

# ON FARM GRAIN STORAGE

## **WE WANTED FLEXIBILITY! A NEW LOOK IN GRAIN STORAGE.**

Flexible, strong, convenient and cost effective. Those four adjectives pretty much precisely explain why a huge precast concrete bunker manufactured by Hanson Silo Company, Lake Lillian, MN was erected on Peine Farms, Cannon Falls, MN last summer.

Bunkers are 'old hat' for Peine Farms, basically because this operation finishes out about 2,000 head of beef cattle each year. In the feedlot business, bunkers for bulk storage of various feedstuffs simply are the most convenient. However this operation also grows lots of corn and soybeans so steel bins had become the progressive way to build storage for these cash crops. "But last year we looked at our situation. More steel bins just didn't seem to be the best answer anymore," says Jeff Peine, farming partner with his brother Roger. "We wanted more versatility for corn storage.

"Yes, much of our corn goes through the cattle operation as silage or grain. But we now sell a lot of corn into the cash market so convenience of moving this corn into storage and out of storage becomes a big factor."

## **CASH CORN WORKS GREAT IN BUNKER STORAGE**

And thus the switch to the Hanson precast bunker system. "These are tremendously strong units. When you're dealing with solid concrete, you've got tremendous strength. Other concrete bunkers we've looked at are made with thick webs, but thinner concrete in between," notes Peine.

Mike Hanson, Hanson Silo, claims their bunkers are the strongest in the business. "We use 35% heavier reinforcement schedules than our closest competitor," he said. The Peine bunker was constructed with 12' tall, T shaped concrete sections positioned on a 5 1/2-inch concrete floor. The structure also has an 8', 2 x 6 stud wall and wood rafters spaced 4' on center with metal roofing. Net result was a totally enclosed, 60' x 120'

even includes a walkway above the grain, is 38' for this monster storage facility. Soon to be emptied, Jeff Peine says those 100,000 bushels have stayed quality perfect.

So how do you fill a 100,000 bushel bunker? Some would think dump the corn on the concrete floor, then use a big-bladed tractor to shove the corn into position. But not so with Peine Farms. "We spout the corn directly from the dry-grain leg of our crop dryer into a conveyor that feeds into the conveyor running full-length at the top of bunker shed. This conveyor discharges on the go filling from one end to the other."

For unloading Peine's had an 8,000-bushel per hour grain reclaim conveyor built into a corner of the bunker. Gravity flow will load out a portion of those 100,000 bushels. After that their pay loader with front bucket gets put to work.

## **SUPER VERSATILITY**

Versatility of this Hanson structure was a key selling point. After corn storage, Jeff sees this facility working great for fertilizer storage, or machinery storage, or special feed stuffs such as DDGs for the cattle operation. With an all-steel building you've got rust and corrosion problems if used for fertilizer storage he noted.

Construction of this big bunker was basically a matter of logistics. Peine Farms used their own semi trailers to haul the 12'High (each weighing over 6 tons) concrete wall sections from Hanson's Lake Lillian plant. The Hanson crew with an articulating crane then lifted and positioned each concrete section on the concrete floor. After that Dohmen Construction, Cannon Falls, did the stud walls, rafters and metal roofing.

"It went very fast. We provided some help but our local contractor got it finished in just a matter of a couple weeks," recalls Peine. Right now the big structure will likely be refilled with corn again this fall. But depending upon fertilizer prices, he suggested it could also be bulk storage for their 2012 fertilizer needs.

Peine Farm feedlots accommodate about 1,000 head with two fills per year to reach that 2,000-head annual production. Feeders get sourced out of the Dakotas or Montana. Their 2011 first batch of cattle were being sold late June, fortunately after a good spike in fat cattle prices.

Jeff admits steel bins are nice for corn storage; and they've put up several in recent years. "But this Hanson bunker system diversifies us quite a bit more giving us several options. And we like the cost effectiveness of this system which figured about \$1.25 per bushel including the grain handling and conveyor systems. We've got a structure that will last a long time." Grain Handler, a Minnesota firm that specializes in grain dryers and grain conveyors, custom built the conveyors for the Peine bunker. "We know these guys pretty well. Like Hanson Silo, they build good stuff," summed up Jeff Peine.

Grain quality is important in the cash market. Two huge 10-hp centrifugal fans, each hooked into 18-inch aeration tubes the length of the bunker, conditioned the corn well for this first-year run. "I haven't detected any musty odors. It should be excellent grain."

## **HANSON COMPANIES RICH HISTORY**

For over 96 years and four generations, the Hanson family has been involved with agriculture. Hanson Silo was founded in Lake Lillian, MN in 1916 by Emil Hanson, a local farmer who wanted a better product for himself and his neighbors.

"From our first silo built in 1916 that held 25 tons of feed to our 3.5 million bushel grain storage bunkers of today, the company has been resilient of the times. We look forward to the next hundred years growing with you." Gregg Hanson CEO.

## **HANSON GIVES YOU CHOICE**

Hanson Silo bunkers can be round, oval, rectangular or a hybrid thereof.

tunnels. Pairing these two powerful technologies saves time, money and headaches when unloading your grain bunkers. All Hanson reclaim tunnels can be customized to feature grates as often as needed to make unloading your grain easier and less labor intensive.