# COMPANY Profile



#### In 1997 Ag Partners, LLC was formed as a

joint venture between Albert City Elevator (Alceco), an Iowa cooperative, and Cargill. This joint venture was deemed unique in that it equally combines the principles of a cooperative, owned by local producers, with the assets of an international agricultural firm. These assets included financial strength, risk management tools for grain marketing, technological practices and direct access to domestic and global markets. Ag Partners is a true partnership in which both owners have equal ownership and representation on a six-member board of directors. Although both partners retained ownership of their facilities in exchange for annual lease payments, substantial capital was invested to initiate a strong start.

Alceco, the cooperative aspect of Ag Partners, has been in existence for over 100 years and began its operation in Albert City, Iowa. The founding premise of the farmer-owned cooperative is still in effect today at Alceco: It's owned and democratically controlled by its members; and it returns surplus revenue to members proportionate to their use of the cooperative.

Members of Alceco are rewarded with patronage for doing business with Ag Partners. The company is different from most farmer-owned cooperatives with its method of financing the co-op and issuing dividends. Its equity policy is structured to improve the farmer-member's cash flow while still building equity for the future. Specifically the majority of the member dividend (over 90%) is paid in cash while a small portion is applied to an equity share. Alceco does this to ensure the tax liability for members doesn't exceed the cash distribution. Members elect a nine-member board of directors who retain overall responsibility and authority for operating the cooperative business. There were over 905 Alceco members as of year-end 2007.

#### Locations

Ag Partners operates seven facilities located throughout lowa employing over 135 individuals. These locations include retail agronomy outlets, grain facilities and feed mills.



#### Locations (continued)

Albert City is the largest location and home to Ag Partners' corporate offices. It is a full-service facility for grain, agronomy and feed which includes grain storage and marketing, fertilizer sales and application, seed products and bagged feed sales. Albert City offers rail-loading capabilities along with four other Ag Partners locations.

Other agronomy and grain locations include: Alta, Emmetsburg, Fonda, Hartley and Royal. The facilities' trade territory covers approximately 1.6 million acres of corn and 1.4 million acres of soybeans in northwest lowa. Total annual sales for the company is approximately \$220 million.

The Hartley facility is the site of the largest expansion in company history. From 2004-2007, this expansion included the addition of a one-million gallon liquid fertilizer tank; 40,000-bushel per hour conveyance; grain storage system with holding capacity of 3.2 million bushels; and a 31,000-ton dry fertilizer plant. The fertilizer plant is a joint effort with two other ag companies.

Ag Partners operates feed mills in Fonda, Sheldon and Ellsworth. All facilities also offer corn-unloading services. Ellsworth is a joint venture owned in part by Ag Partners. A management agreement was formed in 1996 with nine turkey growers to operate a feed manufacturing plant in Ellsworth. Ag Partners and the nine growers then formed a limited liability company called Lincoln Supply, LC in 1998. The Ellsworth mill produces turkey and hog feed with an annual tonnage of over 150,000 ton.

In 2002, Ag Partners also entered into ownership of a feed plant with 14 southeast lowa turkey growers. The company, referred to as Agri-Way Partners, operates in Wayland, Iowa.

### **Employee** Base

Ag Partners employs over 135 full-time individuals in northwest and central Iowa. With an annual payroll of over \$6 million, the employee team is comprised of management, sales and support, and production personnel.

## Economic and Community Development

Ag Partners supports local communities and organizations in terms of volunteerism and monetary donations. A few examples include: donating \$10,000 to the Buena Vista Regional Medical Center for Women; serving as sponsor of local libraries' summer reading programs; providing annual scholarships to area Future Farmers of America (FFA) youth; and supporting the Farm Safety 4 Just Kids program.



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For more information about Ag Partners, visit our website at www.agpartners.com.