

Ottawa Cooperative Association Celebrates 75 Years in Business



Supporting local farmers since 1950!

Happy 75th Birthday to The Ottawa Cooperative Association February 9, 2025.

75 years is a long time, kind of crazy to think back to the Ottawa Coop's beginnings. It was back in January 1950 that 40 local Ottawa farmers came together to discuss the possibility of forming a Cooperative. Out of this first meeting a steering committee of 15 members was selected to form the Ottawa Coop. 13 from the steering committee were present when they met with a Gerald Brown from CCA (What would later become Farmland Industries) on February 2, 1950. They came up with the basics for the organization at this meeting such as the name of the organization, number of board members, etc. \$10 from each person present was pooled together to have the funds to apply for a charter which was received on February 9, 1950.

The Board of Directors started actively looking for a facility to purchase or a green site where they could build. With over 400 members by April 22, 1950 the Board of Directors met with Carl Ross and agreed to purchase the facility located at 302 N. Main for \$150,000. O.C. Servis was hired as the first General Manager and the facility was opened for business on June 1, 1950 handling 175,000 bushels of wheat in its first month of operation. There were originally 9 employees at the Ottawa Coop.

The Ottawa Coop has come a long way in the past 75 years. Our most recent year ending 8/31/2024 resulted in annual grain receipts of over twelve million bushels and total sales of \$129 Million with 1043 voting members spanning 15 locations across 6 counties in Eastern Kansas. The Ottawa Coop currently has 82 full-time employees.

Clark Wenger, CEO

Life in 1950

Median Household Income: \$3,319/year

New Car: \$2,210

Milk: \$0.83/gal

Hamburger: \$0.12

Quart of Paint \$0.98

Gas: \$0.27/gal

Eggs: \$0.60/doz

Bread: \$0.12/loaf



Mike Green

The Agronomy Department welcomed four new sales agronomist this Fall. They are Alex Barker, Cody Crim, Abigail Colwell, and David Bartman they join with Mike Beying and Scott Jones. Mike Beying covers the Waverly/Burlington area and Scott Jones covers the Overbrook/Burlingame area. This team will work to prepare plans for the 2025 season for fertility, chemicals and seed needs. We had a particularly good harvest this year, the weather was ideal for a bountiful harvest for many. We had a nice fall run for fertilizer with the open and dry weather. Contact your sales agronomist and come by to meet the new team members for spring pricing as we prepare for the 2025 season. Alex Barker will be in the Spring Hill and Wellsville areas, Cody Crim and David Bartman will be in the Ottawa office to help meet your needs. Abby Colwell is in the Ottawa office and will oversee all the Precision Ag recommendations. We look forward to collaborating with our growers this upcoming year.



Lance Studer

The Ottawa Coop had a strong year financially in fiscal 2024. With the income generated from our fiscal year we were able to pay back to our members over five hundred thousand dollars between cash patronage and equity redemptions from prior years. We were also able to pass through to our members over \$1.5 million in tax deductions.

Additionally, we are nearing the end of our first year with a new input finance offering called "Winfield Secure". We gained a lot of traction with our producers in the first year. This program enabled us to offer financing on seed and chemical at 0% interest in a higher interest rate environment. We have renewed this program for the 2025 crop year and will continue to offer our in-house financing program in addition to Winfield Secure.

Lastly, I would just like to say thank you for your continued support of the Ottawa Coop and best wishes for a safe and profitable 2025!



Cal Wenger

The Seed Department continues to offer discounted seed prices. Offering Dekalb/Asgrow, LG, and Taylor seed brands. We have some very attractive financing offers available as well that you can pair up with the discounted prices and take advantage of both at the same time. Contact your local agronomist or Cal directly at 620-504-2135 to take advantage of our early order pricing now or to talk about our financing options including 0% interest offers until February 1st of 2026.