

Selling Field Field®

IN THIS ISSUE

- p1** Join Us as We Celebrate 75 Years
John Latham
- p2** Growing Season Activities Grow Your Sales
Amy Rohe
- p3** Mental Hacks *Ryan Schon*
- p4** Roll Out the Welcome Mat
Shannon Latham
- p5** 75 Years Strong!

JUNE
2022

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR SEED SALES TIPS AND INFORMATION

JOIN US AS WE CELEBRATE 75 YEARS

Seventy-five years! It's hard to believe that Latham Hi-Tech Seeds is celebrating 75 years in the seed industry.

Our grandparents Willard and Evelyn Latham started Latham Seed Company in 1947 near Alexander, Iowa, on the farm our great, great Grandfather Milton Latham first farmed in 1892. My brother, Chris, and I grew up here. We literally lived a few steps away from our grandparents, whose former home now serves as the Latham Seed office. In fact, what is Shannon's office was Grandma Latham's kitchen. There are still hooks in the basement bathroom with the names of my dad and his four brothers, indicating where each one hung his towel.

We feel blessed to be third generation of Lathams to own and operate Latham Seeds. Approximately 13% of family-owned businesses are passed down successfully to a third generation with just 3% passing down to a fourth generation, according to *Business Week* magazine. We're working hard to bring the fourth generation into our business, we can continue to live our family's legacy.

In an era of consolidation with multi-national companies owning seed companies, Latham Seeds continues to pave its own path. We're investing more in our internal R&D program, as well as exploring partnerships with new technology companies.

Latham®
HI-TECH SEEDS



by **JOHN LATHAM**
PRESIDENT

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We know that we can only be successful when our customers are successful. That's why we have the best interest of farmers in mind. We travel the countryside to meet with Latham® dealers and customers.

Please celebrate this milestone achievement of 75 years in business with us this summer! Mark your calendars now and plan to join at these three signature events:

- Latham Dealer Kickoff from July 14-15 in Iowa's beautiful Capitol city. Registration is open now at LathamSeeds.com/events! Those who register early will receive a complimentary, limited edition 75th anniversary t-shirt.
- ACE Tours in July and August
- Latham Premier Agronomy Day on September 8 on the Latham Family's Iowa Century Farm



GROWING SEASON ACTIVITIES GROW YOUR SALES



by **AMY ROHE**
SALES MANAGER

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We have talked extensively about the importance of making impactful touch points throughout the sales year. Field visits during the growing season are a key touch point that our customers have shared are important to them. What are your growing season plans? First step is to make a list of whom you will visit. Remember to show extra care for new customers and include prospects on your list.

Here are three tips to keep in mind as you decide when and where to make customer contacts:

- 1 Commit field visits to your calendar.** Unless you put dates on the calendar, you'll only think about doing it. You need a plan... You've heard the adage, "A dream written down with a date becomes a goal. A goal broken down into steps becomes a plan. A plan backed by action makes your dreams come true."
- 2 Vary your touch points.** Your customers want agronomic tips and relevant information. Keep your information fresh and exciting by providing a mix: share links to Latham Seeds' blogs and videos; make in-person visits; and hold group meetings at a plot. You can also send a text message, letting a customer know you stopped by and looked at his field.
- 3 Think through critical stages during the growing season.** Plan customer visits and touchpoints to capture crop development stages such as emergence, insects/disease/weed pressure, tasseling and flowering. Put dates on the calendar, so you get in front of your customers during those critical growing stages.

Now that we've addressed "who," "when" and "where," it's time to address "how." What will be the content covered during your field visits? Here are three ideas from our RSM team:

- **Stand count.** Contact customers to see if they're available to do a stand count with you. When you're in the field, use Latham's Data Forward™ app to mark your location and take pictures. If your customer isn't around, stop by any way. Then send him a Data Forward text.
- **Root digs.** It is fun to watch how many people gather around a root as it is being split open! (See photo below.) This is a good activity to conduct when you're hosting a meeting in a plot with a group of customers. Lean on your RSM or DSM to help lead this discussion.
- **Weekly agronomy updates.** Latham Seeds' has a library of different topics that you can share both in our Dealer Center and on "The Field Position." You also will find a tab for "Ask the Agronomist" on LathamSeeds.com. These videos have great content, so feel free to share a link each week with your customers. You also can take a video yourself in a field during the growing season. It's amazing how much impact a quick video has!

Summer is the best time to set yourself apart from the competition. Staying connected throughout the entire growing season builds stronger relationships and leads to greater understanding of our products. Your activity throughout the growing season will roll into crop plans and then translate into orders this fall.

GOOD LUCK AND HAPPY SELLING!



MENTAL HACKS

When I write to you, I try to take leadership principles that I've learned from books, podcasts and experience, and apply them to the seed business. This month I'm going to share highlights from an article that I thought was too good on its own for me to make too many changes to it.

Mental Hacks for Agribusiness Leaders

from Shane Thomas at Upstream Ag Insights

Thinking Differently

Ask Questions. Be Curious. Be Open Minded. Strong Opinions Loosely Held. Don't let your experience lead you to stop learning. With more experience, you may have to work even harder to keep learning and to unlearn things that are no longer true.

Embrace Complexity. Be Comfortable in the Grey Area. Think in Higher Order Implications. Expand Your Time Horizons. Agriculture is an increasingly complex system. Look for the hard and complex things – that's where you'll find opportunities to create value. If the answer is easy and obvious, everyone will be there. And society wants everything now. Right now. Think about 3, 5 or 10 years from now to see the real opportunities and get there first.

Resist Secondhand Knowledge. Quantify & Visualize What You Can. Stating facts is not the same as understanding an issue. If you can find data, let it guide you. If data can help tell the story with images and emotion, that's even better. The best test of your own knowledge is whether you can teach someone else what you know.

Outcome Over Ego. Are you humble enough to celebrate someone else's better idea being successful?

Taking Action

Become Great at Numerous Things. Get Passionate. Have High Standards. Create a Brand. Sounds like a farmer! Being in the top 1% of one specific area is hard. But being better than average at agronomy, finance, grain marketing, computers will set you apart. Do it with excellence and make that part of your own brand. Remember if you don't have a brand, then you are a commodity. Choose purposefully.

Motivation is a Myth. Consistency. Motivation can bring you energy but discipline delivers results. Do the hard things. Not just occasionally, but every day.



by **RYAN SCHON**

GENERAL MANAGER

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It Always Comes Down to People

People Matter. Develop Soft Skills. Technical skills are necessary. But you won't get far if you can't connect with people. Clear communication, storytelling, critical thinking, and leading others will differentiate you. Work to build and implement your soft skills every day. Understand that how you make people feel is more important than them knowing exactly what you think.

Identify Role Models. Build Your Network. Build Up a Resource Base. Make connections. Introduce yourself to people outside of your current circle. Nurture your network by helping others succeed. Attend industry meetings, use social media, and reach out to people who are working on the things that may help you. Be resourceful by finding answers in uncommon places. You can't know or remember everything, so know where to find answers.

Think differently, take action and make connections. I tell people that I work in the seed business, but don't forget that it will always be a people business.



ROLL OUT THE WELCOME MAT

We're on a mission at Latham Hi-Tech Seeds to help family farmers live their legacy by increasing their yields and profitability. A Latham® dealership offers additional income to any operation as well as helps bring home the next generation. We are proud to be the third generation to own and operate Latham Seeds. The fourth generation is already taking interest, so we know the importance of leaving a legacy.

We remain committed to our founder's, Willard Latham, philosophy of "neighbors helping neighbors." Willard's wife, Evelyn, was known for her hospitality. She always had a fresh pot of coffee and a plate of homemade cookies ready for anyone who entered her door. We honor Evelyn's legacy by opening the doors of her former farmhouse to all of you as Willard and Evelyn's home has been transformed into our office.

Their story is part of our story. We're literally rolling out the welcome mat by opening the doors to our business. Our teams work hard to provide a unique and meaningful experience to everyone who attends a Latham Seeds event. Our goal with every event we host is to deliver "wow" experiences that will last long after the event itself. As Evelyn started 75 years ago, it's about how people feel when they do business with people that truly care.

Our story is also part of your story. How can we help you create distinctive and relevant engagement with your farmer customers? How can we go beyond satisfying customers to amazing them? (After all, ACE stands for Amazing Customer Experiences.)

As you plan customer events this summer and fall, keep the following in mind:

- 1** Know the purpose/objective of your event.
- 2** Develop a theme.
- 3** Create an emotional connection to the audience.
- 4** Recognize special people.
- 5** Have great entertainment.
- 6** After the event, reconnect in a meaningful way. (Provide a take-home gift. Send a thank you note.)
- 7** Capture the moment. (How can you share snippets on social media? Should you send a photo and news release to traditional media, such as your community newspaper?)



by **SHANNON LATHAM**

VICE PRESIDENT

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Latham's Sales and Marketing Teams are here to help you create one-of-a-kind experiences. We can help you create attention-getting invitations and order unique take-home gifts. We're also providing experiences for you to share with your customers including:

- **July – ACE Tour in Alexander, Iowa.** We'll roll out the welcome mat to you and your customers. Spend a day talking with Latham owners and management team members. Walk our fields and view unique research plots plus gain tips from Agronomist Phil Long on how Data Forward™ can take your field visits to the next level.
- **August – ACE Tour in Alexander, Iowa, and/or your own customer appreciation event or plot tour.**
- **September – Road trip to Latham Seeds' HQ in Alexander, Iowa, for our Premier Agronomy Center Showcase.** Watch for more details coming soon!

We look forward to seeing you at a Latham Seeds signature event this summer.





75 Years Strong!

Please join us for a family-friendly party as we celebrate 75-year-old, family-owned Latham Seeds with a barbecue, cake and ice cream

on Thursday, July 14, 2022
during Latham® Dealer Kickoff
Happy Hour begins at 5:30 p.m.

Complimentary shuttles will take you to and from the Marriott Des Moines Downtown. First shuttle will leave at 5 p.m. Watch your email for more details.

www.LathamSeeds.com/events

P.S. Once you have registered, you will receive a confirmation email. Please double-check your registration if you haven't received a confirmation email.



SEEDWARE TRAINING



SANDIE JOHNSON

SEEDWARE TRAINER

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Wednesday, June 8, 2022 7:00 AM
Thursday, June 9, 2022 8:30 AM

2021-22 SEEDWARE OVERVIEW: DEALER RETURNS, BEAN DUMPS AND SETTLEMENTS

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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SUDOKU!

This month's puzzle is rated HARD.
Good luck!



1			2	4			5	
8			1		9			
	6			5			7	
9			6	3				4
		4				8		
3				2	4			1
	9			8			1	
			3		5			9
	3			1	2			5