

ProfitTalk

Simple perspective on disciplined grain marketing for producers

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MOVING ON!

The year 2020 left us with many gifts, for many the best of which is that it's over. It was an emotional year that seemed overwhelming at times, but the good news is we are now moving on to 2021 and beyond.

It was a challenging year for marketing crops. Many felt out of sync with the markets and felt they experienced extraordinarily little success. But was this reality or perception? Selling and having prices go higher (sometimes much higher) can lead to beating yourself up, but higher prices after a sale does not mean the sale was bad.

The market may present different challenges in any given year, but the job is the same. You will raise a crop, you will harvest a crop, and you will sell grain (though selling does not have to come last). The selling decision tends to cause anxiety as producers struggle with the fear of being "wrong". Missing the high of the market, selling too soon, waiting too long, selling too little at a good price – these can all feel like mistakes.

“The secret to being wrong isn't to avoid being wrong! The secret is being willing to be wrong. The secret is realizing that wrong isn't fatal.”

- Seth Godin

The key to successful grain marketing is not to judge your selling decisions as right or wrong, but rather to make profitable sales and then move on to the next one. Regretting a decision does not mean that the decision was bad. If you sold at a profitable level, the sale was a good one.

Moving on is keenly important because you always have more to sell, be it for this crop or the next. If you make a profitable sale only to see the market rally, you now have the opportunity to make an even better sale.

As you move forward, follow these good marketing habits.

1. **Think profit.** Know your costs and try to generate revenue above them.
2. **Expose yourself to opportunity.** Always have offers in to sell at profitable levels.
3. **Move on.** Focus on the next sale as opposed to the last one.

Of course, some decisions are better than others, but stop judging them by unforeseen outcomes. Make decisions based on good information at the time and move on to the next. Focusing on the outcome of past decisions is a good way to miss opportunity in the present.

Successful grain marketing is not about judging decisions as wrong or right; it's about making the best decisions possible and moving on to future decisions.