

# LOCATION PROFILE: BASSETT

## FUEL MASTER



At Farmers Ranchers Cooperative, when we think about our Bassett location, we think refined fuel. And when we think fuel, we're thinking Ev Stewart. Farmers Ranchers purchased the fuel facility from Gordon Oil in Bassett in May 1998. Fortunately for us, Ev was part of the package.

When it comes to fuel delivery, Ev knows his stuff. He began delivering for Don Gordon in 1976, following a stint with Uncle Sam and some ranching. And except for a year off, he's been hauling energy from the fuel tanks in Bassett to area farms and ranches ever since. That's a total of 30 years behind the wheel, pumping quality refined fuel products that keep machines and irrigation pumps running across a wide territory.

### Getting the job done

The Bassett location covers all of Rock County, some of Holt, and, depending on the season, some or all of Keya Paha County. When needed, Ev also delivers into South Dakota. "I'm delivering with a 2006 Peterbilt truck equipped with a 4,500-gallon tank wagon," says Ev, who adds that equipment is the thing that's changed the most over the years. "When I

first started I had a 1,500-gallon truck that maybe pumped 30 gallons per minute. The truck today pumps right around 80 gallons per minute. It's a big improvement."

Even with better equipment, the job's challenges have basically remained the same, says Ev. They include finding his way to a new customer's place, driving in bad winter conditions, and handling tight delivery schedules during the hectic haying and irrigation seasons when customers are depending on timely deliveries. He's in his truck and heading out of Bassett by 7 a.m., and working until dark many evenings.

On his time off, he might be called to handle a repair at his wife Myrna's grocery store in their hometown of Newport, cutting lawns or gardening in the summer, completing woodworking projects in winter, or spending time with the couple's two daughters' families, including three grandchildren.

But after all of the years on the job, he says he still enjoys chatting with customers, and seeing the countryside as he drives back roads. His main goal, though, is service. "I try to serve everybody and do a good job," says this long-time fuel master. "When a customer needs fuel, I try to get it to them as soon as possible."

For Farmers Ranchers Cooperative's one-man, one-product location in Bassett, that says it all. ■

FARMERS RANCHERS COOPERATIVE  
224 SOUTH MAIN  
AINSWORTH, NEBRASKA 69210

PRSR STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
VISTACOMM

**INSIDE**  
**NEED FINANCING?**  
**CHECK OUT COFINA**

**PAGE 3**



# TRAILHEAD

"BRINGING INNOVATION AND SUCCESS TO THE SANDHILLS"

DECEMBER 2007 • PUBLISHED BY FARMERS RANCHERS COOPERATIVE, AINSWORTH, NEBRASKA 69210



- Main Office ..... 402-387-2811
- Propane Office..... 402-387-1220
- Mr. Tire – Ainsworth ..... 402-387-2533
- Toll-Free..... 800-233-6627
- Fertilizer Plant..... 402-387-2323
- Feed Mill ..... 402-387-2810
- Mr. Tire – Mullen..... 308-546-2281
- Mr. Tire – Valentine..... 402-376-2060
- Farm Supply – Valentine .. 402-376-3045
- Toll-Free..... 866-376-3045
- Keya Paha Division ..... 402-497-2020
- Bassett – Fuels ..... 402-684-2811

[WWW.FARMERSRANCHERSCOOP.COM](http://WWW.FARMERSRANCHERSCOOP.COM)

## GOOD NEWS IN 2007

Farmers Ranchers Cooperative had an excellent 2007 fiscal year. The proof is in the numbers. Net income rose from \$851,525 in 2006 to \$1,287,121 this past year. Total sales increased from \$30.6 million to \$33.3 million.

As members, you participate in that success. For fiscal 2007, Farmers Ranchers will distribute \$249,000 in cash patronage and \$177,730 in equity redemption—paid either to member estates, requests from members age 65 and older, and members who have moved away.

What is behind the successful year? Feed and agronomy were excellent areas for us in 2007. In terms of feed, even though total tonnage sold was down a bit, income increased due to our product mix. Agronomy experienced a healthy increase in both income and tonnage of fertilizer sold. We realized an approximate 1,000-ton increase in dry fertilizer sales this year, and a 3,200-ton increase in liquid fertilizer sales. Additional corn acres were responsible for a good portion of that increase, but we also picked up new business.

Energy continues to be a challenge considering the market volatility and tremendous price swings from day to day. Not surprising, when we carry a large inventory and the price drops as

### MANAGER'S MOMENT

by Keith Erickson  
President & CEO  
[kerickson@frcoop.com](mailto:kerickson@frcoop.com)



much as 10 to 15 cents per day it will cut into our margins.

Overall, we're very pleased with the past year, and off to a good start for 2008. We appreciate the dedication of our board, our employees and you, our members, who continue to support the cooperative you own.

### Agronomy and Ampride® updates

Kenny Eggers has recently been named Agronomy Division manager. Kenny took over as acting manager in April and has done a great job. He brings years of experience, sales expertise, and a deep knowledge of agronomy operations. We're happy to have him on board and look forward to his leadership in the agronomy area.

Changes are also underway at the Ampride® in Ainsworth. After several years managing the store, Deb Baxter is moving from the area to pursue other interests. We thank her for her many years of dedicated service and wish Deb

## CONGRATULATIONS CHAMPION!

It isn't every day Farmers Ranchers Cooperative has the opportunity to congratulate a world champion in its midst. That's why we're excited about the accomplishments of Tamara Maloun, granddaughter of Dan and Darla Drake of Ainsworth. Dan works winters in the Farmers Ranchers Feed Division, and spring/summer in agronomy.

Tamara, a power lifter, competed in Louisiana earlier this year, claiming a national title. This October, she brought home three golds from the AAU (Amateur Athletic Union) World Championships at Disney Wide World of Sports in Orlando, FL, making her a world champion. Tamara's lifts included: squat at 319.5 lbs., bench press at 187.25 lbs., and the dead lift at 314 lbs.

Tamara has been powerlifting for about two years, holding local, state, and national records. Congratulations Tamara! We're proud of your accomplishments and wish you continued success. ■



## GIVING BACK

Farmers Ranchers believes in giving back to the communities we serve. In fact, during fiscal year 2007, your cooperative's donations to our region totaled \$18,112. That included contributions to organizations like 4-H councils, FFA chapters, local fire departments, county fair boards, and school organizations.

We'd like to highlight one unique project that caught our attention this year. The community of Springview needed a new truck scale, but there was no single business which could

afford to purchase the scale on its own. Local leaders determined to make the purchase of a scale a community-wide project.

Farmers Ranchers has a busy branch in Springview, hauling many truck loads of feed from that location. We were proud to become a project partner, donating \$10,000 towards the costs. Farmers Ranchers is always pleased to see success in our region, and we congratulate Springview on their commitment to move ahead and make a new scale a reality. ■



*Farmers Ranchers board member Jim Ferguson presented a \$10,000 check to Bev Cook, secretary of the Springview Community Scale Fund.*

## IT'S ON THE WEB!

Patrons with a high school senior planning an ag-related career should check out our Web site. You'll find information on the Farmers Ranchers "The Future of Agriculture" \$1,000 scholarship. We award three scholarships in our trade area. Find the details at [www.farmersrancherscoop.com](http://www.farmersrancherscoop.com).

## GOOD NEWS IN 2007

Continued from Page 1

and her husband the best of luck. Taking Deb's place starting January 1 is Peggy Graham. Peggy is a

long-time employee, coming to Farmers Ranchers when the Ampride first opened. That means she'll be

bringing her years of experience to the job as manager. We want to welcome Peggy to her new position and invite you to stop in to both bid Deb farewell and congratulate Peggy.

The entire Farmers Ranchers staff also wishes each and everyone of you, our patrons, a blessed holiday season. This time of year—and always—we're happy to be part of the Sandhills Community. ■

# REVIEW 2008 STRATEGY

## AGRONOMY ADVICE

by Kenny Eggers

Agronomy Division Manager

[keggers@frcoop.com](mailto:keggers@frcoop.com)



Are you prepared for 2008? As the price of corn and soybean rises, it begs the question: Which should I plant next year?

While we can't answer that question for you, we can provide the products and services you'll need for the 2008 growing season.

Let's look at fertilizer. We don't expect any shortages in the next growing year, but we have seen rising costs. Part of the reason is that the U.S. has not built any new manufacturing facilities for years. Instead, a lot of product is coming from overseas. The approximately 93 million acres of corn in 2007 used up a lot of product, and those fertilizer tanks have not yet been filled. People are waiting to see what's going to happen in 2008. We also can't minimize the impact of today's global demand for fertilizer—with product heading to places like China and Brazil.

In terms of seed, Farmers Ranchers is excited about the prospects. Kevin Pickhinke, in charge of seed sales, tells us that Croplan Genetics® had a very successful 2007. The year marked the first time Croplan sold over one million bags of seed corn. In fact, the company is now tied for third place with NK.® With Farmers Ranchers handling Croplan and Asgrow® Dekalb,® your cooperative is now selling the Number 2 and Number 3-selling brands in the country. It provides us the option of placing a wide range of genetics on your farm.

For example, with the new Monsanto YieldGard VT Triple™ event, we saw an approximate 8-bushel average increase over the

triple-stacked corn. Crop insurance companies are noticing the difference, too. They're offering a new program in the eastern Corn Belt: reduced insurance premiums on fields planted with the VT Triple event. If the program goes well they expect to go nationwide in 2009.

As for seed supply, we expect to be in good shape. Croplan is sitting comfortably with about 2 million bags available, and Monsanto is in a similar situation.

## Take advantage of pre-pay discounts

We have three deadlines for pre-pay seed discounts: December 20, January 20, and February 20. Obviously, the earlier you buy, the better discount you'll receive. We also offer volume discounts.

Another incentive is Croplan's triple-stacked program. When you buy a minimum of 24 bags, you can receive \$24 off up to 108 bags of seed corn. That offer ends January 20, so stop in and get the details. We're also offering pre-pay discounts on fertilizers and chemicals.

There's no better time than now to stop in. At Farmers Ranchers Cooperative, we'll be glad to sit down with you and go over your crop strategies for the upcoming year. Just give us a call at the Fertilizer Plant at 402-387-2323. ■



# THINKING GOALS AND FINANCING

## FINANCE FACTS

by Bob Mulligan

Office Manager

[rmulligan@frcoop.com](mailto:rmulligan@frcoop.com)



Yearend is a natural time to celebrate your hard work and reflect on accomplishments. How did your actual yields compare to your goals? What might you want to do differently with next year's calf crop in terms of production and/or marketing — and what kind of resources would it take to make needed changes? Farmers Ranchers Cooperative encourages you to talk with us at your earliest convenience about crop and livestock operating loans for next season.

We offer fast, easy financing packages through Cofina Financial for all your production needs—with benefits such as competitive loan rates, quick response on your initial application, and easy access to your funds. Our local service and expertise, combined with the national experience and resources of Cofina Financial, gives you a powerful advantage. Together, we take great pride in knowing what's possible in crop and livestock production and marketing, as well as what's possible financially.

Financing with someone who really understands your business is important. As you think about any new opportunities or potential changes for the season ahead, it's especially helpful to work with a knowledgeable and friendly team that sincerely wants to help you succeed. Contact Bob Mulligan at 402-387-2811 or 800-233-6627 today. Farmers Ranchers Co-op—Serving You Sandhills Style. ■