leg, we're able to handle grain intake much faster," Joel says.

"Our end goal is to have our cooperative be a part of the members' business, building for their future and for ours, offering products and services that help them achieve the financial goals of their farms."





## Check out newest version of MyCHS portal, app

Whether you're in front of a computer in your farm office, on a tablet in the field or on your phone in the cab of your tractor, CHS transactions are now just a touch away.

With the newest version of the MyCHS portal and app, producers use one simple sign-on to see their CHS business activity all in one place, even if they have multiple accounts. Contracts, bookings, prepays, scale tickets, payment history and more. From agronomy, energy, grain, seed and retail, all of your business activities can be viewed, sorted and even downloaded, from anywhere, anytime. You can even use it for tax planning to get reports for proof-of-yield for your insurance company by exporting the information to Excel.

Holly Rourick, Grain accounting, has helped with the newest upgrade. "We went to the growers and patrons and asked what they wanted to see, how they wanted to see it and what they see when they first log in," she says. "We now offer a payment option, but you do need to set that up through us at CHS Primeland."

If you're not familiar with MyCHS, it's free and available to all farmers, ranchers and customers doing business with CHS. You can register and get access to MyCHS through our website at [www.chsprimeland.com](http://www.chsprimeland.com). Once you've registered, you can download the web app for easy access on any of your mobile devices — either Apple or Android.

"I really encourage everyone to register and try out the mobile app, and if you have suggestions for how it can be improved, please let us know," says Holly. You can contact Holly at [holly.rourick@chsinc.com](mailto:holly.rourick@chsinc.com).



By Ken Mingo  
manager, Seed and Agronomy Division

## A growing season like no other

The spring work started 35 to 40 days ahead of last year, when everything was condensed and everything happened at the same time. Our early start put less stress on staff, facilities and equipment, and we were able to serve our customers on a timely schedule. With cooler weather and rain when we needed it, we're seeing one of our best-looking crops in recent years.

So what made this season like no other? The pandemic. It added a lot of restrictions and forced us to manage our staff and spaces differently. That included having people work from home as much as possible and limiting face-to-face contact with customers, whether in the field or office. As a result, none of our staff has had any issues, and we believe we've helped keep our customers safe, too.

We also have seen a change in what growers are planting. Right around harvest last year, the chickpea market tanked, so in 2020, we're seeing growers increase their acreage for cereals and canola. Due to those well-timed rains, we've had fairly significant rust issues, but worked to the best of our abilities to spray fields — sometimes twice — to stop the spread of rust before it could damage the crop.

And finally, at the end of June, we restructured our agronomy and grain businesses by consolidating management on the Camas Prairie, selling the St. John location and shuttering the Mead/Peone facility. Urban sprawl really was creating a problem at that location, but we're still able to serve producers from our Rockford location.

As we move into the fall, we're all hoping for a lessening of the pandemic and good weather to match the good crop. All of the Agronomy staff wishes you a safe and successful harvest. We'll be prepared when you're ready to start your fall fieldwork.

*Keeping your cooperative sound, safe, cont. from page 1*

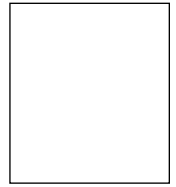
## Financials at a glance

We're two-thirds through the year and are currently at a \$3.5 million bottom line profit year-to-date. July and August are usually tough months, but we're confident that we'll have another profitable year. Summer is always a mixed bag as producers wrap up buying inputs and prepare for harvest. While margins are tight, we're looking for every efficiency to keep your cooperative successful, profitable and safe.



**PRIMELAND**

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It's about maximizing the grower's dollar.

*-Craig and Hunter Stillwell, agronomists*

## Like father, like son: Two generations of Stillwells help customers grow

Listen to Craig and Hunter Stillwell, and you hear the same thing: "It's almost like it was meant to be." The "it" they're referring to is both of them landing agronomist positions with CHS Primeland almost a year ago, giving them the opportunity to work one-on-one with growers in a region of the country both of them love for its outdoor attractions like hunting and fishing.

Craig (father) is based out of Craigmont, Idaho, while Hunter (son) works from Nezperce — about 15 miles apart. This isn't the first time the father-son duo has worked in close proximity, having farmed together for seven years in northern California.

The Stillwells took different paths to CHS Primeland. Craig worked the majority of his career in the vegetable seed industry, spending the last six to eight years in senior management and responsible for all of the company's U.S. production. "It involved a huge amount of travel, about 70% of my time," Craig says. "I was ready to work directly with growers again."

Hunter farmed with his dad, picking up "boots on the ground" experience with agriculture. He also worked for Land O'Lakes Forage Genetics, which focuses on alfalfa and other forages.

Both have the same goal: to provide the best information

possible to their growers, giving them options that best fit their crops and their budget. Ask them, and they'll say almost the same thing: "It's about maximizing the grower's dollar so they can get more bushels/pounds per acre and bring in a good crop."

For instance, with this year's outbreak of rust — just when growers thought they were done paying for and applying inputs — the Stillwells agree that their customers' best option is to spray for the fungus and save as many bushels as possible.

Like father, like son. Dedicated to helping their customers grow.