



# Farmers Face Troubling Year During 2026 Planting Season

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Those days may be over. Growers for Crystal Sugar have enjoyed some good years in 2023 and 2024. Those crop seasons saw yields that exceeded 30 tons to the acre. Final crop payments for those years were right around \$80 per ton.

That was not the case with the 2025 crop. There is presently a glut of processed sugar on the world market and as a result, Crystal farmers will receive less than \$50 per ton this year, probably about \$48 per ton.

Although that is a return of only a

little over half of what they had been receiving, Crystal growers are still doing better than MinnDak growers. Those farmers are looking at a final check somewhere in the middle \$20s per ton for their beets. MinnDak has been recovering from some growing and processing problems and also has a plant at Wahpeton that needs equipment updating.

In addition to weather, price and production, many farmers are now facing a new problem, input costs are unknown. And fuel costs alone have shot up a dollar a gallon already this spring.

Fertilizer is an unknown commodity, and supplies could be tight during the busy planting season. Both fuel and fertilizer concerns are being driven by the war and uncertainty in Iran.

So where does all this lead us?

It takes us to the same place the farm economy comes from every year. We have a lot of growers around the region that are raising a good product over which they have no price controls. Someone else sets the final price that they receive. Some things never change.



Lots of rain means shallow root systems in corn and sunflowers. That's a bad combination when high winds come along and topple the growing plants.



Too much rain coming down too fast and staying on the land too long, did a lot of damage to the farm economy last summer.



A lot of unit trains numbering from 110 to 125 cars ship out of Agassiz Valley Grain each year. Corn and soybeans are the primary cargo. The majority of the local crop will head west. Millions of bushels of local corn and soybeans will wind up on ships headed for the Orient.



Soybeans do not like getting their feet wet. Too much rain standing in growing bean crops cut into yields last year on ground that could not shed water fast enough.



Evidence of a big crop in 2025 was shown in the outdoor storage at the Agassiz Valley Grain Terminal north of Barnesville. Several million bushels of corn and soybeans were stored in outdoor bunkers to be picked up and shipped over the winter on westbound unit trains.



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