

Opportunity For Success Centers On Marketing Strategies

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind. — Farmers from across the country listened as agricultural leader emphasized the necessity for producers to develop strategic marketing plans for 1998.

Gene Paul, National Farmers President, Delavan, Minn., and Paul Olson, vice president, Taylor, Wis., encouraged independent producers to unlock the doors to a brighter agricultural future by using the latest network marketing tools.

In his state of the organization speech, Paul outlined the current state of production agriculture, and summarized industry consolidation and market volatility. "Producers must recognize the marketing environ-

ment they're operating in, and market together to positively influence prices," he said.

"Today we're seeing volatility in the market like we've never experienced in history, but that also means there are pricing opportunities," said Paul. And National Farmers commodity marketing programs help independent producers gain market access and take advantage of the narrow windows of marketing opportunities that exist.

To underscore his point of widening price swings, Paul provided producers with a marketing price summary for the last 12 months. In the last marketing year, volatility resulted in these percentage differences in

prices: 59 percent for wheat, 43 percent for soybeans, 34 percent for corn, 40 percent for cattle, 20 percent for milk.

"Food is not just another commodity, it is essential to life, and the price volatility American farmers experience today makes it critical for them to place more emphasis than ever before on marketing," Paul said.

Paul pointed out using futures and options contracts to protect prices and take advantage of market upswings remain important parts of the family of Nation Farmers marketing programs.

He also said niche markets and an open and informed approach to exporting, can pro-

vide great potential for American producers. "I believe livestock producers can also benefit by forming small partnerships with each other," emphasized Paul. And producers also should take advantage of the multitude of farm groups and cooperatives representing agriculture today.

Paul also stood fast on behalf of U.S. consumer safety by endorsing country of origin labeling. "I'm proud of the production that comes from the

farms and ranches in this country, and I believe labeling that production as U.S. grown will do more to restore consumer confidence than anything else."

Nation Farmers Vice President Paul Olson stressed the importance for America's farmers to embrace new ideas that can provide positive opportunities. "It doesn't hurt to keep an open mind, and it doesn't hurt to do some things differently," Olson said. "It doesn't hurt to do some different things. Think about that."

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