



Meet the 2008

Allaman pairs stewardship, profit

By HOLLY SPANGLER

ASTEP through the back door of the Allamans' farmhouse offers a telling look at the biggies in their lives: family and the Illini. For this farm couple, those two things go hand in hand. Roger and Jule met at the University of Illinois back in 1964, and two of their three children also graduated as Illini. "We loved every minute down there," Roger reminisces.

They began their farming

life together 37 years ago, following graduation. After a short stint as an ag teacher, Roger returned to Roseville to farm with his father. Today, the operation encompasses 2,000 acres.

They joined Farm Business Farm Management during those early years, and use FBFM analysis extensively to manage their operation and make business decisions, including the decision to finish some 2,000 hogs a year and then 20 years later, to liquidate that same operation.

"We felt like we'd been let out of prison!" Roger jokes of those first months out of the hog business. "We could even take off and go to a U of I football game if we wanted to!"

Attention to management details makes Roger's operation a success, says Sue Sharon, FBFM field staff member. In addition

to using FBFM analysis, Roger has written several Excel spreadsheets, some of which allow him to track farm-by-farm inputs, expenses and profits that he can share with landowners. For their farm accounting software, the couple uses PC Mars.

Roger also tracks the farm's grain marketing with his personalized spreadsheets. He sells directly on the Chicago Board of Trade, allowing him to take advantage of basis changes. Another spreadsheet tracks local basis and prices.

He began using strip till several years ago, and currently strip tills nearly all his corn and no-tills his bean crop. Roger's conservation philosophy has remained the same throughout his career: Profit and conservation are not mutually exclusive, but rather are dependent on one another in both the short- and long-term vision of the operation. "When we get a piece of ground, we make sure it's well-tiled, and [we] put in terraces

where they're needed," he says. "We want to make sure we leave that farm in better shape than when we got it."

Giving back

As a longtime Roseville resident, Roger loves his community and does what he can to contribute to it. He's put in more than a decade on the local school board and has served his church for many years as well. Most recently, he helped guide a church building project, where they completed the majority of a family life center with volunteer labor.

And in his free time? "Grandchildren!" say both Roger and Jule. They enjoy their five grandchildren, ranging in age from 1 year to 10 years old. The little ones like to visit the farm, and Roger has accommodated them fully, taking time not only to offer combine rides and lessons on seed germination, but also to build a reasonably elaborate swing set. That memory is, apparently, still fresh. "However

Master at a glance

Name: Roger Allaman

Age: 64

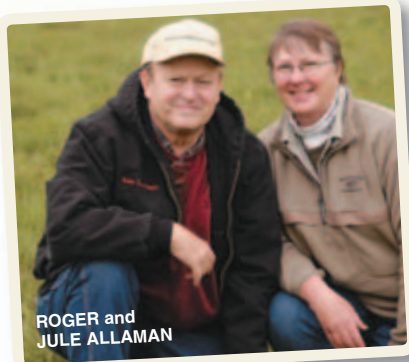
Family: Wife Jule and three children — Jacquelyn, a dietitian, and husband Don Worthington have one child; Doug, a banker, and wife Brandy have two children; Lori, a CPA, and husband Chris Stortzum have two children

Farm snapshot: Farms 2,100 acres in southern Warren County

Leadership mark: Served on state FBFM board and was president for nine years; continues to serve on Western FBFM board of directors; named Warren County Conservation Farm Family of the Year

much time they say it will take to build it, just double it!" Roger laughs today.

Yet it's time well-spent, by this Master Farmer's standards. "We had all kinds of opportunities to keep our own kids busy here," Roger adds. "The farm has been a great place to live and a great way of life."



ROGER and JULE ALLAMAN

Corzine promotes and raises corn with son

By JOSH FLINT

WHEN traveling, Leon "Len" Corzine carries a USB flash drive with him. On it is a catalogue of recent PowerPoint presentations on corn.

Master at a glance

Name: Leon "Len" Corzine

Age: 58

Family: Wife Susie and three children — Craig, a farmer, and wife Ashley have two children; Allison, a nurse practitioner, and husband Jerry Curran have one son; Ashley, a real estate agent, and husband John Megginson have one daughter

Farm snapshot: 2,810 acres in eastern Christian County with his son, Craig

Leadership mark: Served as Illinois Corn Growers Association president in 2002 and National Corn Growers Association president in 2005

Len's willingness to promote corn across the U.S. and in foreign countries landed him in the position of Illinois Corn Growers president in 2002, and then National Corn Growers Association president in 2005.

As the unofficial ambassador of corn, Len worked for six to seven years with ICGA and NCGA on the renewable fuels standard, part of the 2005 Energy Bill. He still remembers meeting with President Bush prior to the bill's passage. "He shook my hand and said, 'Big fella, we're gonna get that energy bill passed,'" Len recalls.

His commitment to public service has made Washington, D.C., one of his favorite destinations. "Everyone should experience our great nation's capitol," Len says. "Congress is going to make laws that we live by whether we're there or not, so we need to be there talking."

Greatest success

Even though Len is a familiar face on the Hill, he's also popular

in Assumption, where he farms 2,810 acres with his wife, Susie, and his son, Craig. Len's public service record started with his deep commitment to the family farm.

After he graduated from the University of Illinois with a bachelor's degree in agricultural mechanization, Len took a job at the local grain elevator. In the mid-1970s, he began farming with his father and brother. In 1987, he lost his dad. Len and his brother divided up the family farm in 1992, leaving Len with 980 acres to work with.

When Craig left for U of I in the early '90s, he wasn't sure about coming back to the family farm. Len remembers feeling the same way when he left for college. However, Craig always had a strong desire to farm and when he announced his intentions to return, Len and Susie worked hard to build up the



SUSIE and LEON CORZINE

years later, Len looks back and says it was definitely worth it.

"For me, having my son desire to farm, and then for us to be able to provide Craig the opportunity for a livelihood in farming, that's my greatest success," Len says.

Craig is the sixth generation to farm on the family's land. Last year, Len obtained Centennial Farm designation from the Illinois Department of Agriculture to recognize the success of past generations, especially his parents'.

Len's also been innovative in his farming decisions. In the early '90s, he was one of the first farmers in Illinois to begin using Deere and Co.'s data recording yield monitor.

Recently, Len and Craig converted 90% of the acreage to continuous corn. With their soils, climate and location, they felt it was the right marketing move. Plus, as Len puts it, "Craig likes to grow corn."

operation.

"In trying to make a viable operation for two families, there were times in there where things weren't so rosy," Len notes.

With grain prices down, he pushed for more custom-harvest work, began a shared-equipment program and acquired more land. Len's wife, Susie, worked as a schoolteacher in their early years, which helped the family finance additional land purchases. More than 15