



CELEBRATING 250 YEARS OF AMERICAN AGRICULTURE

The story of the Poots Heritage Farm

By Sara Clausen, Director of Communications, Sara.Clausen@keycoop.com

AS WE CELEBRATE AMERICA'S 250TH ANNIVERSARY, one word comes to mind: stories. And when you add stories and Iowa farm families together, the results transform into actual numbers recognized by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship. Since 1976, more than 21,000 Century Farms have been recognized throughout the state. Since 2006, 2,000 have received the prestigious designation of Heritage Farm.*

For one Newton family, their story began in Germany when a young man changed the course of his future and moved to America in 1857. Frederick Reckler first settled in Davenport, Iowa, then moved on to Grant County, Wisconsin, where he enlisted in the military, answering President Lincoln's call for 75,000 volunteers to serve in the Civil War. Reckler may have been a young, inexperienced soldier, but his story is that of a fearlessly dedicated American. In the historic Battle of Bull Run in 1861, he took a bullet to the heart and was presumed dead, only for his family to later learn he'd been saved by his pocket Bible. He was captured and held as a prisoner of war. When his time as a soldier was through, he bought land to farm in Jasper County, Iowa.

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Above: Key Agronomist Clayton Poots (left) and his father Todd (right) at the Poots Heritage Farm, which has been in their family for over 150 years.

*A Century Farm is deemed as such if it is owned by the same family for 100 years. A Heritage Farm is deemed as such if it is owned by the same family for 150 years.

GRAIN FEATURE

The crop is off to an excellent start! For that reason, the Key Grain division is already preparing for the coming harvest.

Fall plans begin with empty or nearly empty facilities. As a result, most of our summer work relates to getting those facilities empty and prepped for the next crop cycle.

See page 2 for the full story.

ENERGY FEATURE

Propane is an essential part of the energy division at Key Cooperative. In fact, we've been delivering propane to customers for over 50 years!

See page 4 for the full story.

Sign up to receive Key's e-newsletter every other month. Just scan the QR code and enter your email address!





Investing in the Future

By Jarod Lemper, Grain Division Manager, Jarod.Lemper@keycoop.com

THE CROP IS OFF TO AN EXCELLENT START! For that reason, the Key Grain division is already preparing for the coming harvest.

Fall plans begin with empty or nearly empty facilities. As a result, most of our summer work relates to getting those facilities empty and prepped for the next crop cycle. Through rail car loading in Newton and Nevada and plenty of truck traffic, we're making great progress toward that goal. We're on pace to be as empty as possible by the end of August.

Having space available during harvest is one of the ways we can serve our members, and I believe one of Key's greatest strengths is our ability to receive grain at a high rate across our facilities. Investing in facilities to store and maintain those harvest receipts is of great importance to us and to you!

We've been sharing regular updates on one major addition coming this fall: the Newton hoop building, which is nearing completion. We've had a deficit of space in the Grinnell/Newton/Sully area for

some time now. We're pleased that this new building will add about 1.25 million bushels of space to the area.

With the increased volume of grain flowing out on the Iowa Interstate Railroad, having additional storage in Newton will be a great asset. We'll be able to position a large amount of corn and soybeans near our loading facility, which will make for a short haul when recharging after loading any cars. We'll be free to make sales and market grain when the opportunity arises and not because our space is full. The building also has an unloading system that will allow us to draw grain out over time without being constrained by weather, as we were with the bunkers.

We will continue to monitor the crop as it develops. We're all aware of how the final harvest numbers can change due to growing conditions over the remainder of the season. Plans will evolve as conditions change, but we will do our best to be as prepared for the fall as we can be. In the meantime, fair season is fast approaching, and we look forward to seeing many of you on the fairgrounds! 🍌



The story of the Poots Heritage Farm

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Frederick Reckler's story is one that's been passed down among his descendants, the Poots family, for generations. They relish the opportunity to share that he is the reason they now have a Heritage Farm—an honor they received at the Iowa State Fair in 2019, when they celebrated the farm's 150th year.

"Nearly every generation that has operated our farm is buried here in Newton," said Reckler's great-great-grandson, Todd Poots. "I'm now the fifth generation to operate the farm and tell our family story."

The original 160 acres operated by Reckler have grown to include a couple more neighboring 80 acres for the family to manage. "Surprisingly, my father, Jerold, was able to grow our farm in the 1980s," said Todd. "He was involved with the farm for 75 of the 150 years!"

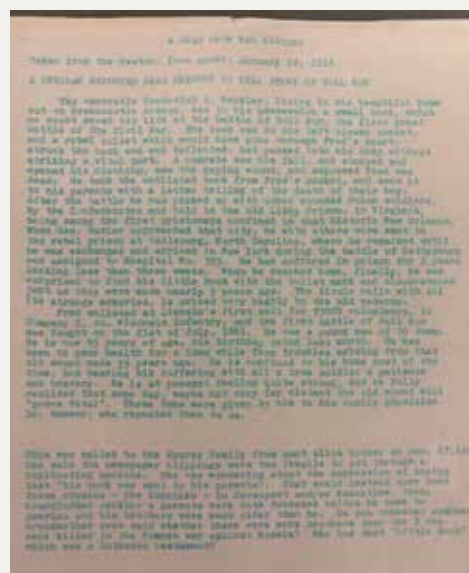
Though Todd and his wife, Marta, raised their children in Huxley, they moved back to the home farm in 2002 to care for

Todd's parents and help farm and tend to their livestock.

Now the family gets to celebrate yet another generation on their land. Todd and Marta's son Clayton—who also serves as a Key Agronomist—has moved his young family to Newton and built a home on the farm.

In recent years, the family has diversified by growing their cow-calf herd, which they sell at market and to some local lockers. "We're focused on being conservative, but we have done a lot of updates to the farm," said Todd. "We must rethink what we're doing to add value to our operation."

If you'd like to take part in celebrating historic Iowa farms and the families who keep them going, you have the opportunity next month! New farms will receive Century and Heritage Farm designations at the great Iowa State Fair on Thursday, August 20, in the Pioneer Livestock Pavilion. ●



From the family records, at the top is Frederick Reckler's obituary, and below is an account of his service during the Civil War, which was published in a newspaper in 1916.



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Essential Services, Essential Team

By Scott Richardson, Energy Division Manager, Scott.Richardson@keycoop.com

PROPANE IS AN ESSENTIAL PART of the energy division at Key Cooperative. In fact, we've been delivering propane to customers for over 50 years!

Propane is also essential for our customers' farms, homes and businesses. We know our customers must have access to propane for hot water, cooking, heating their homes and drying grain. These important functions couldn't happen without the tireless service of our propane drivers.

Key Cooperative currently employs eight full-time drivers who provide delivery services to over 5,000 customer tanks. These drivers work all summer long to fill and inspect gas systems, ensuring that our customers are safe and ready for the coming grain harvest, and that they are going into winter with a full tank to heat their homes. Our drivers will run all hours of the day, plus nights and weekends—anything harvest demands. Then they continue through the long, cold days of winter.

On average, our eight delivery drivers will work **over 6,000 hours** this next winter, make **over 12,000 stops** and drive **over 86,000 miles** to take care of customers. Some days, they must face challenging subzero temperatures, hazardous road conditions and the limits of their equipment as they make sure everyone has the propane they need for their families. To say our drivers are committed to being your essential business partner is an understatement. They have over 100 years of combined experience in delivery, training, certification and industry knowledge. We couldn't do it without them!

At Key Cooperative, we pride ourselves on our ability to provide quality propane service to our customers. I'm grateful to have the opportunity to highlight these efforts in this month's newsletter and announce a new feature. **Our summer-fill propane delivery program is adding an additional savings option, where customers can receive a \$0.05 discount per gallon when they pay for their propane within 10 days of delivery.**

Drivers will leave a delivery ticket with the optional discount printed at the bottom and the due date for the discount to be paid. Payment can be made over the phone, dropped off at your nearest Key location or submitted online through Key Connect. Invoices will be available in Key Connect within a day or two of delivery. Accounts must be in good standing to receive the discount.

Our drivers have already started summer-filling propane tanks and will continue through the end of August. Key offers fixed-price winter contracts with no deposit required, discounted prepaid winter contracts and an annual budget billing program, with level monthly payments to help propane customers manage their heating needs. If you're not currently a Key propane customer, please reach out to one of our Energy Customer Service Representatives at 800-469-1040 to find out which service best aligns with your needs. ●

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Get More Value From Your Manure This Fall



By Landon Van Dyke, Conservation Agronomist, Landon.VanDyke@keycoop.com

HOG MANURE is one of the most valuable nutrient sources on your farm, but a portion of its nitrogen can be lost before next year's crop ever has a chance to use it. Instinct NXTGEN® is a nitrogen stabilizer designed to protect ammonium nitrogen in manure by slowing the conversion to nitrate. This helps keep more nitrogen available for your crop and can improve the return on your manure investment.

To help more producers experience the benefits of manure stabilization, we will be offering a special discount on Instinct NXTGEN for fall manure applications. Details will be announced in the coming months.

As fertilizer prices and nutrient efficiency remain top of mind, now is a great time to start thinking about ways to maximize every gallon of manure applied. Contact your Key Agronomist to learn more about Instinct NXTGEN and take advantage of the upcoming discount! 🟡

Know Your Hybrid's Response to Nitrogen & Fungicide

RESPONSE TO NITROGEN

Modern corn hybrids show varying responses to nitrogen based on genetics. High-response hybrids often require on average 20–30 lbs. per acre more than lower-response, more efficient hybrids to reach optimal yields.

Nitrogen uptake is critical from the R1 to R6 grain fill timeframe, accounting for approximately 38 percent of nitrogen use. Be sure to ask your agronomist about adding SRN25B to your fungicide applications, especially with the excessive rainfall experienced in some areas.

RESPONSE TO FUNGICIDE

Fungicide is a key component of overall plant health and stalk quality. Plants grew extremely fast in a short amount of time this year after a slow start, making the stalks weaker than most years. One of the hidden benefits of fungicide that is difficult to quantify is standability.

Also, do not forget to apply fungicide to disease-prone soybean varieties around the R3 stage. Under high moisture and disease pressure, yield responses can range anywhere from a 4–6 bushel increase, and summer is just beginning.

Corn fungicide scores are based on 4-year trial studies:

- Low = 4.5–10 bushel increase
- Average = 9–14.8 bushel increase
- High = 14.2–18.7 bushel increase



**Information provided by local CROPLAN®, DEKALB® and Brevant® representatives, respectively. Yield data is not a guarantee of yield response. Contact your Key Agronomist if your hybrid is not listed.*

DEKALB	Response to Nitrogen	Response to Fungicide
DKC 101-33/35	High	Average/High
DKC 105-33/35	Average	High
DKC 106-98VT4	Low	Average/High
DKC 56-26	Average	Average/High
DKC 107-69	High	High
DKC 108-17	High	High
DKC 108-64	Low	High
DKC 109-71	Average	High
DKC 110-10	Average	Average
DKC 110-41	High	High
DKC 111-33/35	High	Average/High
DKC 111-61/62	Average	Average
DKC 112-12	High	Average/High
DKC 112-35	High	Average
DKC 113-03	High	High
DKC 114-42/43	Average/High	High
DKC 114-99	Average	Average/High
DKC 115-55	Average	Average
DKC 116-62	High	Average/High
DKC 66-06	Average	High
DKC 68-35	Average	Average/High

BREVANT	Response to Nitrogen	Response to Fungicide
B04J45	Average	High
B06Y18	High	Average
B08R32	High	Average
B09Z08	Average	High
B10Z50	High	Average
B11C37	High	Average
B12H48	High	Average
B12J58	Average	Average
B13C49	High	Average/High
B14C59	High	Average

CROPLAN	Response to Nitrogen	Response to Fungicide
CP4840	Low	High
CP5050	Average	High
CP5249	Average	Average
CP5320	High	Average
CP5468	Average	Average
CP5682	High	High

Summer is a season of work, traditions and excitement

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modern payment technology, the Zearing location will help serve both daily traffic and the seasonal needs of agriculture. We appreciate the patience and support shown throughout the project and look forward to seeing this station become a valuable asset for the Zearing area and the surrounding countryside.

July also brings one of our favorite traditions: county fair season. Each summer, Key Cooperative employees have the opportunity to serve meals at county fairs across our trade territory. These meals are a simple but significant way to thank the 4-H and FFA members, families, volunteers and fair supporters who invest so much time into agriculture and youth development. We know that many of tomorrow's leaders are learning responsibility, work ethic and pride through livestock projects, exhibits and community involvement. We're honored to support them.

Beyond the fairs, our team will be active in a variety of community events throughout July and the rest of the summer. Whether they are helping with a meal, participating in a parade, supporting a local celebration or volunteering where an extra set of hands is needed, our employees continue to give back to the towns and rural areas we are fortunate to serve. That commitment is part of who we are as a cooperative. Our employees do not just work in these communities—they live here, raise families here, serve on boards and committees here and take pride in helping our member-owners and customers succeed.

As we look ahead, we're also excited to begin planning an open house event for our new, 3-million-bushel grain storage building in Newton. As Jarod notes in his article, this project is a major investment in capacity, efficiency and long-term service for our members. Once final details are set, we look forward to inviting our member-owners, customers and community partners to tour the facility, visit with our team and see firsthand how this addition strengthens Key Cooperative's ability to serve producers today and into the future as we strive to be your essential business partner. 🟡



KEY COOPERATIVE

1918 - Present

While the nation is celebrating 250 years of American agriculture, your Iowa cooperative is celebrating 108 years of progress and shared success.

Watch for us in local parades, serving meals at our county fairs, hosting a member golf outing and welcoming you all in for customer appreciation events!

 **KEY COOPERATIVE**

Celebrating 250 YEARS OF AMERICAN AGRICULTURE

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KEY COOPERATIVE

COUNTY FAIR MEALS

Key Cooperative is pleased to support our local 4-H clubs and FFA chapters by sponsoring meals for exhibitors and their families. Look for us at the following county fairs!

Central Iowa Fair
Wednesday, July 8, 12:00 p.m. (Marshalltown)

Southern Iowa Fair
Monday, July 13, 5:00 p.m. (Oskaloosa)

Story County Fair
Wednesday, July 15, 5:30 p.m. (Nevada)

Poweshiek County Fair
Friday, July 17, 5:30 p.m. (Grinnell)

Polk County Fair
Tuesday, July 21, 11:30 a.m. (Des Moines)

Jasper County Fair
Tuesday, July 21, 6:00 p.m. (Colfax)

Celebrating 250 YEARS OF AMERICAN AGRICULTURE



Filling the Gap

By Justin R. Crocheck, Senior Cattle Consultant, Justin.Crocheck@keycoop.com

THERE IS ONE FUNDAMENTAL THING

that has held true in the feed industry in the past 35 years I've been associated with Key Cooperative. That one thing is that all species of livestock will need supplemental protein at some stage or all stages of their lives.

In a perfect world, all feedstuffs would supply exactly what a particular species needs for all stages of their lives. But with forages, protein levels can differ by species of forage, by different fields and by different cuttings. That's why it is important to test forage samples in an effort to meet the needs of the animal being fed.

The protein value of our forages was lowered last year since the nitrogen content was diluted by the rains and/or the additional tons harvested. Grass hay that had tested 9–11 percent CP in the past tested 6 percent CP last year. If a first trimester cow requires 10 percent CP to

meet her needs, then we need to provide supplemental protein to fill the gap.

If protein is our only need, then we can simply provide supplemental protein using soybean meal (46–48 percent CP) or distillers grains (26–27 percent). The feeding rate will be based on degradability and digestibility of the protein fed. If vitamins, trace minerals or ionophores are needed along with supplemental protein, then we can use a natural protein pellet (32–36 percent CP) to fill those needs. However, the feeding rate may not allow it to be our only source of protein because of the wideness of the gap.

Sometimes that nutritional gap can be so big in our ruminant diets that we need to spike the supplemental protein with urea. One pound of urea is equivalent to 287 percent CP, which means that one pound of urea is equal to 2.87 pounds of natural plant protein. With different



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forms of urea, we can provide supplemental protein through different delivery methods. We have the ability to supplement protein through pellets (36–55 percent CP), molasses tubs (20–40 percent CP) or liquid supplements (30–50 percent CP) to fill the gap.

Allow Key Cooperative to assist you in filling the gap between your feedstuff values and the nutritional needs of your animals. Have your feedstuffs tested, review the options that fill the gap and select the supplemental protein option that makes the most nutritional and economic sense for your animals and your operation! 🟡

Thursday, July 30, 2026

8:00 A.M. Check In
9:00 A.M. Shotgun Start

Westwood Golf Course

3387 Hwy. F48 W
Newton, Iowa

*New location
and details!*

For questions, contact Sara Clausen
at Sara.Clausen@keycoop.com
or 515-388-8030.



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KEY PERSPECTIVES

Summer is a season of work, traditions and excitement

By Brent Deppe, CEO,
Brent.Deppe@keycoop.com



SUMMER IS ALWAYS

a busy and meaningful season across Key Cooperative. From serving our member-owners and customers during

long days in the field to supporting the communities we call home, this time of year is a reminder of why local ownership and local service matter. We're proud to continue investing in facilities, services and people that help keep agriculture and our rural communities moving forward.

One of the most exciting updates this summer is the opening of our new Zearing fuel station at the end of June. This site represents another important investment in convenient, reliable fuel access for area farmers, businesses and community members. With updated fueling options, 24-hour access and

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Submit your photo for the next issue of Key Connections!

Would you like to see one of your photos featured on this page?

The *Connections* photo contest is open to any member or customer who receives our newsletter. One winning photo will be selected and placed in the newsletter. Photos must feature agriculture, ag events or rural settings; Iowa-based scenes are preferred. Photos must be submitted by the tenth of each month in order to qualify for the following month's newsletter. Please include your name, address, phone number and email address with your submitted photo(s).

Submissions may be emailed to
Sara.Clausen@keycoop.com.

Key Connections is sent to you courtesy of Key Cooperative. Please send comments or suggestions to
Sara.Clausen@keycoop.com or
call 515-388-8030.

24-Hour Hometown Fuel Station Now Open in Zearing! 70197 130TH STREET

Your Fuel Choice Matters - When you choose to stop at a Key fuel station, you can rest assured that you're doing business with a local company, not a major chain. As your local cooperative, we are community-focused and make it a priority to be good neighbors. We invest in hometown projects and student scholarships. Every time you fill up at your local Key Cooperative fuel station, you're supporting area farmers and your community. Thank you!

Want to Save at the Pump? Get a Key Cooperative fuel card and use it at any Key fuel station to automatically save \$0.06 cents per gallon every time you fill up!

Key Fuels Stations

- **Are locally owned.** We know what's in our fuel and we stand behind the quality of each product.
- **Offer premium fuel options.** We carry Cenex® gasoline, diesel and ethanol blends.
- **Do not require an account.** We accept all major credit cards and you don't have to have an account or membership to fill your tank!

Key's 24-hour fuel stations are conveniently located in these communities: Ames, Gilbert, Nevada, New Sharon, Newton, Roland, Story City, Sully and Zearing.

