

Grain Drying Project

Alexander (Sasha) Prinak is a grain farmer in the village of Pyshchyky in west-central Ukraine. As is typical for Ukrainian grain farmers, he rents his farmland from dozens of village land-owners, who each received a few hectares (a hectare is 10,000 square meters, or 2.47 acres) when the large collective farms were split up and returned to the people after the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991.

These village landlords usually receive their rent payment in the form of grain. The growing season in west central Ukraine is often too short to allow for complete field-drying of corn, so farmers like Sasha harvest corn at higher moistures to get it out of the field before the snow flies. However, wet corn at harvest receives much lower prices than dry corn at other times of the year. This year Sasha got about 85 metric tons (94 US tons, or 3,350 bushels) of corn dried by IBA through the Grain Drying Project, allowing him to store it overwinter and sell for a higher price in the spring.

Economically priced grain driers for small farmers are in short supply in Ukraine. The grain driers left over after

collective farming are either outdated or way too large for a small farmer. New driers are available, but they very expensive. Given that smaller used batch-type grain driers are readily available in the US for reasonable prices, IBA has shipped a number of them to Ukraine to help farmers dry their own grain and give them better marketing options than selling wet grain to the elevator at harvest. Farmers

who get grain dried through the Grain Drying Project have to pay for the fuel, plus a fee for the maintenance of the driers, but are getting a service that would otherwise be unavailable to them.

These grain driers are mostly run by volunteers from the US. In the fall of 2019, Dan Troyer (Idaho), Daren Zimmerman (Texas), Ervin Mast (Missouri), Freeman Troyer (Missouri), Micah Yoder (Alabama), Justyn Erb (Montana), Kevin Kropf (Oregon), Jethro

Peachey (Maryland), Joyce Peachey (Maryland), and Londa Kinsinger (Maryland) assisted in the grain drying project;




Alexander (Sasha) Prinak, a farmer in the Ukrainian village of Pyshchyky, with his wife and four of his eight children. IBA dried corn for Sasha, which allows him to store it overwinter and sell for a higher price in the spring.



A farmer unloads corn into the grain dryer. The tanker at left has propane to dry the grain.

with about half serving the first 6 weeks and rest the second six weeks of the drying season. IBA dried a total of about 2,540 metric tons (2,800 US tons, or 100,000 bushels) of corn, 426 metric tons (470 US tons, or 31,000 bushels) of sunflowers, and 12 metric tons (13 US tons, or 435 bushels) of soybeans for 5 farmers in west-central Ukraine. Some of the smaller farmers that IBA dried for other years didn't need drying this year because the grain dried down enough in the field.

IBA anticipates drying grain again in 2020, and is looking for short-term volunteers for this project in the fall of 2020. Please contact Luke Coblentz or Larry Troyer if interested (contact info below). IBA has also been sending used grain dryers, grain augers, and grain wagons to Ukraine to sell to farmers who otherwise wouldn't have access to this equipment. If you know of used grain equipment at a reasonable price, please contact Luke or Larry. 



A farmer with a load of sunflower seeds awaits his turn at the dryer. The dryers run on propane, which is stored in the cylinders in the lower right.




Grain drying continued long into the night during the busy season. Several grain dryers were usually placed in a central location, and farmers would bring their grain in to be dried.


Boy's/Men's Home

This project has great potential and IBA is still trying to figure out how to best serve the local needs. A number of boys received training and experience in mechanical work over the summer.

As of late fall/winter 2019, four men aged 42-60 are enrolled in the program. These men, one of whom was the town drunk, came to IBA and the local church asking for help to get their lives in order. They are living at the IBA property, participating in Bible study, attending church services, and receiving vocational training.

Please pray that these men grow strong in Lord and that IBA and the local church can serve them and others like them well. 

Animal Project

The Animal Project has been active, with a number of new recipients. This project is expanding in scope beyond just animals in an effort to serve more people. This project will likely get renamed to represent its broader focus. We will focus on this project in our spring 2020 newsletter, so stay tuned for more details. **Current needs include funds to purchase a small square baler.** 



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