

Selling Field X Field®

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JUNE
2020

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR SEED SALES TIPS AND INFORMATION

MOVING SEED IS KEY TO OUR BUSINESS

Typically, I travel throughout the month of June. There is always a seed partner meeting the first week of the month, and then the American Seed Trade Association (ASTA) holds its annual Policy Leadership Development Conference (PLDC) toward the end of the month. I was really looking forward to the 2020 PLDC as I was to be inducted as chairman of ASTA board. My one-year term officially begins July 1.

It's such a great honor to have served on the ASTA board, and I'm especially honored to have been selected to serve as board chairman. My involvement with ASTA has allowed me to form so many relationships with other U.S. seed companies. ASTA membership is comprised of large and small companies alike, so I work with companies of all sizes that sell all types of seed. I've learned more about the vegetable and flower seed business than I could have ever imagined. It's been interesting to learn about the amount of seed that gets exported around the world. Movement of seed is critical for seed companies like Latham Hi-Tech Seeds, since our farmer customers need export markets, as well as for companies that sell their seed overseas.

Trade, tariffs and now a world-wide pandemic have created unprecedented challenges. COVID-19 has curtailed travel and cancelled large events. The ASTA chairman usually travels a great deal to represent ASTA and talk about issues of importance to its seed members. I always enjoy traveling to Washington, D.C., for the

spring ASTA meeting because our nation's capital is so beautiful in bloom. I was especially looking forward to representing the U.S. seed industry at an international meeting in South Africa, but that meeting has been cancelled.

Instead, I'm spending countless hours on video conferences. I'm hoping that I'll be able to start traveling again this fall even if it is for smaller group meetings like the ASTA Board of Directors. I'm also hopeful that we will be able to hold smaller company meetings, like in-field product training sessions, later this summer.

It's encouraging that many states are starting to re-open businesses and restaurants. At press time, most restaurants are only open at half capacity and no large group meetings are allowed. It makes it difficult to plan company events, so we're implementing Plan B for Latham® Dealer Kickoff. We're going to host this year's Kickoff online.

We're committed to making this Kickoff a great one, although we can't meet in person. I'm very excited about the dealer programs we are introducing to focus on simplicity and customer service. I'm very optimistic about the upcoming sales year. In times of uncertainty, people prefer to do business with people and brand names they can trust. We know Latham® is a name they can trust! It's a great time to be a family-owned, U.S. business. Together we can make 2021 the best year yet for your Latham dealership... **After all, you were made for this!**



Latham®
HI-TECH SEEDS

by **JOHN LATHAM**
PRESIDENT

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5 TIPS FOR WRITING EFFECTIVE CROP PLANS



by **AMY ROHE**
SALES MANAGER

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Summer officially arrives this month, but many of us experienced summer-like temperatures last month. The warm weather allowed a lot of seed to get planted in a short period of time, and we greatly appreciate the long hours you put in to make that happen. Your hard work is paying off!

Now that the seed is in the ground, let's focus on service after the sale. Our top-selling dealers say walking fields with customers leads to great conversations, which impacts product performance and customer satisfaction. Let's take this one step further...

Latham® Dealers who have the highest customer retention and sales growth walk customers' fields all growing season. They used crop notes to develop customized crop plans for their key customers.

Top-selling Latham dealers say it's important to keep the crop plan simple. Below are additional tips from your fellow dealers who are using crop plans to grow their Latham dealerships:

- 1 Learn the key products.** When walking fields with your RSM, pay close attention to the key products for your area as these products will likely make up 80% of your sales.
- 2 Learn how to place key products in your area.** Walk fields with your RSM. Use our online tools. Attend product training sessions and ask questions of our product team. Understanding where to recommend products is key.
- 3 Match products with farmers' management practices.** Understand how certain products must be managed, so you can match products with your customer's management practices.
- 4 Ask questions about weed management.** What kind of weed problems does your customer have? What herbicide platform has he/she been using? Has he/she been rotating chemistries?

- 5 Just do it!** Keep the plan simple. If you have completed steps 1 through 4, writing the plan will be easy. The hardest part of writing a crop plan is usually getting started. Once you have something down on paper, bounce it off your RSM before proposing it to a customer. You can even take what you learned by walking fields and work on the plan together with some customers. Many of our top dealers walk fields and put together a crop plan with their existing customers before harvest.

Orders based on a crop plan are less likely to change, cancel or get returned when a seed competitor offers a "fire sale" or a low-ball introductory offer. The time you spend crop planning upfront saves you time, money and energy later in the sales season.

My challenge to you is this: Walk at least 50% of your customers' fields, so you can present them with a crop plan before harvest. After harvest, review the crop plans and confirm each customer's order. Ask for an additional field if you don't have 100% of their acres. Then set up delivery, so you spend time in January and February recruiting new business.

This summer we will provide more opportunities than ever to look at Latham products. We're creating videos and blogs to provide you with more information for product recommendations. Couple that with the information you gain from walking fields, and it's a win-win for the customer and you.

Happy Selling!



WE'RE COMMITTED TO DEALER SUCCESS



by **RYAN SCHON**
GENERAL MANAGER

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While you and your farmer-customers are in **planting** mode, your Latham team is in full-on **planning** mode. We've reviewed all the aspects of our business. We've gathered input from our sales team and internal staff, and we're working through all the various ideas that we've collected all year long to charge ahead in 2021. Without stealing any thunder from our upcoming Latham® Dealer Kickoff, here are two ways we are investing for dealer success in 2021: **(1)** Delivering a more consistent Latham service to farmers; and **(2)** Simplifying how we do business with dealers.

This month I will focus on service. Each of your dealerships is different. You may invest more or less time and capital in your dealership. You might actively sell and prospect new customers, or you may just sell to the same friends and family year after year. You may serve an area with corn and soybeans in rotation. You may add alfalfa or silage to serve a livestock market, or you may have nearly 20 various crops planted in your area. Latham Hi-Tech Seeds needs all of you! We need you to consider how you can deliver each of these critical Latham services to your customers.

The 2021 selling season really starts this spring. How do you help your customers select the best Latham brand products for their farm, place them in the right environments and then manage them for success? Did you apply SoyShield™ seed treatments at your site? Did you help farmers manage their bulk soybean handling with bulk bins or seed tenders? Are your customers using variable rate inputs, and have you mentioned how Data ForwardSM can help them create those scripts? Are you walking their fields early and scouting for emergence?

Summer activity can make or break your fall sales pitch. Are you out walking fields again, scouting the crop at tasseling or flowering? Are you creating notes in Data Forward and sending those to your customers with a recommendation for follow up? Are you walking test plots with your RSM to build product confidence in our new 2021 class of products and getting comfortable with new technologies on the horizon? Are you already thinking about which products you'll recommend for each environment this fall?

You know that your customers will get their best deal of the year in the fall, especially if they are a loyal, repeat customer. So make sure you're getting proposals, including field-by-field crop plans, to each of your returning customers and key prospects.

Make recommendations for each customer and remember to include your whole portfolio: SoyShield seed treatments, alfalfa and Data Forward. Talk to your customers about their payment plans. Will you collect cash or offer John Deere financing? Our best deals on financing are also in the fall!

Being well prepared before harvest will take some pressure off that combine ride. Promise you'll follow up after harvest to lock down plans.

If your first sales call of the year is after harvest, you can bet that price will come up very quickly in that conversation. If you've been delivering service (i.e. value) to the customer all year long, you will be set up for a great conversation. This is when to ask for the sale.

You always need a sharp pencil, so your customer gets the best deal. You must build a good relationship. Those are table stakes. And at least once a year, you need to work in a top-of-mind conversation with them. What keeps them up at night? What are they focused on? I call this "needs discovery." The best time for this conversation is likely different for different farmers, depending if their nature is to focus more on their agronomy, grain marketing or finance.

We're very excited for Latham® Dealer Kickoff, so we can reveal more about how we're ready to help you deliver these services. Next month I'll talk more about how we're simplifying the way we do business.



LATHAM® DEALER KICKOFF GOES VIRTUAL!



by **LAURA CUNNINGHAM**
 MARKETING MANAGER
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These past few months have certainly been challenging when it comes to planning our summer training and launch events. To keep Team Latham – our dealers and employees – safe this summer, we are taking Latham Dealer Kickoff virtual this July!

We certainly will miss catching up with each of you and your families in person, but we were **Made for This** challenge.

The first step in making sure you receive all the needed information to join us for this virtual event is to register online by June 15 at www.lathamseeds.com/events. Once you let us know you intend to participate, we will send you a special care package and materials to "get connected" during the event. **NOTE:** If you had already registered for Kickoff, there's no need to register again.

The agenda follows:

July 8, 2020, at 7 P.M.

Join us for a virtual happy hour at 7:00 P.M. Those who interact during the session are eligible to win some special prize giveaways! Furthermore, our virtual support team will be available to help you work through any kinks, so you can see and hear the next day's sessions. The session will conclude at 7:30 P.M. with a virtual group "toast" to dealers and our support team for all your outstanding work this past season.

July 9, 2020, at 8 A.M.

Our goal is to make our virtual event as interactive as possible through Q&A sessions, games and trivia contests. The schedule at right is a tentative, but more detailed look, at the Day 1 agenda for large group participation.

July 10, 2020, Times to be assigned on a regional basis

Latham® Dealers who register for our virtual Kickoff will receive a link, directing them to a presentation specifically tailored to products in their region. Once you register for our virtual Kickoff, you will receive a link that directs you to a 90-minute online meeting specifically tailored to products in your region. You and dealers from your area will hear from each of our product managers, plus there will be a Q&A session following each product line's presentation.

Watch your email for more details!

JULY 9 ITINERARY	
8:00 AM	Sales Manager Amy Rohe welcomes the group and then President John Latham will provide an Industry Update
8:30 AM	General Manager Ryan Schon will follow with a look at the State of Latham Seeds and our "Made for This" approach for 2020-2021
8:50 AM	Building Sales through Service with the Data Forward™ Team
9:30 AM	How Latham's Services and Sales Programs are Made for Increasing Customer Loyalty with President John Latham
9:50 to 10:00 AM	Break
10:00 AM	Business Success -- You Were Made for This! Ryan will illustrate how our revised programs make it easier to calculate your profitability.
10:20 AM	You Were Made to Deliver Hometown Service with Chief Marketing Officer Shannon Latham
10:40 AM	Q & A with the Latham Product Team
11:00 to 11:15 AM	Wrap up Day 1 and Preview Day 2



MADE
for This

MADE
for This

**Annual Latham® Dealer Kickoff
IS NOW VIRTUAL!**

**REGISTER BY JUNE 15 TO
RECEIVE YOUR CARE PACKAGE**

www.LathamSeeds.com/events

2019-20 SEEDWARE OVERVIEW

Dealer Returns, Bean Dumps & Settlements



SANDIE JOHNSON

WEBINAR INSTRUCTOR

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Wednesday, June 10, 2020 7:00 AM

Thursday, June 11, 2020 8:30 AM

TO PARTICIPATE:

1. Call or email Sandie to get registered.
2. You will receive a notice via email. Please confirm your registration by clicking "register now."
3. Reminder emails will be sent prior to the webinar.
4. When the time has come for your session to start, join by clicking the link received via a confirmation email.
5. Watch, listen and learn!

SEEDWARE WEBINAR



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Selling FieldXField®

Published monthly for Dealers of Latham Hi-Tech Seeds, focusing on seed sales tips, trends and information from around the seed industry.



FATHER'S DAY WORD SCRAMBLE

Unscramble the letters to form the names of ten different words to describe Dad. Then unscramble the shaded letters to answer the riddle.

RFUELAC

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OSDAEHNM

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ONRGTS

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YALLO

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What do you call a monkey who is just like his father?
