

Make your first goal to keep harvest safe

THERE'S a reason that National Farm Safety Week typically falls in September. Harvest can be rewarding when yields are good, but it can also be frustrating, especially if corn is wet or fields are muddy.

Odds for harvesting wet corn seem pretty strong. Heat units simply haven't accumulated as they did last year when a dry, warm August and warm September bailed out crops running two weeks behind. Asking for a warm fall and late frost two years in a row might be tempting your luck.

If corn moisture at harvest is higher than it's been in several years, you know what adjustments to make. You know how to set high-temperature dryers to be efficient, and you know it's back to the basics, layering wet corn on top of corn that's already dried in low-temperature systems. Our story on Page 28 should remind you of some of the basics that help maintain a top-efficiency grain handling center.

Hidden danger

What we're more concerned about as harvest approaches is how you react mentally and emotionally to the prospect of a long, difficult fall harvest.

Our View

By **TOM J. BECHMAN**

When corn is wet or fields are muddy, equipment tends not to work as well. Frustration can mount quickly. That's when accidents happen. Bill Field, Purdue University farm safety specialist, shares tips about staying safe while handling grain on Page 15.

All the safety equipment in the world may not save you, another family member or an employee if you get careless, or take shortcuts to save time. One of the most deadly shortcuts is climbing into a bin with the auger running. It could happen if you fill a bin and it begins to heat up, forcing you to empty it. Some shortcuts just aren't worth the risk. Lock out the electrical power to the bin auger before you climb in for whatever reason.

You'll also want to be careful with motorized bin sweeps inside the bin. And outside the bin, watch for electric wires when moving augers. Don't just assume "it cleared last year, it will clear this year." Make sure it will clear. And



also know how to react if you find yourself on a tractor or truck with downed power lines.

Think about your health

Your most important goal this fall ought to be protecting your health, and the health of your employees and family. Your odds of staying healthy and avoiding injuries will be better if you take simple steps to protect yourself and your body. Work smarter, not just harder.

You'll find three stories in this issue about steps you can take to deal with ar-

thritis, prevent future problems with the crippling disease and also stay comfortable while working. Much of it is based on ergonomics, the science of studying how workers can do their job and still remain comfortable. Find these stories on pages 40, 41 and 47.

Most important of all, don't neglect your family this fall. They'll understand that you must put in long hours, but they'll also appreciate it if you reserve some time for them. Use it to recharge your batteries, too.

So here's to a safe, healthy harvest, no matter what Mother Nature brings.

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1004 East Illinois Street | Assumption, IL 62510 USA
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