

# Winter Is A Good Time To Plan Equipment Upgrades

**PRINCETON, KY.**

**W**ith grain crop producers gearing up for another growing season, many are thinking about adding, replacing or upgrading their equipment, especially after wet conditions this past fall.

“Winter is ideal for buying equipment because producers have some extra time to reflect on the past year and review their options,” said Sam McNeill, agricultural engineer with the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture. “And as dealers are trying to plan out their workload for the year, equipment discounts are often available to those who plan ahead.”

Next month’s National Farm Machinery Show offers producers a chance to see available equipment, compare products and view the latest technologies.

Farmers who are looking for new equipment are doing so for several reasons. Late planting and a delayed harvest in 2009 put those without sufficient drying and storage equipment in a bind. In past years, some farmers heavily relied on natural air drying of the crop, but wet conditions in 2009 did not allow that. This re-

sulted in producers selling much of the crop earlier than planned and at higher moisture levels.

Others are looking to replace outdated equipment or ramp up storage or drying capacity to match their combine’s production.

In addition, producers looking to increase the size of their operation in 2010 may need additional storage.

Producers should consider several factors including which piece or pieces of equipment would most improve their operation, their operation’s size, capacity of current equipment and harvesting strategy. Reviewing previous harvests helps producers find any recurring equipment deficiencies or problems.

“For some, it could be as simple as adding a heater to a bin to get more drying capacity,” McNeill said.

He added that once an equipment decision is made, producers should shop around for the best value and talk to local vendors about their ability to provide any necessary maintenance or repairs to the equipment. Δ



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