

Selling FieldXField®

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APRIL
2022

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR SEED SALES TIPS AND INFORMATION

PUBLIC COMMENTS DUE MAY 15 ON ESCALATING INPUT COSTS

Inflation is everywhere. Prices have been on the rise in every industry in America, especially over the past 18 months. Fertilizer and crop protection products have increased by 85 percent! Seed prices doubled for genetically modified seed between 2000 and 2015. We're feeling the squeeze again now on seed technology royalties.

We've seen consolidation in the seed industry over the past two decades. During a series of joint workshops held in 2010 by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Department of Justice (DOJ), farmers described their experiences relating to agricultural inputs, intellectual property, and market power. In my opinion, the situation has only grown worse in recent years. There are only four major trait suppliers now, and two of these are much larger in terms of market share and their ownership of seed genetics and traits.

Latham's team works extremely hard to keep prices low by routinely evaluating ways to be more efficient. Still, it's increasingly difficult to stand up to increased trait royalties when there is so much domination in a consolidated industry with only a few major technology providers. We need more companies to invest in breeding and technology to help solve problems. This is one of the main reasons Latham Seeds has put such a focus on R&D.

When it comes to input prices, the USDA is looking into these issues. A Request for Information (RFI) has been issued to gain insights on competition from farmers and ranchers.

"Concentrated market structures and potentially anticompetitive practices leave America's farmers, businesses, and consumers facing higher costs, fewer choices, and less control about where to buy and sell, and reduced innovation — ultimately making it harder for those who grow our food to survive," said U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack.



Latham®
HI-TECH SEEDS

by **JOHN LATHAM**
PRESIDENT

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The public comment period is open until May 15. If you are interested in providing comments, go to [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov). Search for "competition in seed and fertilizer market."

Make your voice heard. We must provide information to the USDA, so large companies along the supply chain stop putting the squeeze on competition and taking advantage of farmers.

Be a voice of reassurance for your customers.

Your customers face tough decisions about where to invest their input dollar. Remind them of the value their Latham® seed- and **your service as their dealer**- brings to the farm.

During the past 20 years, seed has accounted for approximately 20% of total input cost. Seed traits and technology bring additional value by offering protection for weeds, insects and disease. Placement knowledge of this seed technology influences up to 20% of yield.

These are important factors you bring to the farm that make a big impact on yield at harvest and, ultimately, on the farmer's return on investment. In 2022, your customers are looking for a strong leader who can guide them through the decisions ahead. Look to the Latham Team for support. Remain confident in the value you can bring to the farm.

PLANT MORE THAN SEED THIS SPRING



by **AMY ROHE**
SALES MANAGER

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Spring is finally here! It is always exciting to see shed doors open and equipment setting outside, which are signs that planting season is near.

As you prepare for planting, keep in mind that it also is the first call of the next seed selling season. How can you lay the groundwork for your 2022-2023 sales?

Many Latham® dealers do a great job at being there for customers while managing their own farms during planting season. Here are a few proven tactics to consider implementing:

1 Group communications. Set up a group text or group Snapchat to stay in touch and build camaraderie. For example, you might send a text with the weather forecast and caution about imbibitional chilling. You can send a pic of your seed depth indicator in the soil, reminding them to check seeding depth on a regular basis. Be intentional about sending a communication twice a week. Here are a few other ideas to get you started:

- **Wait for fit planting conditions.** Latham Product Manager Lyle Marcus has a lot of great videos in our Dealer Center about the importance of planting in the right conditions at the proper seeding depth.
- **Share map of current soil temps.**
- **Share the “Ask the Agronomist” weekly videos.** We cover real-time topics of what is happening across the Latham territory.

Work with your RSM to develop a list of topics now, so you're prepped and ready to send them throughout the planting season.

2

One-on-one weekly calls. Reach out to each of your customers with a simple phone call to see how things are going. (Yes, make an actual phone call.) If they do not answer, leave a message that you're checking in to see how planting is going. What percentage is complete? How is the crop plan going? Do they need additional seed? This will give you a good pulse on inventory, so you can move seed if needed. These personal phone calls have become more popular each year.

3

Walk behind planters. Can you jump out of your tractor for a few hours to walk behind some of your customer's planters, checking seeding depth? You can help you customers make adjustments where needed. As you know, proper depth and spacing is key to maximizing yield. Make sure you have a supply of seed depth indicators, so you can leave one with your customers. NOTE: Seed depth indicators can be ordered on lathamgear.com.

Our customers tell us these types of touch points matter. Kick off the 2023 sales season with personal, impactful touch points! Have a safe planting season. We look forward to seeing you in the field soon.

GOOD LUCK AND HAPPY SELLING!



HOW MUCH AM I WORTH?

"Humility is nothing but
TRUTH,
and PRIDE is nothing but
LYING."



by **RYAN SCHON**

GENERAL MANAGER

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Farmers are generally a humble bunch. Most of our Latham® Seeds dealers either still farm or grew up on a farm. That humility is just one reason we love all of you and why we work together. It's also one of our biggest traps as the seed business continues to be more intensely competitive. What's at stake and what can we do about it?

First, I want to quickly revisit the market research that I shared during our virtual Latham Dealer Kickoff in 2020. These are the top five needs farmers tell us they have from their seed rep:

1. In-season follow up  service after the sale
2. Fair prices – a fair price for the value delivered
3. Locally located  relationship, delivery, treating
4. Cash / financing  help manage cash flow
5. Seed knowledge  selection, placement, management

Notice that none of those are the product itself. If you're "just" selling product, it's easy to understand why price is really the only important factor.

Take another look at the four factors I've marked with a checkmark. YOU are the difference! How are you meeting those needs? How much do you think those are worth? In addition to

Saint Vincent de Paul

St. Vincent de Paul's insights on humility above, one definition is "having an accurate estimate of one's worth." Let's focus on that.

Reflecting on our market research, sit down and make a list of services you provide. Now think about how valuable they are for your customers. Humility, again. But go ahead and give it a try:

- | | |
|---|------------|
| 1. Selling field-by-field / placement | \$200/acre |
| Dr. Fred Below says up to 20% yield impact (40-bushel corn / 12-bushel soy) | |
| 2. Scouting and agronomic advice | \$6/acre |
| 3. Real-time treating and seed tending/deliveries | \$4/acre |
| 4. Making connections with landowner, grain buyer, banker | \$12/acre |
| 5. Working through cash and financing options | \$8/acre |

I know that no customer ever forgets the need to have a fair price. With that said, I believe the more value you create and deliver for customers, the higher price that a customer thinks is fair. In that sense, a price objection is like a report card. Am I delivering enough value? Am I communicating it well enough? Am I confident enough in it? (Humility, again.) When you're done with your exercise, delivering and communicating that value, **let's add a check mark there too.**

Fair prices  a fair price for the value YOU delivered

Your Regional Sales Managers have done this same exercise. They know your business. Ask them to help you with this exercise and what they learned from it.

ONLINE REGISTRATION OPENS APRIL 1 FOR LATHAM® DEALER KICKOFF



by **SHANNON LATHAM**

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Take the time now to register for the 2022 Latham Dealer Kickoff, which will be held July 14-15 in Des Moines at the Marriott Des Moines Downtown. **Online registration opens April 1 at [Lathamseeds.com/events](https://lathamseeds.com/events).** Those who register early will receive a limited edition 75th anniversary t-shirt.

There is so much to see and do in Iowa's Capitol City that you'll want to be sure your room is reserved. We're still finalizing our agenda for this annual dealer meeting, and that will ultimately determine what area attractions will fit into our plans. Here's our short list:

- 1 Iowa Capitol** – Who knew the Iowa Capitol is the only state capitol with five domes? You can climb to the top! Iowa also is just one of 11 states with golden domes.
- 2 Des Moines Botanical Garden** – You'll feel like you stepped into the tropics inside the conservatory. Under a sheltering canopy of palm trees, you'll find exotic orchids and other flowering plants. The Trellis Café overlooks the Botanical Garden's water garden.
- 3 Iowa Cubs (I-Cubs)** – Named for their Major League Baseball (MLB) affiliate, the Iowa Cubs play at Principal Park. Their 2022 schedule is set to begin April 5. As one Trip Advisor reviewer wrote, "If you are into baseball, this is a must. People here love the game. Awesome ballpark, friendly service, good time."
- 4 Science Center of Iowa (SCI)** – Hands-on exhibits, special-format theaters and unique programming provides a fun learning environment for all. Experience large-scale video

projection in SCI's 60-foot planetarium. "Iowa Skies Tonight" shows constellations and planets as you learn myths of the night sky in this live program.

5

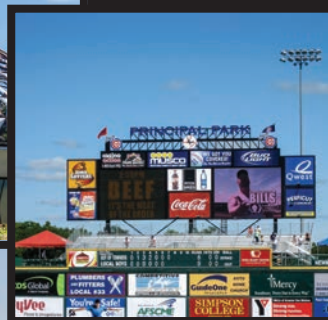
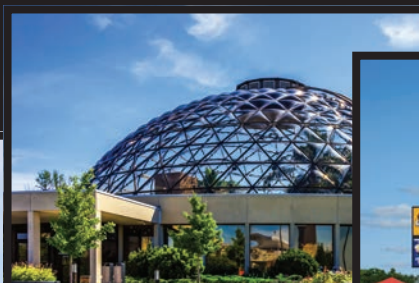
Blank Park Zoo – Red pandas, African lions, giraffes and Magellanic penguins are among the zoo's 1,500 animals. The zoo offers a variety of kid-friendly experiences, including train, carousel and camel rides, as well as animal feedings.

You don't have to follow "The Field Position" blog for long to know I love to explore great places to eat. Des Moines is the home of Steak De Burgo and some of Midwest's best pork tenderloins. Whether you desire a white, tablecloth restaurant with prime beef on the menu or a vintage dinner serving up on of Iowa's famous loose-meat sandwiches, you can find it in Des Moines!

Other regional specialties include zombie-style burgers and Iowa ham balls. The Iowa Taproom serves 99 Iowa craft beers from a Sukup® grain bin. If you stay downtown through Saturday, put the Des Moines Farmers' Market on your "to do" list. It's a five-sensory experience! In addition to garden-fresh flowers and produce, you'll find unique, handmade items. You'll also smell the most amazing foods cooking. Come hungry because you'll want to try everything!

Watch for more details coming soon! In the meantime, register to reserve your room for the 2022 Latham Dealer Kickoff in Des Moines. We look forward to continuing our 75th anniversary celebration!

Scan the QR Code for Things To Do in Greater Des Moines



SAVE THE DATE!


Latham®
HI-TECH SEEDS

FAMILY-OWNED
FARM
PROVEN

Latham® Dealer Kickoff
July 14 – 15, 2022
REGISTRATION OPENS
April 1



Visit **LathamSeeds.com/Events** to register!

SEEDWARE TRAINING


SANDIE JOHNSON

SEEDWARE TRAINER

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Wednesday, April 13, 2022 7:00 AM
Thursday, April 14, 2022 8:30 AM

2021-22 SEEDWARE OVERVIEW: CUSTOMER DELIVERIES, WIDGETS AND STATEMENTS

TO PARTICIPATE:

1. You will receive an email with SeedWare training dates to attend. Register for the training by responding to the email or by calling Sandie.
2. Once registered, you will receive an email where you can respond by "accepting the invitation."
3. In the confirmation email, there will be a link in the body of the email to "Click here to join the meeting."
4. When the day/time comes for the training, simply check "Click here to join the meeting" in the email and it will take you to the meeting.
5. Watch, listen and learn!


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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RANDOM DEFINITIONS WORD PUZZLE

In this challenging new word puzzle, you must use only the letters in the featured word to spell answers for the clues. THEN you must place your answers correctly in the diagram.

- A. a singing group
- B. respond
- C. ancient horse-drawn vehicle
- D. three times
- E. seat
- F. planet
- G. missile
- H. to gain an advantage through deception
- I. stage performer

NOTE: It may appear that some answers can go in more than one spot. But you need to find a solution in which all the answers can be placed into the diagram.

1					A			
2					R			
3					T			
4					I			
5					C			
6					H			
7					O			
8					K			
9					E			

SOLUTION CAN BE FOUND HERE:

<https://www.word-game-world.com/support-files/free-word-puzzle-artichoke-answers.pdf>