

Bigger is not always better

We've traded combines every two years recently. It's getting harder to keep the trade amount reasonable. Our dealer says it's because we've got the biggest machine available, and midsize units are easier to move. We could probably go to the midsize and use our same head, and maybe have to run a bit slower in good corn. Is better

Profit Planners

trade value worth considering backing down combine size a step?

Erickson: It sounds like your business is having trouble justifying the cost of

a larger combine than what you really need. I would suggest you use a machinery calculator to figure what size combine meets your operation's needs. Knowing the appropriate size of machine from an operational perspective should help you determine your needs.

Evans: For the large operation needing

Meet our panelists

- **David Erickson**, farmer, Altona, Ill.
- **Mark Evans**, Purdue Extension director
- **Dan Gottschalk**, financial consultant, Delphi, Ind.
- **Steve Myers**, farm manager, Busey Ag Resources, Leroy, Ill.

to cover ground, it would seem trade value could be small compared to the problems of being held up on a good corn year or in good corn-producing areas. In other words, if you have not needed the bigger machine, why have you been purchasing it in the past?

Gottschalk: Will you lose harvest efficiency and have larger field losses through delayed harvest with the smaller machine? Compare estimated losses to the projected gain of trading a smaller machine.

Myers: Consider what your harvest needs are in terms of timing and efficiency. If the smaller machine still allows you to complete harvest in a timely manner, then downsizing could prove to be the correct choice.

Coping with a one-year contract
I'm reluctant to invest very much money in applying phosphorus and potassium this spring on rented land. Most of my contracts are one year at a time. I'm considering asking landowners to guarantee me at least two more years before I invest in as much fertilizer as recommended. That would require us to renegotiate contracts. Is that a good idea, or should I just leave things alone rather than stir up a hornets' nest?

Erickson: I would suggest you consider including terms in your next lease that provide for reimbursement of unused fertilizer applications as a safeguard. Another option would be to apply fertilizer every year with applications for only the next year's crop. Also make sure you keep landlords informed about your fertilizer application practices.

Evans: While one should never take any landlord for granted, most know where the problems are located. Tactfully explaining and working with those would have a great deal of merit. Have a plan and go prepared with the input cost data and reasoning for your need.

Gottschalk: I hope you have the type of relationship with your landlords where you could discuss this without the hornet stinging you. Hopefully they would see this as beneficial to all concerned. But if you don't have this type of relationship, you face the possibility of losing some of your fertilizer purchase. Take this opportunity to work on positive landlord relationships.

Myers: One must consider what the current lease requires. If it states you must apply a certain amount of fertilizer, then you should abide by those terms or try to renegotiate. I would suggest always being open and forthright with the landowner. Communication is the key.

CONTROL YOUR WORLD

Increase your productivity and profitability!



Multiple Constellation!
Receives GPS, GLONASS, and Galileo

System 150

State-of-the-art AutoSteering system with flexible accuracy options

- Industry leading performance
- Simple on-screen setup
- Intuitive, user-friendly control console
- Automatic coverage mapping
- Optional AutoSection control

Complete steering solution with fully integrated inertial sensors and steering control

Easily upgradeable accuracy options include WAAS, EGNOS, Omnistar VBS/XP/HP and RTK

Call today! Learn how you can:

- Increase efficiency & improve yields
- Reduce input costs
- Protect the environment



800.443.4567 www.topconpa.com