

Selling Field X Field®

IN THIS ISSUE

- p1** Share the Good News during Pre-Harvest Customer Visits! *John Latham*
- p2** The Power of Walking Fields before Harvest *Amy Rohe*
- p3** Living Evelyn's Legacy *Ryan Schon*
- p4** Provide Value Even When Distanced *Laura Cunningham*
- p5** Latham's 2020 Field Tour Goes Virtual



SEPTEMBER 2020

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR SEED SALES TIPS AND INFORMATION

SHARE THE GOOD NEWS DURING PRE-HARVEST CUSTOMER VISITS!

This year has gone much differently than we expected due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We prefer meeting face-to-face, but some good things have resulted from our increased online presence. For example, presentations delivered during our Virtual Dealer Kickoff event are available in the Dealer Center on LathamSeeds.com. You can choose content by topic and watch it whenever it is most convenient, even if that means midnight or 5 A.M.

We also are placing more emphasis on providing you with resources to answer questions your customers have as their crops are growing. Our website has a new look as agronomic information is now grouped by topic. A new "topic of the week" is featured weekly on our website, so related articles are listed together. This same topic also is covered in Thursday's "Ask the Agronomist" video during which Phil Long, one of our precision agronomy advisors, answers questions from viewers via Facebook Live. It has been fun to watch the crops mature as Phil sometimes takes viewers into the field at Latham's Century Farm.

We enjoy hosting tours of our research farm in Alexander, Iowa, but this year's tours will look differently. We plan to continue doing many crop updates virtually. We also will hold tours for small groups of farmers.

It is important to take the pandemic seriously to keep everyone healthy, as well as to avoid any potential liability from an event. If you decide to hold an in-person event, start by setting expectations. Remind everyone to follow social distancing guidelines. Latham's Marketing Team has designed a creative sign to remind people to keep their distance, and you can download this template from the Latham Dealer Center.



Latham®

HI-TECH SEEDS

by **JOHN LATHAM**
PRESIDENT

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Whether you decide to hold a fall field day in person or online, there is just so much good news to share with existing and potential customers! Latham Hi-Tech Seeds has nearly a 75-year history of proven performance. We offer stability and a sense of security. There has never been a better time to represent an independent seed company because we have access to the latest and newest technologies. In fact, a record number of many competitive dealerships have been inquiring about adding a Latham dealership. They need access to a brand like Latham to provide the trait options their customers want and need.

Our loyal Latham dealers have first chance at ordering our products, so please go see your customers early to make sure they are covered for 2021. There is a great deal of interest for E3 and Liberty Link soybeans. There is still much uncertainty with the Xtendimax label and what the EPA and the courts might do with this technology. We have the options both in genetics and traits, which makes for a great discussion point with an existing customer or a new prospect.

Latham's Double Up program can take your sales to the next level with many customers. Please also promote our aggressive John Deere Financing program, which continues to grow. As always, work with your Latham RSMs.

Remember, sales made this season could earn you a trip to the Bahamas in 2022. We're working on that itinerary because we're so excited to once again travel the world!

THE POWER OF WALKING FIELDS BEFORE HARVEST



by **AMY ROHE**
SALES MANAGER

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Last month we covered implementing a year-long sales process with some simple steps to set up yourself for success. I want to go into more detail now about one of the steps, which is walking fields with customers. This is one of the most powerful touchpoints you can have all year!

Have you ever thought about where you have the best conversations with your customers? Are they in the middle of a field or at the kitchen table? When does a customer feel the most comfortable?

Nine times out of 10, farmers are the most talkative in the middle of a field. This is precious time to really hear your customers' concerns, learn what is working for them and what they want to accomplish next year.

A field provides the perfect conversation starter because you can talk about what you're seeing. A simple question asking how they think this crop looks can start a great conversation. Your job is to listen to what they are really saying and ask more open-ended questions. We highlighted it in last month's article but I feel it is worth mentioning again, we have created a new FieldXField® form to help (1) start the conversation and (2) guide the conversation with additional questions.

Once you have had at least one conversation in the field with a customer, it is an easy transition to ask for an early order. Take a

customer to a nearby plot. Based on the conversation you had in their field, show that customer products you believe best fits his/her operation. Are there additional products that you would like this customer to keep an eye on during harvest? Are there "must have"

products he/she should order now to ensure availability? We have a supply now, but supply either gets tight or sells out on some products every year. If there is a specific hybrid or variety your customer needs to help with a specific issue or if he/she wants a racehorse to capture high yields, encourage him/her to order soon.

Time and again, I've seen Latham® dealers increase their sales simply by visiting in the field with customers. Great conversations in the field help you really understand what each customer's challenges are and how you can help them accomplish their goals. It all starts with the summer field visit!

There are limited days between now and harvest for in-field visits to happen. Prioritize. Make a list

of which existing customers and prospects you want to see. Then contact your RSM and plan to visit them all before harvest. If you listen and take good notes, I promise you this will be the most impactful visit you will make all year.

GOOD LUCK AND HAPPY SELLING!



LIVING EVELYN'S LEGACY



by **RYAN SCHON**
GENERAL MANAGER

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Hospitality: the friendly and generous reception and entertainment of visitors and guests.

This is always a unique time of year for seed businesses. The crops are in the field, and we're all praying for just the right amount of heat, rain and favorable weather. Farmers only get one chance to get it right each season, and we want to help them make the most of it.

For our Latham team, these few months right after Dealer Kickoff are a rare chance to pause and reflect on this last sales season before we fully jump into the new season with both feet. As I have been reflecting, my thoughts keep coming back to hospitality. Our virtual Kickoff leaves us with a sense of loss that we didn't get the opportunity to host you and your families. We truly enjoy hosting all of you as our guests and trying to treat you like family.

The Latham family's hospitality is rooted in Latham family legacy. Willard and Evelyn lived with a spirit of hospitality even before starting Latham Seeds in 1947. Evelyn baked cookies for their early customers, and surely it wasn't because of their new business relationship. She did it because hospitality and service were in her heart and they were expressions of love. What a legacy, indeed!

Now we look ahead. We will continue to look for opportunities to host all of you. In the meantime, my family is eagerly anticipating this coming football season. Whether it's at Jack Trice Stadium or in our driveway, we WILL be tailgating this fall! We've seen our sports teams win, lose and even tie. Games have been cancelled or delayed for tornadoes, blizzards, and lightning. But we've never – NEVER – lost a tailgate. Hospitality is the essence of tailgating.

Food is symbolic of love when words are inadequate.
Alan D. Wolfelt

FOOD. I love this quote so much that my bride had it framed for me as a gift and it hangs in our kitchen. When we put our heart into our cooking, that food becomes a beautiful act of service. You will not leave our tailgate hungry.

Therefore, we aspire to please him, whether we are at home or away. 2 Corinthians 5:9

FAITH. When we eat, we say grace. We show our gratitude for our food and the farmers who provide it. We also remember those who have gone before us. Count your blessings!

There are no strangers here; Only friends you haven't yet met.
William Butler Yeats

FAMILY & FRIENDS. All are welcome at our tailgates. Of course, we have many friends and family that are regulars and join us every week. On the one hand, we're hosting a family reunion at a football game. At the same time, everyone is welcome. Even the foes are friends before kickoff.

FUN. There's no greater feeling than having the ball and the lead as the clock ticks down. Victory Formation! That's also true when you **Tailgate Victoriously** and we always end with our own version of victory formation. Join us in Ames sometime or invite us to bring our hospitality to you and watch your home team with you. Our tailgate trailer is ready to travel!

FOOTBALL. We go to the games and expose our hearts to the ups and downs of being fans. Being a Cyclone fan my whole life, I can tell you that's an adventure. At least we always know that we already have a win under our belts as we walk into the stadium.

You can win this fall by delivering care packages to the field or implementing other tactics outlined in Laura Cunningham's article. I invite you to put your own mark on Evelyn Latham's legacy of hospitality at field days and in customer interactions.



PROVIDE VALUE EVEN WHEN DISTANCED



by **LAURA CUNNINGHAM**
MARKETING MANAGER

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Research shows that farmers age 55 and younger want to hear from you weekly during harvest. So how can you stay in touch with customers and reach out to prospects when distancing measures are the norm and the busy season is upon us?

Meet your customers where they are during the fall season... in the cab of a combine, tractor or semi. These three tactics could be part of your fall marketing plan:

1 Send a text message. Snap a harvest photo and text it to your customers. Your photo will likely spark a dialogue. You also can text them quick reminders of program deadlines. These simple gestures are a non-invasive way to “check in” and allow them to respond on their own time.

2 Deliver a care package. Use Latham’s Co-op Marketing funds to purchase branded treat bags, as well as the snacks you put in them. Popular picks are a cold drink, beef sticks, cheese curds and trail mix. The bag also provides an opportunity to drop in some product or program materials like a Sell Sheet created from SeedWare with your top product picks or perhaps a copy of the cash discount schedule and financing options. Part of the decision-making process happens in the cab while customers are watching results from this year’s growing season. Seize an opportunity to share the value you can provide with independent trait options, and programs that reduce risk like cash and financing.

3 Share, Share, Share. Our Product and Marketing Teams have plans in place to share timely, relevant information all fall long to help you build customer confidence in the product lineup for 2021. Nearly every day of the week – sometimes even more than once a day – Latham Seeds posts yield results graphics, Ask the Agronomist Videos and special food and family features, plus updates from our President John Latham. Watch LathamSeeds.com, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram for timely graphics on internal and F.I.R.S.T. Trial results, continued content from our agronomy and product experts. NEW this year, we’re going to share special result updates from John Latham. These can be a quick share from your own

social profile, or a link that may be easily sent via text or email to your customers. Analytics show an uptick in website and social traffic each harvest on Latham pages. Take advantage of a “captive” audience by bringing valuable content straight to their devices.

Marketing tactics like the ones outlined above help meet your customers in the critical stages of the decision-making process when the normal in-person visits and chats in the cab may be a bit more limited. Make plans now – commit your ideas to paper – to ensure your plan gets implemented. This plan does not have to be time consuming or complicated. It just needs to get written because written plans are 40% more likely to get implemented!

Speaking of written plans, often they transition right into goals! Why not set a goal that includes some R&R in the beautiful Caribbean?

We’re making plans to enjoy some time in sunny Nassau Bahamas in 2022. We’d love for you to join us!



LATHAM'S 2020 FIELD TOUR GOES VIRTUAL

While gathering a crowd for our annual field day at the home farm may not be in the cards this year, we're excited to announce that this year's event is going virtual! One big advantage is we can now leverage technology to include innovation and research happening across our entire Upper Midwest territory. **SAVE THESE** dates and tune in to hear Latham's product team share insights on variety of key topics geared toward success this harvest and into the 2021 growing season.

TUESDAY, SEPT. 8, 2020: KICKOFF TO LATHAM'S VIRTUAL FIELD TOUR WEEK 2020

- 8 AM:** General Session: 73 Years of Quality and Innovation with President John Latham
9 AM: Roundtable Industry Discussion with Latham's Product Team

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 9, 2020: MAXIMIZING YOUR 40 CHANCES

- 8 AM:** Farmer Roundtable: Start Today! Farmers tell all about managing not-so-ideal harvest scenarios. Hosted by Bob Foley

9 AM:

- General Session: Test Ideas for Tomorrow with Precision Agronomy Advisor Darin Chapman
- General Session: Maximize Performance and Reduce Risk with Corn Product Manager Lyle Marcus

10 AM:

- **Special Feature! 20 Minute Workshop hosted by Precision Agronomy Advisor Phil Long** Placing Products G X E X M. Did you know that placement can affect yield by up to 20%? That's a 20-50 bushel yield swing! Phil will walk through how to match management style to product characteristics for best placement and performance.

THURSDAY, SEPT. 10, 2020: MANAGING SOYBEANS ON OFFENSE AND DEFENSE

8 AM:

- General Session: Select Products Built for Battle with Mark Grundmeier, Soybean Product Manager
- Ask the Expert: How do I protect the Yield Potential of my Soybean Genetics from Day One with Kilah Watson and Gary Geske
- General Session: Diversify to Maximize Performance and Reduce Risk with Mark Grundmeier



SEEDWARE WEBINAR



SANDIE JOHNSON
WEBINAR INSTRUCTOR

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Wednesday, September 16, 2020 7:00 AM
 Thursday, September 17, 2020 8:30 AM

2020-21 SEEDWARE OVERVIEW CUSTOMER & ORDER ENTRY

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!

OVER
70
YEARS

OF THE INDUSTRY'S
BEST GENETICS, HIGHEST
QUALITY PRODUCTS, AND
HOMETOWN SERVICE.

HELPING FARMERS FEED AND FUEL THE WORLD

Latham[®]
HI-TECH SEEDS

Selling FieldXField[®]

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

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FOOTBALL WORD SCRAMBLE

Unscramble the letters to find the football-related words below.

- REEEREF _____
- NDTUHWOCO _____
- KKOFIFC _____
- RMGAMCESI _____
- ITECSTK _____
- NGDTCOONINI _____
- CTIONTINPEER _____
- DSENFEE _____
- TVCIRYO _____
- IRCACETP _____
- YPKBLOOA _____
- IFRUMON _____

