

2020 Women Impacting Ag Honoree Laurie Johnson

Starting from a young age, Laurie Johnson was involved in agriculture through her family's acreage and 4-H. After marrying her husband, Phil, 22 years ago, she became even more active in the agriculture industry. Today, Laurie's activities focus on record keeping, machinery operations, and grain marketing for their Wright County, Iowa farm. She is also a leader in her community, serving extensively on cooperative and church boards. Laurie's exceptional leadership earned her the ISU Extension and Outreach 2020 Women Impacting Agriculture honor. "Laurie Johnson is a talented farmer and farm manager who has demonstrated outstanding leadership skills; she is very active in her community and has a positive influence on people she has worked with," stated Kelvin Leibold, her nominator and ISU Extension and Outreach Farm Management Field Specialist.



"Laurie is truly a lifelong learner and looks for opportunities to improve her skills," described Leibold. As a lifelong learner, Johnson has taken on many opportunities to improve her grain marketing skills and abilities. ISU Extension and Outreach has been a good resource. Laurie was a founding member of a local Women Marketing Grain group over ten years ago. She participated in Annie's Project, Managing for Today and Tomorrow, and Women Marketing Grain courses.

Over the years, Johnson developed skills, strategies, and techniques she enjoys sharing with others. Co-hosting a north-central Iowa grain marketing workshop two different years gave Laurie a chance to share her passions and knowledge with other women in the industry.

She presented at the 2017 ISU Extension and Outreach conference on grain marketing and demonstrated spreadsheets she has developed to track costs, breakeven prices and returns to storage with the Women Marketing Grain group.

Not only is Johnson involved in learning, sharing, and decision making of grain marketing, but she is also very involved in her community. She is currently serving on the board of directors of Gold-Eagle Cooperative. "Her leadership skills proved to be very valuable as the North Central Cooperative and Gold-Eagle Cooperative merged," stated Leibold. Laurie represented an 11-state region on the Resolutions Committee for CHS Cooperative to help bring the voices of farmers to policy makers in Washington D.C.

Giving back to her community is important to Laurie. She served the Trinity Lutheran Church as board secretary for 11 years. Currently, she is leading a fundraising campaign for an addition to the church building. She can also be found volunteering at the mobile food pantry to help meet the needs of local residents. Laurie also serves as the Wright County clerk for the Belmont Rural Fire Department and served two years as president of a New Mexico condominium association board.



As a big supporter of conservation work, Laurie is excited to be a newly elected Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioner for Wright County. She and her husband implemented buffer strips and grass waterways on their own farm, as well as utilizing the USDA Conservation Reserve Program.

As a woman who is actively involved in farming and her community, Laurie demonstrates true leadership within the agricultural industry and makes an impact on her rural community.