

# across the state line

*FARMER'S COOP ELEVATOR CO. of Hemingford, NE builds its first elevator across the state line in South Dakota to provide a harvest time facility for its customers in that area.*

As Farmer's Coop Elevator Co. of Hemingford, NE has grown in recent years in the northwest corner of Nebraska, it has gained a certain following among grain and oilseed producers across the state line in southwestern South Dakota.

"We weren't able to service our South Dakota patrons during harvest time," says Scott Sterkel, vice president-grain, who has been with the cooperative for 12-1/2 years following graduation from Chadron (NE) State University. "There are tons of good grain grown in the area, and we did not have a close location to take harvest time deliveries."

The coop looked at a number of

sites for a new elevator around Bennett County, SD and settled on 30 acres adjacent to the unincorporated town of Swett, a wide spot on U.S. Highway 18 about halfway between Martin and Batesland with zero population. (Locals say the town's sole business was a bar and grill eatery, in which the family owners lived in back, but that has been closed for years.)

To construct the \$6.5 million, 1.2-million-bushel country elevator, the coop hired EBM Construction Inc., Norfolk, NE (800-356-9782) as general contractor and millwright. Sterkel notes that EBM had done previous projects for Farmer's Coop Elevator, including the additions of

## FARMER'S COOP ELEVATOR CO.

### Hemingford, NE

308-487-3317

**Founded** • 1919

### Storage capacity

10 million bushels at 6 locations

### Annual volume

15-20 million bushels

### Annual revenues (grain)

\$70 million

**Number of members** • 1,000+

**Number of employees** • 60

### Crops handled

Corn, hard red winter and hard red spring wheat, sunflowers (oil), millet, barley, soybeans, oats

### Services

Grain handling and merchandising, feed, agronomy

### Key personnel at Swett

- Scott Sterkel, vice president-grain
- Mical Marks, location manager
- Robert Starr, superintendent



SOUTH DAKOTA

★ Swett



New country elevator for Farmer's Coop Elevator Co. in Swett, SD, holding 1.2 million bushels. Drone photo courtesy of EBM Construction Inc.

## SUPPLIER LIST

- **Aeration fans** • Chief Agri
- **Bin sweeps** • Sioux Steel Co.
- **Bearing sensors** • 4B Components Ltd.
- **Bucket elevator** • Schlagel Inc.
- **Catwalks** • Warrior Mfg. LLC
- **Contractor/millwright** • EBM Construction Inc.
- **Control system** • Buchheit Precision
- **Conveyors** • Schlagel Inc.
- **Distributor** • Schlagel Inc.
- **Dockage tester** • Mid-Continent Industries
- **Electrical contractor** • Triangle Electric
- **Elevator buckets** • Maxi-Lift Inc.
- **Grain temperature system** • Tri-States Grain Conditioning Inc.
- **Moisture meter** • DICKEY-john
- **Motion sensors** • 4B Components Ltd.
- **Portable belt conveyor** • LeMar Industries
- **Scale automation** • AgTrax
- **Site preparation** • Buettner Construction
- **Steel storage** • Chief Agri
- **Surge tank** • Lowry Manufacturing Co.
- **Tower support systems** • Warrior Mfg. LLC
- **Truck probe** • Gamet Mfg. Inc.
- **Truck scale** • Sooner Scale, B & B Valley Scale Service (installation)
- **Valve** • Schlagel Inc.

several concrete tanks in Hemingford over the past nine years, as well as a greenfield elevator at Mirage Flats, NE in 2013. “They did a great job,” he says.

In addition to EBM:

- Triangle Electric, Williston, ND (701-572-6783), served as the electrical contractor.

- Buchheit Precision, Hemingford, NE (308-763-1439), provided the control system for the elevator.

- Buettner Construction, Hay Springs, NE (308-638-7684), did earthwork on the project, which got underway in January 2017.

The facility began receiving grain in October of that year.

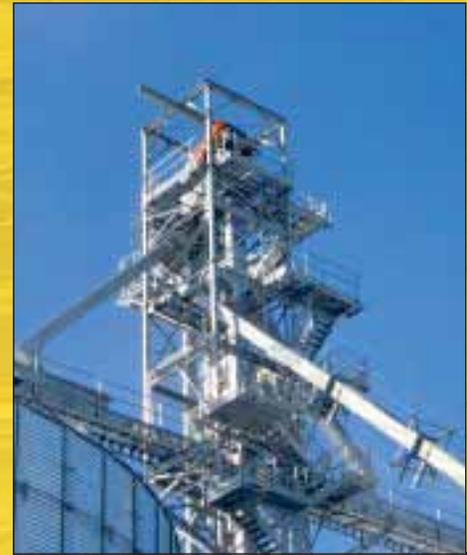
### Facility Specifications

The bulk of the elevator’s upright storage consists of four Chief 300,000-bushel corrugated steel tanks in an east-west row. These tanks stand 80 feet in diameter, 64-1/2 feet tall at the eaves, and 86 feet tall at the peaks.

The tanks have outside stiffeners, flat floors, Daay paddle sweeps, and 14-cable TSGC grain temperature monitoring systems. The tanks are set up for Bindicator radar-type level monitors, but those have not been installed yet. ►



Facility office building and grain lab adjacent to a 120-foot Sooner Scale inbound-outbound scale and Gamet JaHam probe. Ground-level photos by Ed Zdrojewski.



Top of the receiving leg, inside a Warrior support tower, feeds into a 4-hole Schlagel rotary distributor.

A set of four Chief 25-hp centrifugal fans per tank supply 1/10 cfm per bushel of aeration through in-floor ducting.

Trucks hauling incoming grain line up for weighing on a 120-foot Sooner Scale inbound-outbound pitless truck scale, where they are sampled with a Gamet JaHam probe. The scale data is recorded by an AgTrax scale automation system. Samples are analyzed in a grain lab in the adjacent facility office building; equipment includes a DICKEY-john GAC® 2500-UGMA grain analysis computer and a Mid-Continent MCi Kicker dockage tester.

Drivers are directed to one of two mechanical receiving pits. Both pits send grain directly to a single Schlagel 20,000-bph leg outfitted with a single

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-Scott Sterkel, Farmers Coop Elevator Co.

row of Maxi-Lift Tiger-Tuff 20x8 heavy-duty buckets mounted on a 22-inch Continental belt. The leg is supported by a 14-foot-x-14-foot-110-foot Warrior tower with switchback stairs.

The leg deposits grain into a Schlagel four-duct rotary distributor. In turn, the distributor sends grain out to upright storage via Schlagel 20,000-bph drag conveyors. These conveyors are outfitted with special flights that have cup-shaped indentations specifically designed for moving oilseed sunflowers.

The distributor also can send grain

via gravity spout onto a LeMar portable belt conveyor, which carries grain out to a site for an emergency storage pile as needed.

“Last year (2018), we had about 80,000 bushels in that pile,” Sterkel says. “They were the first to be picked up and moved out.”

None of the upright Chief tanks are equipped with sidedraw spouts. Instead, they empty into 12,000-bph Schlagel reclaim conveyors in above-ground tunnels. These run back to the receiving leg.

From the distributor, outbound grain is sent via gravity spout to a Schlagel K-valve atop a pair of Lowry Manufacturing 3,500-bushel overhead surge tanks for loading trucks.

“It’s been a very good first year,” says Sterkel of the coop’s newest elevator. “Our yields were excellent. During the season, we transferred more than 600,000 bushels to other locations so we could keep the doors open.”

*Ed Zdrojewski, editor*



Gravity spout leading to a portable belt conveyor used for building emergency storage piles during harvest as needed.



Ground-level view of Farmers Coop Elevator Co.’s year-old country elevator at Swett, SD.