

Full speed ahead: Elevator repair done

Written by Elizabeth Barrett

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All Points fully operational for harvest.

An American flag flutters atop the All Points Cooperative elevator.

The placement of Old Glory earlier this month signified the end of a three-year construction and repair project.

“That’s how millwrights celebrate the end of a project,” said All Points grain handling president Steve Costello. “They put up a flag.”

As part of a \$6 million expansion project, All Points had just added three new bins, a dryer and renovated its grain handling equipment.

Then, during the height of harvest in November of 2008, an explosion ripped open the main elevator—damaging corn and equipment, sending an employee to the hospital and crippling the business for months.

Until now, repair of the elevator from the blast has been ongoing.

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Costello figures that about \$9 million in equipment was lost or damaged. Grain loss is difficult to measure, he said.

A couple of items are left on the reconstruction list such as coating the roof of the main elevator which is scheduled this week.

Wheat began arriving at the elevators in both Gothenburg and Farnam in July but was about half the normal quantity, he said.

“Because of the moisture, farmers couldn’t get it planted,” Costello said.

Looking to the 2010 harvest, he said a lot of wheat ground was turned into beans.

“And the acres look good,” Costello said.

Corn quality reports from this year’s crop are also favorable.

The biggest hurdle, he said, will be the amount of damaged corn on hand from last year’s harvest.

“But that’s what all the elevators in the Corn Belt are facing,” he noted.

Costello said large quantities of high-moisture corn were

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