



# WE'RE HELPING OUT LOCAL SCHOOLS

**T**he crops in Bahia have gained a lot of ground the last six weeks, mostly because we've had great rains. The moisture that we waited for at the beginning of the planting season has come back. And as long as it continues for the next three to four weeks, we shouldn't experience any yield losses.

**WE SHOULD BEGIN** popcorn harvest the last week of March, and would hope to have it out by the time you read this. Popcorn is tough to judge, but it should be 55-60 bu./acre; the price today is \$19.67/bu. We'll harvest at about 26% moisture and then run it through our dryer system and get it to the market ahead of most other producers. Having a grain drying system allows us not only to beat the market, but also lets us get a jump on some double-crop edible beans that will follow the combine.

Overall, soybeans, cotton and field corn look very good. The beans are waist high and have set a lot of pods. They look as good as I could hope for. Corn also looks very good. It is around black layer so it will still be a couple of weeks before we can start in on it. I hope to have all of the corn harvest completed before we get started on the beans. My goal is to free up a couple combines by then to focus on getting the beans out as fast as we can. We have nine combines contracted and

three grain carts, so we should be able to cut a lot of acres per day.

Cotton still needs more time to completely fill out all the bolls, but at this point it looks good.

**ON A DIFFERENT FRONT**, last month we made a donation to a local school here that needed money to help finalize the construction of a kitchen for serving noon meals. I feel like it's our responsibility to help some of the less fortunate people and schools here in the community. Our goal is to build a business here that is second to none, but we also need to be socially accepted by our neighbors by doing our part. I got a chance to visit the school

a few days ago to see how things were coming along.

I would say that the children were all from poor families that have very little, but they were some of the happiest kids you could have been around. I was overwhelmed by the welcome I got from them. I'm excited to continue to do our part going forward, knowing that we are helping improve the lives of a lot of local folks.

Overall, the last few weeks have been very busy to say the least. I attended Commodity Classic in Nashville, TN, where I spoke on a marketing panel sponsored by this magazine. I have been at the Classic for the last three years and I'd say this year producers from all over the U.S. were in great spirits.

I can't remember a time where the U.S. economy appeared to be entering into a recession and the farm economy was doing the exact opposite. As commodity prices continue at unprecedented highs, I think one producer said it best: "Prices have never been so good before and I have never been so worried about them in my life." **CSD**



PHOTO: ERIC TIESZEN

◀ With small budgets, noon meals at the local school consist primarily of rice, beans and bread. "When I told the school that we were going to help provide them with meat for protein, they couldn't stop thanking me," says Tyler Bruch.