

## ALBERT LEA SEED ORGANICS NOW SUPPLYING NON-GMO PROJECT VERIFIED SEED

By Matt Leavitt, Sales Agronomist



Albert Lea Seed is pleased to announce that we will be offering selected varieties of Non-GMO Project Verified seed for planting in 2016. The Non-GMO Verified label was launched in 2006 by the Non-GMO Project of Bellingham, WA, and has become one of the fastest-growing retail labels used worldwide. Sales of products with the Non-GMO Project Verified label top \$11 billion in annual sales.

The Non-GMO Project Verified label is the most widely recognized label in the Non-GMO industry. We're proud to be launching these organic oat, wheat, rye, and barley varieties with the Non-GMO Project Verified label, and expect to be launching labeled seed of other species and varieties very soon.

"Being certain the seed they're buying is Non-GMO is important to some of our customers," notes Mac Ehrhardt, co-owner of Albert Lea Seed. "We view this as another quality control hurdle for the seed we sell. Some of our seed will now be, in effect, triple-certified. By that, I mean it will be Certified Organic, Certified Blue Tag variety Identity-Preserved, and now it will also carry the Non-GMO Project Verified label." ▶



*Look for the Non-GMO Project Verified logo next to the product listing in our organic seed guide and online. The seal indicates that seed of that variety meets the standards of the Non-GMO Project.*



## WE WELCOME MATT HELGESON

Matt Helgeson of Lake Mills, IA, is the newest member of the Albert Lea Seed team. In addition to farm seed sales, Matt will be focusing on research integration. He will work to find and communicate relevant agronomic information to the staff, dealer network, and customers of Albert Lea Seed. In this role, he will constantly be asking the question, "How does this information help someone make better farming decisions?" Look for his byline in e-newsletters, print newsletters, catalogs, and maybe even tweets.

Matt was born and raised on the family farm in Lake Mills. He earned his B.S. and M.S. degrees from Iowa State University. Prior to joining Albert Lea Seed, Matt worked at DuPont Pioneer in Des Moines with the soybean trait integration program. Matt's years of experience in innovation science will be a valuable asset as we work to bring the newest farming practices and ideas to Albert Lea Seed customers. Matt, his wife, Julie, and their two children, Mae, 2, and Henrik, 4 months, recently moved back to Lake Mills. ▶

# BEST OAT HARVEST IN 25 YEARS



By Mac Ehrhardt, Co-owner

This year, in southern Minnesota and northern Iowa, we had our best oat harvest in 25 years. Encouraging high yields and overall good quality are evident in the following oat reports and testimonials from July 2015:

## OAT STORIES — JULY 2015

REGION	TEST WEIGHT IN POUNDS	BUSHELS PER ACRE
LAKE CITY, MN	37	95
DASSEL, MN	37	150
AUSTIN, MN	37.1	140
WEST CONCORD, MN		170

*"BEST OATS THIS ELEVATOR HAS SEEN THIS YEAR. VERY HAPPY AND WILL BUY AGAIN!"*

*"IT'S A LOW FIELD THAT DOESN'T GROW SOYBEANS WORTH A DANG, SO I THOUGHT I'D TAKE A CHANCE ON SOME OATS THIS YEAR. I ALSO GOT 100 SMALL SQUARE STRAW BALES PER ACRE, TOO. GREAT YEAR FOR OATS."*

The timing for such success couldn't be better, as it comes just when a number of farmers are looking for a third crop in the rotation. This year, there'll be farmers who actually make money on oats—we've not been able to say that in a while. There are two reasons:

### 1. It's been a good year to raise oats.

Thanks to Mother Nature! In addition, new tools helped improve oat production over the last four years. Newer varieties have had better yield and test weights, and

conventional farmers improved their yield and quality by scouting and using over-the-top fungicides to improve overall plant health. This made a big difference in yield, quality, and standability. So, why is that important? My second point explains.

### 2. There's a growing demand for oats in the U.S.

Over the last 20 years, most oats used for human consumption have been imported from Canada. Major domestic users, such as Grain Millers and Quaker Oats, would prefer to buy oats in this country, thereby reducing transportation costs. Grain Millers, in particular, is putting forth a great effort to source oats in Minnesota, Iowa, and the Dakotas, so they don't have to transport great distances. All this makes for a better market for oats than there has been in many years.

Grain Millers has partnered with Practical Farmers of Iowa to improve their ability to source oats in the Upper Midwest. Practical Farmers is known for on-farm trials and farmer education. They're currently working with both the University of Minnesota and Iowa State University on the viability of oats as a rotational crop. At Iowa State, Dr. Matt Liebman, agronomy professor in sustainable agriculture, focuses on cropping system diversification, which includes crop rotations. I mention these because all are good resources if you'd like to do more research on the viability of oats as a third crop. See the links I've provided below. As always, Albert Lea Seed is here to help any way we can. ▶

Practical Farmers of Iowa: [www.practicalfarmers.org](http://www.practicalfarmers.org)

Dr. Matt Liebman, Iowa State University: <https://susag.iastate.edu/>

*Sarah Carlson, Practical Farmers of Iowa, and Ken Pecinovsky, Iowa State University.*





## WE'VE BEEN BUILDING!

Solar energy panels. A dust collector. New roofing and siding. Increased storage. "From our perspective, our current projects demonstrate a

commitment to the long-term and the business we're in," according to Mac Ehrhardt, president of Albert Lea Seed. "They make us more energy efficient,

improve the quality of our operation, and increase overall plant efficiency." Let's take a look. ▶



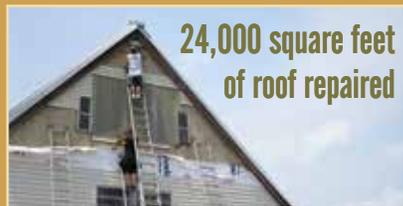
*New hoop house for more storage*

### You can never have enough storage space

So true! At Albert Lea Seed, our new hoop house storage shed makes it possible to free-up more warehouse space for seed by moving equipment and materials, such as conveyors, pallets, production and seed-handling equipment, to their new home. ▶

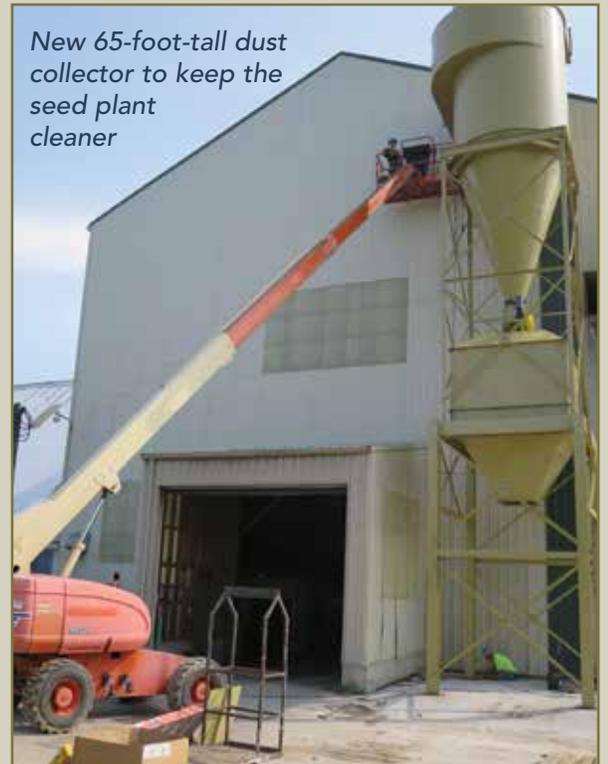
### Harvesting the sun's energy

Our new solar panels communicate Albert Lea Seed's commitment to long-term sustainability. These new panels help meet our energy needs by powering our plant and reducing consumption. Installed by Rural Renewable Energy Alliance of Pine River, MN, these 12 rows of panels provide over 25% of our annual energy needs. ▶



**24,000 square feet of roof repaired**

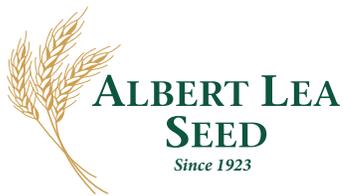
Consider 75,000 square feet of warehouse and production space at Albert Lea Seed. One-third of the roof got new shingles and skylights recently. In addition, we re-sided one end of the warehouse and installed more clear panels to improve lighting. ▶



*New 65-foot-tall dust collector to keep the seed plant cleaner*

### Too much dust

Cleaning seed generates a tremendous amount of dust. A Swiffer just won't cut it! To tackle the problem, we've installed a 65-foot, dust-collecting cyclone to improve our housekeeping. From the cyclone, the dust goes—via truck—to a composting site. ▶



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## ACT NOW FOR BEST DISCOUNTS

### EARLY-PAY DISCOUNTS

- 7% Paid by Nov. 15
- 6% Paid by Dec. 15
- 5% Paid by Jan. 15
- 3% Paid by March 15

*Not available with John Deere Financing. Available on corn and soybeans only.*

### EARLY-ORDER DISCOUNT

- On orders placed by Dec. 1, 2015 with minimum 10% down payment
- \$10/unit on organic corn (except closeout)
- \$10/bag on organic alfalfa
- \$2/unit on organic soybeans

### VIKING CORN DISCOUNTS

20-49 units	\$2/bag
50-99 units	\$3/bag
100-199 units	\$4/bag
200-399 units	\$5/bag
400+ units	\$6/bag

### VIKING SOYBEAN DISCOUNTS

40-99 bags	\$0.50/bag
100-149 bags	\$0.75/bag
150-199 bags	\$1.00/bag
200-399 bags	\$1.25/bag
400+ bags	\$1.50/bag
Bulk Sales	\$1.00/unit

## SAVE THE DATE!

Join us for our Organic Open House on Friday, November 20. Once again we have an outstanding lineup of presenters, including:

- Mark Gutierrez, from the USDA's Risk Management Administration (RMA), speaking on organic crop insurance and crop insurance as it relates to cover crops
- Representative from Mercaris speaking about organic marketing and forecasting
- Jonathan Olson speaking about organic small grain production
- Dr. Michel Cavigelli, USDA, discussing soil health in organic systems and an overview of organic research
- Gabe Brown (Brown's Ranch, ND) speaking about integrating cover crops into a diverse farm rotation

The Open House kicks off at 9 AM. This will be an interesting and informative day, so bring all your seed questions for 2016 and join us. We look forward to seeing you here. ▶

