



Northern Country Coop

PROFILE

Northern Country Coop STACYVILLE, IOWA



Employees: 105

Grain Farmers: 1,400

Grain Origination: 20 million bushels of corn and 7 million bushels of soybeans

Total tonnage sold: 270,000 tons of feed

Iowa Select Farms annually purchases in excess of 100,000 tons of feed from Northern Country Coop

For more than 100 years, Northern Country Coop has been serving farmers in the Iowa counties of Mitchell, Howard, Worth and Floyd, as well as southern Minnesota. Originally founded in 1908 as Stacyville Cooperative Company, the coop specialized mainly in coal and grain services, due to their proximity to rail lines and farmers in the area pooling their grain to get better prices. The name was changed in 1998 to Northern Country Coop (NCC) to accommodate the coop's growth and expansion in northern Iowa and Southern Minnesota. NCC currently serves 1,400 farmers in 12 locations—two in Iowa, ten in Minnesota. Their facility in LeRoy manufactures the feed for Iowa Select Farms.

Predominantly supplying swine feed to area farmers, NCC also offers feed for other livestock, from dairy and turkeys to show goats. "We have three core areas of our business—feed, grain and agronomy," said Scot Janssen, NCC General Manager. "The coop also has a small lumber yard located in Stacyville."

"We're lucky here in Iowa, where grain farming and livestock farming goes hand-in-hand," said Kevin Hanson, Feed Operations Manager of NCC. "Even if a grain farmer doesn't have livestock or vice versa, they are all still very much dependent on one another."

Much like Iowa Select Farms, NCC has employees spread throughout rural communities, all living close to the various locations. "They understand the business of agriculture," said Hanson. "While it's hard work, it's also rewarding and ripe with opportunity."

"It's important that we offer good jobs in rural communities so families can live here, and raise their family to gain a greater appreciation for what agriculture truly means," said Doug Frodl, Sales and Talent Manager. "We start with talking to the students in agriculture classes to understand what they are interested in, and what they want to do after high school or college. We want to recruit these local kids and offer internships to help develop their interests and let them know the opportunities right in their backyard."

"IF YOU LOSE LIVESTOCK, EVERYBODY IN A SMALL TOWN WOULD BE AFFECTED, YOUR CORN PRICES WOULD GO DOWN, WHAT WE PAY FARMERS WOULD HAVE TO BE LESS, THE WHOLE COMMUNITY WOULD SUFFER."

-Northern Country Coop

"One of the things we are especially excited about are the advancements we've made in all areas of agriculture," continued Hanson. Whether it be animal agriculture or precision agronomy farmers are more efficient, and these advancements are overall better for Iowa and the world as a whole."

Hanson is referring to the progress in livestock nutrition, and the ability to utilize co-products such as dried distillers grain in livestock feed. Also, improved feed efficiency and animal performance is a result of better swine genetics, feed milling equipment and new technology in barn designs and feeding equipment.

"Our partnership with Iowa Select Farms and other area swine producers allows us the ability to help all area farmers and employ as many people as we do," said Brittney Keppy, Swine Specialist at NCC. "If we didn't have livestock farming, entire communities would be impacted. It would affect everyone--families, schools, mainstreet businesses."

"Our relationship also gives us the ability to deliver specialized services and products—which provides more value to our patron owners," said Hanson. "We have been partners with Iowa Select Farms for 17 years and we are able to grow and add jobs as they do. We are a part of feeding the world, and it feels good to play a role," said Hanson.

