



"We always tend to make the worst decisions in the best of times." - Unknown

TUESDAY, JANUARY 17, 2017

Morning Summary: Traders are preparing for a holiday shorten trade week, but one that should provide a bit of excitement in Washington and many headline events. Most macro investors will be focused on three key headlines: U.S. corporate earnings, the presidential inauguration and the [World Economic Forum's Annual Meeting 2017](#), often referred to in the trade as "Davos". Bank earnings continue today with Morgan Stanley followed by Citigroup and Goldman Sachs on Wednesday. Other key earnings this week will include American Express, CSX, General Electric, IBM, Kinder Morgan, Netflix, Schlumberger, Southwest Airlines, TD Ameritrade, Union Pacific and United Health. The Davos conference will provide headlines from some of the worlds most influential investors and business leaders. With this years theme being "Responsive and Responsible Leadership," I suspect we will undoubtedly see and hear some interesting thoughts regarding what many call the "surprise election results" that have taken place across the globe this past year. I personally didn't see the results as a major surprise, but then again I was never polled. This of course includes Donald Trump's election as U.S. President, the U.K.'s decision to leave the European Union and Italy's vote against constitutional reforms. Keep in mind this week will end with president elect Donald Trump's official inauguration at noon on Friday. There's early talk that Trump's speech will be extremely powerful and could move the market. We also have Senate confirmation hearings set to resume today for Ryan Zinke, Trump's pick for Secretary of the Interior and Secretary of Education's Betsy DeVos. Tomorrow we will start the hearing for Wilbur Ross as Secretary of Commerce and Scott Pruitt for head of the EPA. There are also four Fed officials scheduled to speak this week. U.S. economic data this week should be fairly quiet and go mostly unnoticed with so many other large headline events taking place. The trade will take a quick look at: Empire State Manufacturing on Tuesday; Consumer Price Index, Industrial Production, the Housing Market Index and the Beige Book on Wednesday; and Housing Starts and the Philadelphia Fed Business Outlook on Thursday. Internationally, China will be in play this week with GDP, Industrial Production and Retail Sales all released overnight Thursday. Thursday also brings the European Central Bank's latest policy decision, which most inside sources suspect will remain "unchanged".

Can U.S. Economy Withstand Rising Dollar? *Anthony Scaramucci, the founder of SkyBridge Capital and an adviser to President-elect Donald Trump said the U.S. economy could withstand the impact of an even strong dollar, while warning that deflation could cause a downturn that would be worse than past economic crises. Mr.*

Scaramucci, speaking during a panel Tuesday morning at the World Economic Forum, also said that the incoming administration wants an independent Federal Reserve. Mr. Scaramucci said that while "we have to be careful about a rising" dollar, "if you get better than expected growth in the U.S., you can have a strong dollar and robust growth that will lift the global economy." At the same panel, Thomas Jordan, head of the Swiss central bank, said he doesn't envision an "extreme" divergence in global monetary policy, adding that higher interest rates in the U.S. and a stronger dollar could actually help the European economy. (Source: The Wall Street Journal)

Oil Price Skepticism Remains: *Crude prices are up a bit this morning, but still down slightly in 2017. Interestingly oil prices remain up over +40% in the past 12-months and many traders are wondering if the longer-term rally will continue? It seems that many oil traders have recently become more skeptical about OPEC's and Russia's willingness to fully comply with their production cuts. Traders said markets were receiving some nearby support from top crude exporter Saudi Arabia, which said it would adhere strictly to its commitment to cut output under the global agreement among oil producers including the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and Russia. "Many countries are actually going the extra mile and cutting beyond what they've committed ... I am confident about the impact ... and I am very encouraged about those first two weeks," Saudi Energy Minister Khalid al-Falih said late on Monday at an industry event in Abu Dhabi. Under the agreement, OPEC, Russia, and other non-OPEC producers have pledged to cut oil output by nearly 1.8 million barrels per day (bpd), initially for six months, to bring supplies back in line with consumption. Also keep in mind recent fires which have caused unplanned closures at refineries in the Middle East and Asia have also hit short-term demand for crude in the region. Analysts also said that steps to prop up oil prices through a cut in supplies could be self-defeating. AB Bernstein said on Tuesday that the production cuts, and resulting higher prices, would likely hit oil demand. "For each \$10 per barrel increase in oil prices, oil demand will decline by 10 basis points. While consensus expects demand-growth of +1.3 million bpd in 2017 (vs 1.4 million bpd in 2016), we see risks to the downside as demand growth in China and India starts to moderate," Bernstein said (Source Reuters).*

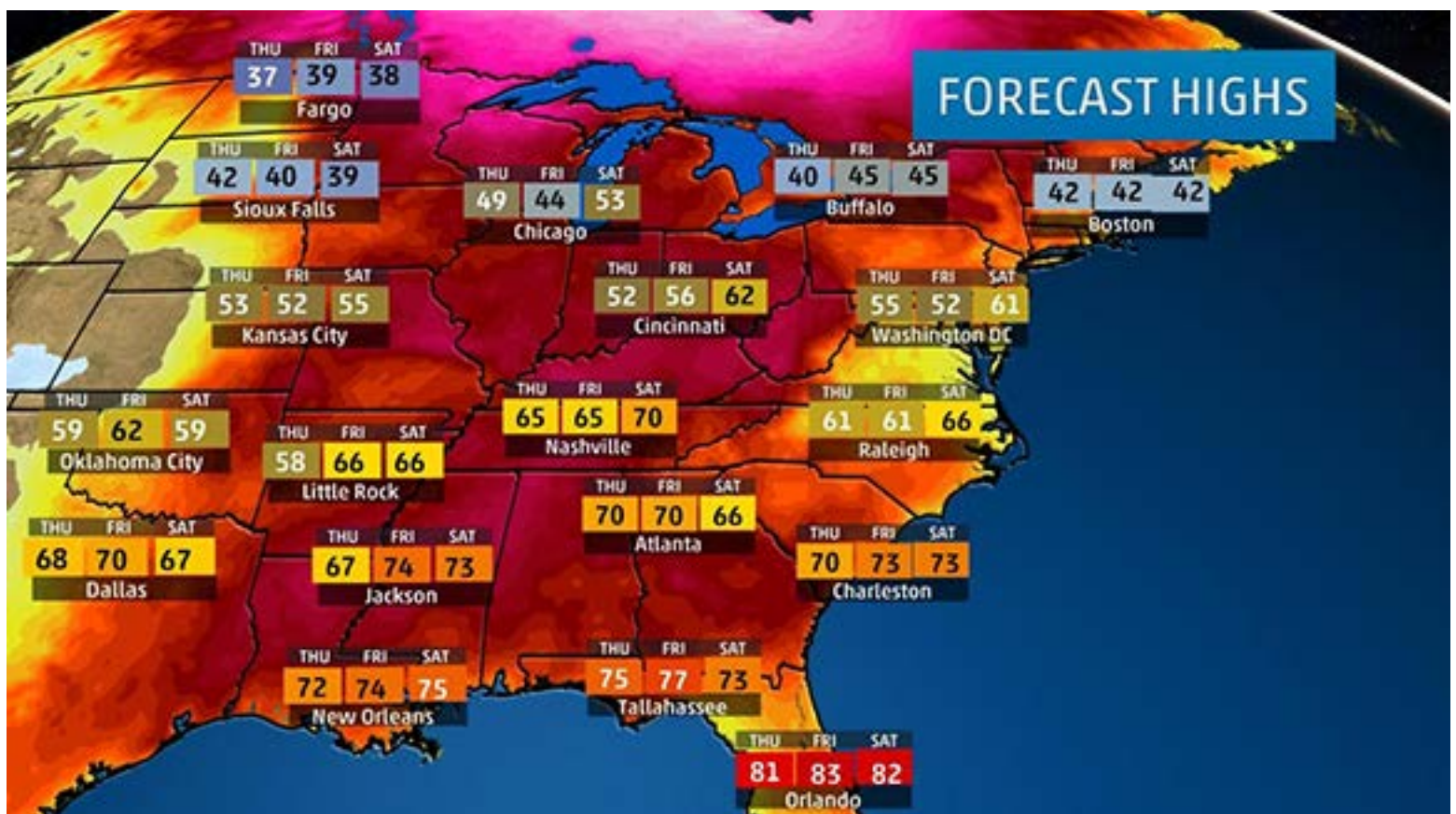
Harvard Is Billionaire University: *Want to learn about the history of economics, how to code with Ruby on Rails, or the essentials of string theory? It's all out there for free on the internet, and anyone who has the time or energy can learn it directly from the experts. The Information Age grants us an unprecedented amount of access to the world's knowledge – and some thinkers like James Altucher or Peter Thiel see this leading to a path where the role of colleges and universities will continue to diminish. There's one caveat to this line of thought, however. While one can say that the actual academic value of these institutions may be undermined by access to the digital world, the value of these as places to "rub shoulders" and network with up-and-comers still remains entrenched. Talk to any successful person in business and they will tell you that developing a strong network is half of the battle. As far as schools go, Harvard is the perfect example of the "network effect" at work. To date, a total of 35 of the richest 500 people in the world have emerged from the storied halls of Harvard. In fact, more billionaires have graduated from Harvard than all of those hailing from Saudi Arabia and Spain combined. The total net worth of the top 35 Harvard billionaire graduates? It's \$309 billion – roughly equivalent to the GDP of Hong Kong or Ireland. With alumni*

like Charlie Munger, Meg Whitman, John Paulson, Steve Ballmer, Paul Singer, Ken Griffin, Ray Dalio, and Michael Bloomberg among the ranks of Harvard graduates, it's a powerful hub to tap into. (Source: Visual Capitalist)



Weather over the weekend focused on significant icing across the country's mid-section. During its trek eastward across the central U.S., the weekend ice storm killed at least six, spreading freezing rain and ice that created dangerous road conditions from Oklahoma and Kansas to mid-Missouri and southern Illinois. As for crop, the weekend mix of snow, ice and rain was generally seen as favorable for soil moisture. Across the southern Plains, the major precipitation even likely helped to improve soil moisture for a large portion of the winter wheat belt, including all of Kansas. There was a high risk of freezing rain and sleet for the area and we are still trying to grasp if any significant damage was caused for unprotected winter wheat. Looking to Brazil, the northeast crop areas continue to see promising rainfall chances through mid-week. A round of hot and dry conditions were expected in southern areas over the weekend. However, this is a short-lived trend with no real stress to crops. Meanwhile, conditions are favorable for harvest progress in Mato Grosso. In Argentina's major crop areas, a stalled weather pattern is leading to concerns for either too wet or too dry conditions. Heavy rains in the northern and central provinces are leading to fears of reduced acreage for row crops and flooding loss. Meanwhile, the southern crop belt of La Pampa and southwestern Buenos Aires has production loss threatened due to below normal December and early January rainfall along with above normal temperatures. Extreme heat has now become a concern!

January Thaw Is Setting-Up: *A weather pattern more typical of early spring is expected to set up this week, with the polar jet stream generally diving southward in the West, and correspondingly surging northward in the central and eastern U.S. into eastern Canada. The warmth could result in a few daily record highs in the Midwest and South through the week ahead. Looking at the forecast highs for Thursday through Saturday, temperatures will be 10 to 30 degrees above average from the Plains to the East Coast. Highs in the 40s and 50s will be common in the Midwest and Northeast, with 30s confined to the far north, 60s and 70s will persist in the South.*



Corn continues to bump up against nearby resistance and trade near the high-end of its recent range. The nearby MAR17 contract struggles to breakthrough the \$3.65 to \$3.75 range while the new-crop DEC17 contract struggles to breakthrough the \$3.90 to \$4.00 range, an area we haven't traded back above since late-June of this past summer. The bulls can argue a small boost coming from a more suspect Argentine weather forecast, a truckers strike in Brazil and last weeks slight reduction by the USDA when they lowered U.S. planted acres, harvested acres and yield by a fraction, pushing total U.S. production lower by -78 million bushels. The bears however are quick to point out total U.S. production was still forecast to be record large at 15.148 billion bushels. They also point to the fact Brazil's corn crop is forecast to rebound dramatically from last years terribly disappointing 66.6 MMTs to a number perhaps north of +84.0 MMTs. There's also a lot of bearish eyes now on China. Not only have they recently introduced new anti-dumping and anti-subsidy tariffs on U.S. DDG imports, but there are fresh headlines floating around inside the trade they could soon look to up import tariffs on U.S. ethanol being imported into their country. I personally feel like corn prices are somewhat stuck in the mud. I can argue a slightly bullish case on fewer U.S. corn acres in 2017 and more extreme weather uncertainty around the next corner. But more than ample domestic and global supply, along with stringent tax and tariff headlines coming from China, should be enough to keep a lid on most nearby price rallies. I still don't see a major threat to the downside, at least not until more is known about South American weather and total upcoming U.S. acres. The problem is I also don't see much nearby opportunity to the upside. Hence the reason I believe we are stuck in the mud.... Staying extremely patient!

Soybean prices in the front-end have rallied over +60 cents from last Mondays low as the trade continues to debate South American weather, particularly that of Argentina. Not only are several key areas still reeling from heavy rains and flooding but forecasters are now talking about extreme scorching heat. As I've mentioned several times as of late, there's still a lot of "uncertainty" in regard to South American weather and how it may impact not only yields and harvest but also logistics. Don't forget the window of opportunity for Argentine producers to replant a crop is almost closed. If Argentina comes up short supply or can't logistically get the beans to the crushing facilities or move the meal to the ports the trade will immediately look back to the U.S. as a supplier. The good news for the bulls is the fact the USDA's latest projections lowered domestic U.S. stocks by -60 million bushels and global ending stocks were slightly lowered as well. I'm also thinking the USDA has probably just forecast its highs for South America production. In other words I think their production total for South America will be coming down in the months ahead not moving higher. I continue to stay extremely patient in regard to reducing more risk and pricing more new-crop bushels. In my opinion "weather" still remains a huge wild-card. I should also note new headlines are brewing about the latest trucker strike in Brazil that has dramatically slowed soy and corn movement through the state of Mato Grosso. From what I understand the protest started late last week as truck owners have demanded more from the transportation companies for moving crops to the southern ports in Brazil. I will continue to monitor...

South American SOYBEAN Production

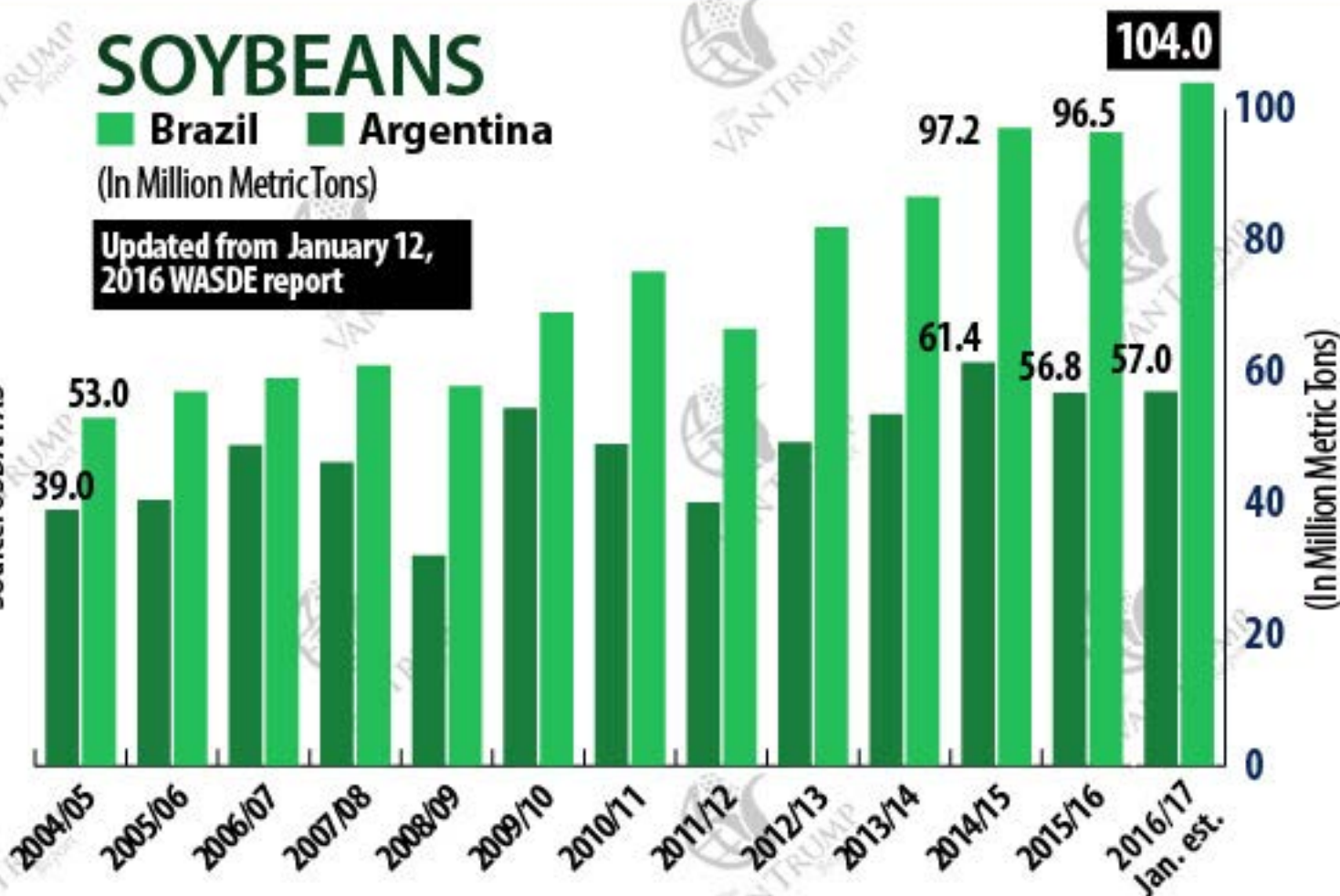
SOYBEANS

■ Brazil ■ Argentina

(In Million Metric Tons)

Updated from January 12, 2016 WASDE report

Source: USDA/FAS



Wheat bulls are hoping some of the recent extremes in U.S. winter weather will help continue to feed the nearby price rally. The bears however point to more widespread rain and moisture falling across many of the dry areas as a negative and reason to stay bearish nearby price. The bears also point to the fact domestic U.S. ending stocks were recently reported larger by +43 million bushels. Add to that a higher global ending stocks number, now pegged at 253.29 MMTs, up from the December estimate of 252.14 MMTs, proving again that world wheat supplies are more than ample. Wheat out of Argentina, Romania, Russia, etc. continues to perform in the lead role as the words "low-cost" providers. As both a spec and a producer I continue to buck the traditional bearish fundamental views, preferring to remain a conservative longer-term bull, looking for larger looming macro and geopolitical headlines to eventually spark a more significant rally. Technically wheat continues to run into heavy resistance on the charts up here between \$4.30 and \$4.50 per bushel. Meaning either another wave of bullish weather headlines will be needed to push through nearby resistance or an entirely fresh new set of headlines will have to surface to ignite more short-covering activity. Unfortunately I understand we might not see either of those come to fruition for several more weeks. I'm trying to stay with a longer-term bullish mindset and not letting the nearby technical resistance on the charts influence or frustrate my overall perception. I believe we are at a critical point in the market and will need another wave of bullish headlines to keep the recent momentum moving higher. Stay tuned...



> Argentine Soybean Crop Seen Falling 5 MMTs: *South American analyst Revista Chacra in a new report Friday forecasts Argentina's 2016/17 soybean harvest will fall below original estimates, as key growing regions of the country have received between 12 and 18 inches of rain over the past 30 days. There are large sections of the Pampa Húmeda where as many as 50% of the beans will go unplanted. Revista Chacra estimates this will reduce the total planting area by 700,000 hectares (1.73 million acres). "With all of the cards on the table, our study is estimating total soybean production volume for the 2016/17 harvest of 50 million tons. We believe it is a reasonable estimate which factors in a 9% reduction from the original forecast of 55 million tons."*

> Brazil May Be A Major Corn Exporter This Year: *With expectations of a super harvest, Brazil is going to have to export more corn in 2017. That is the headline of Naiara Araújo's analysis in SFAgro. "After coming off a corn harvest that was damaged by climate conditions and a supply crisis, the total volume produced in 2016/17 should be a record for Brazil. Agroconsult estimates total production of 94.9 million tons of corn which would be a 32.3% increase over last year. For the summer harvest, the expectation is that production will reach 30.3 million tons or 6.8% more than last year. And already for second harvest corn (safrinha), the company is forecasting 64.6 million tons due to a 10% increase in planting area. In case this holds true, the safrinha harvest would be 40.9% greater than last year. The record harvest would be good news for the domestic market and for the national animal protein chain. While domestic demand will rise from 58 to 62 million tons, that will not be enough to absorb all national production. "Exporting will be the key to draining that supply, but it will be a real challenge to export all of that corn in the second half of the year. If producers only look to the internal market, that will be a problem putting more pressure on corn prices," says Agroconsult director André Pessôa. (Source: Successful Farming)*

> China To Import 2 MMTs Of Corn, Down -37%: *China will import 2 million metric tons of corn in 2016/2017, down 37 percent from the previous year, the National Grain and Oils Information Center estimated in a daily report, as profits from imports have declined. Prices of domestic corn have declined to almost the same level as imported corn in the past year, making the latter lose advantage, the official think-tank said. The United States agriculture department earlier estimated China corn imports for 2016/17 at 3 million metric tons.*

> USDA Delays Rule On Livestock Handling In Slaughterhouses: *USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) said it will delay implementation of a rule designed to hold accountable livestock owners, transporters and haulers for humane handling of live-*

stock in connection with slaughter at federally inspected establishments. FSIS announced the rule, pertaining to how those parties not employed by an official establishment treat animals while on premises of an official establishment, in October. The agency said it would begin enforcement on Jan. 24. However, the volume and substance of comments that FSIS has received on the rule has prompted the agency to continue its examination. Once FSIS has completed review of the comments, it will publish a notice in the Federal Register responding to the issues raised in the comments explaining the determination and any clarifications or revisions made in response to the comments and announcing the implementation date.

> Andersons Announces Exit From Retail Biz: Grain handler Andersons Inc. announced this past weekend that it will be shuttering its retail operations in the second quarter of 2017. The company plans to liquidate its merchandise in the spring and sell the stores. It is unclear how the liquidation will take place. The shutdown does not affect the grain, ethanol, rail or plant nutrient parts of The Andersons.

> China Reports Another Human Bird Flu Death: A man in China's central Henan province has become the latest person reported to have died this winter from H7N9 bird flu. The 36-year-old roast duck salesman developed a fever and a cough around Dec. 25 in coastal Zhejiang province, near Shanghai, and returned to Henan in early January, Xinhua said. He was diagnosed with H7N9 on Jan. 10 and died the next day.

> OPEC Sees Market Stability In 2017: OPEC Secretary-General Mohammed Barkindo forecast that stability would return to oil markets this year while price hawk Venezuela said it hoped its crude basket would rise to \$70 in coming months. The head of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries was back in Caracas for a second meeting in two months with President Nicolas Maduro whom he lavishly praised for an "inspirational" role in the producers' pact to cut output. Under the accord reached in late 2016, OPEC, Russia and other non-members of the producer group will curtail oil output by nearly 1.8 million bpd, initially for six months. Maduro, who sent officials round the world over the last two years to lobby for output cuts, said he hoped the pact would help raise Venezuela's crude basket to \$60 in the first half and \$70 later in 2017. One of the worst-affected nations by the oil price plunge since mid-2014, Venezuela's oil traded at \$44.82 last week, versus a 2016 average of \$35.15. (Source: Reuters)

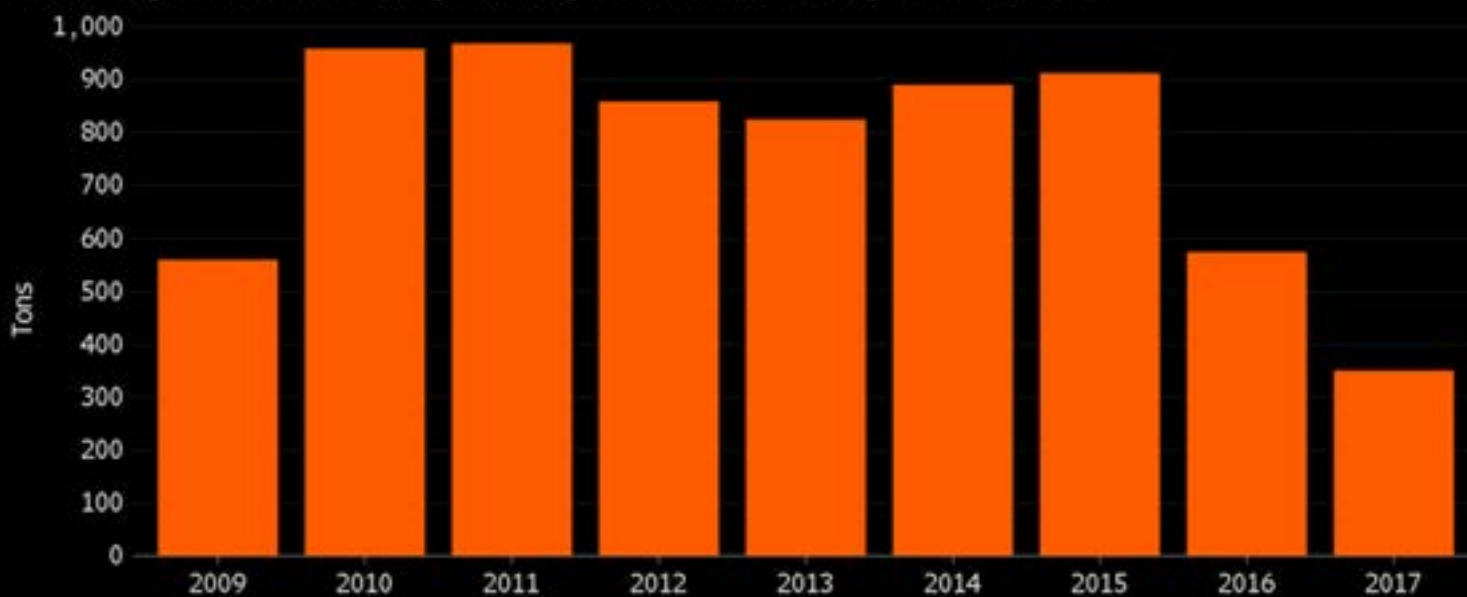
> Theresa May Reveals Her Road Map for a Hard Brexit. UK Prime Minister Theresa May said while speaking at Lancaster House on Tuesday that "we do not seek to hold on to bits of membership as we leave" and that she was against any deal that left the UK "half-in, half-out" of the European Union. (Source: Business Insider)

> Cash Ban Gives India Gold Lovers No Way to Buy Wedding Rings: A self-imposed cash shortage in India is creating chaos for jewelry retailers in one of the world's biggest gold-buying countries. Sales are plunging. A majority of retailers aren't equipped to accept credit cards because India's jewelry industry runs mostly on cash, something consumers have a lot less of these days. In November, the government banned what amounts to half the circulated cash, part of a plan to curb corruption and tax evasion. The move cut purchases of everything from cars to soap in a country where 98 percent of consumer payments are in rupee notes. While a replacement currency was issued, the disruption

further eroded gold demand already slowed by higher retail costs. (Source: Bloomberg)

Demand Collapse

India's gold imports this year may be half what they were in 2015



Sources: World Gold Council (2009-2015)
Kotak Mahindra Bank Estimates (2016-2017)

Bloomberg



East central Iowa - I took over grandpa's farm 4 years ago. My full-time job is overseeing 200 fleet nationwide trucking company. We have no storage as grandpa used to have 2000 head of cattle and fed them with the corn so we have to sell it or pay for storage off site. Locked some in at \$4 last June but not all of it unfortunately. Great numbers in both corn and beans last year 237/70+ respectively. I'm Planning on getting the pencil out this week and figuring out break-even so we can plan on marketing better this season. Feeling ok about the -.08 - .12 basis at this point for winter cash flow. We plan on using the board a bit more this season. After 4 years of running things I've determined growing is the easy part of farming - marketing not so much!

Central Indiana - I have a couple agreements on smaller acreage where the land lord gets 100% in the spring. I have an agreement on a larger parcel where the land lord used to farm and lets me pay him all in the fall - this one really helps the cash flow. As rents get competitive and guys try to find something that will set them apart from another renter they start offering 100% of the rent up front in the spring. The majority of my acres

thankfully are 1/2 spring 1/2 fall. A few I've gotten the Land Lord to wait till a latest date of Dec 15th. This helps me get my bins full and the CCC loan money in the bank before I pay cash rents.

Northwest Illinois - We have been no tilling corn for several years. Its still a work in progress but patience is something needed for no-till. I wont be the first one going out the gate. We have been working hard at getting our fields tilled to lower the water table. Tile pays big here for getting things warm and dry. We have a bigger planter than we need for our acres. This allows me to wait an extra day or 2 to ensure good conditions. One thing that I am going to change for this year is plant deeper. Been at 2" but going to 2.25 or 2.5 this year. I was at a planter/agronomy summer clinic this summer and they talked about how measured/verified planting depths behind the planter were .25 to .5 inches deeper than what mid summer digs showed.



China Updates Supply & Demand Estimates: China's Ministry of Agriculture made only very minor changes in its supply and demand balance estimates for the January 2017 China Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (CASDE) report. The CASDE authors say some corn blown over by storms was actually harvested and some corn performed better than expected in the late growing stage. They emphasize that 2016/17 corn production is still at a historically high level even though it is down from 2015/16. CASDE expects corn stocks to increase in 2016/17 by 5.1 mmt. For soybeans, a slight increase in seed use is incorporated to reflect an increase in soybean plantings this year. Check out the full report [HERE](#).

Low U.S. Winter Wheat Acres Pave Way For Soybeans: U.S. farmers have likely planted the smallest winter wheat crop since 1909 and current prices suggest that growers will plant a lot of soybeans on those lost wheat acres come spring. The U.S. Department of Agriculture on Thursday set 2017 winter wheat acreage at 32.4 million acres, down 10 percent from the previous year. This means farmers in the United States, one of the world's biggest wheat exporters, have nearly 4 million extra acres for other crops this year. This scenario is similar to last year, when winter wheat acreage tumbled 9 percent from 2015 levels. Corn was the big winner at wheat's expense in 2016, but current economics suggest that it could be soybeans in 2017. Read more [HERE](#).

Living Near Heavy Traffic May Increase Risk Of Dementia: People living near a busy road have an increased risk of dementia, according to research that adds to concerns about the impact of air pollution on human health. Roughly one in 10 cases of Alzheimer's in urban areas could be associated with living amid heavy traffic, the study estimated – although the research stopped short of showing that exposure to exhaust fumes causes neurodegeneration. Previously, scientists have linked air pollution and traffic noise to reduced density of white matter (the brain's connective tissue) and lower cognition. A recent

study suggested that magnetic nano-particles from air pollution can make their way into brain tissue. The latest study, published in *The Lancet*, found that those who live closest to major traffic arteries were up to 12% more likely to be diagnosed with dementia – a small but significant increase in risk. Read more [HERE](#).

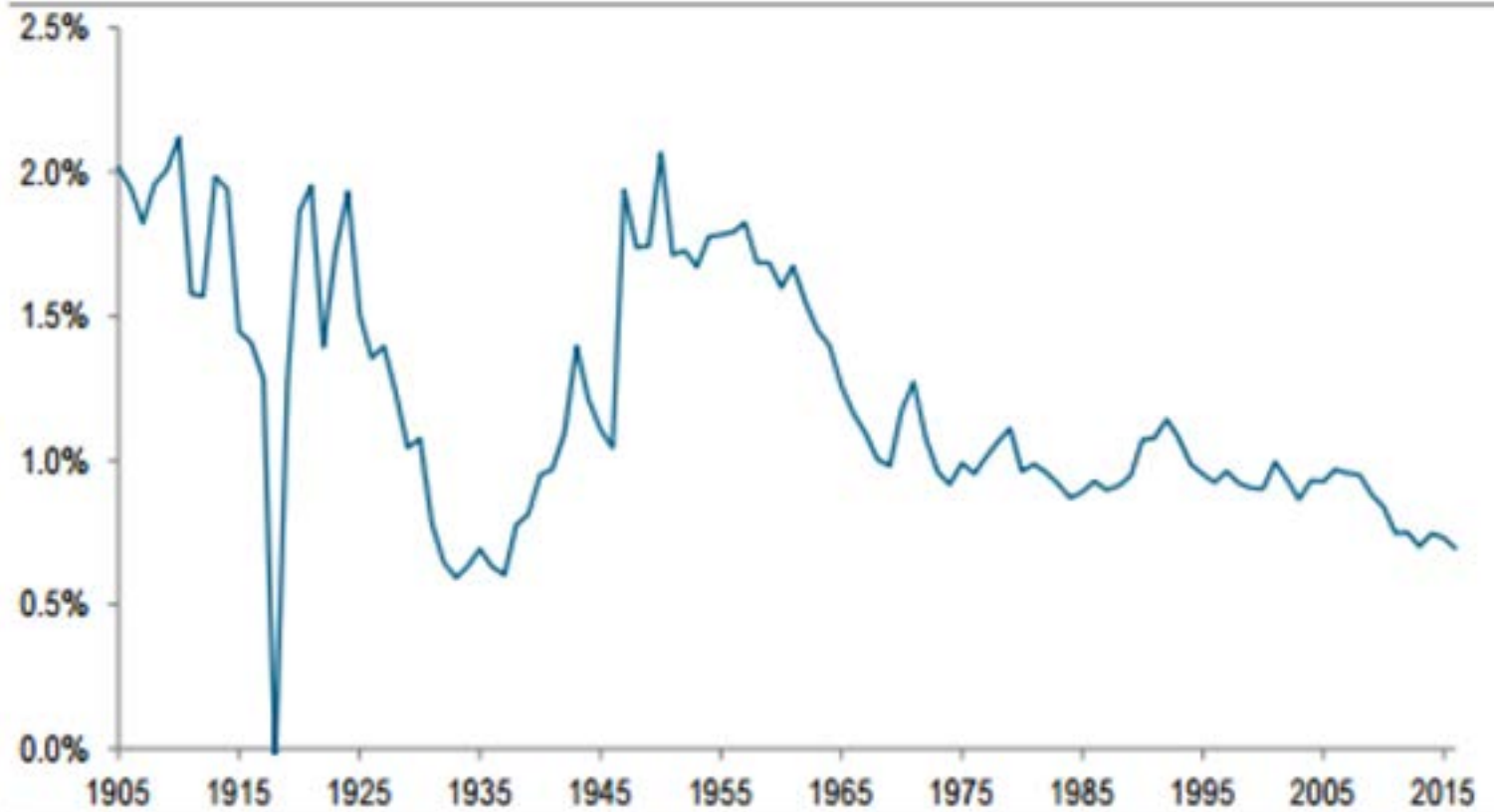
The Most Undervalued Employees: *The irritable team members who toil away in the corner and don't stop by the watercooler might not be the most popular employees, but they might still be the key to your company's long-term success. That's according to organizational psychologist, Wharton professor and New York Times-bestselling author Adam Grant. He recently gave a TED talk about the findings from his popular management philosophy book, "Give and Take." Grant identifies three kinds of employees. Takers approach every situation looking for what's in it for them. Givers approach situations looking to help others. And matchers are willing to help those who help them. Read more [HERE](#).*

Eugene Cernan... Last Man To Walk On Moon Passes Away: *Apollo Astronaut Capt. Eugene Cernan has passed away according to family members due to health issues. It was with very deep sadness that we share in the sadness of the passing of Gene. The family is deeply heart broken and has appreciated everyone's heartfelt thoughts and prayers. Humbled by his life experiences, particularly as an Apollo Astronaut, the retired Naval officer recently said, "I was just a young kid in America growing up with a dream. Today what's most important to me is my desire to inspire the passion in the hearts and minds of future generations of young men and women to see their own impossible dreams become a reality." As we say goodbye, it seems fitting to share the last line in Gene's book, "The Last Man On The Moon," as he explains his experience of walking on the Moon to his then five-year-old granddaughter, "Your Popie went to Heaven. He really did." Before leaving the moon Cernan put the initials of his only child on the surface.*

Are 1930s-Like Demographic Headwinds Restraining the U.S. Economy? *All eyes are on President-elect Donald Trump's imminent arrival at the White House and whether his administration follows through on an agenda that — when it comes to the economy — features a growth target almost double that of recent years. Outside the headlines, however, are demographic pressures reaching levels not seen since the Great Depression. That bodes ill for achieving the 3 percent to 4 percent gains in gross domestic product envisioned by Trump's pick for U.S. Treasury secretary, Steven Mnuchin. Without an improvement in productivity or an influx of people into the workforce, GDP can't accelerate. Read more from [Bloomberg](#).*

Figure 1: US population grew only 0.7% in 2016

US annual population growth since 1905, %



Source: Census Bureau, Standard Chartered Research



Pregnant And Sick Cows Will Soon Be Texting You

The latest technology is proving that farmers and ranchers won't have to pull their cows out of the herd to see if they're sick or pregnant. Instead a simple text message will be sent to alert what's wrong. An Austrian startup named [SmaXtec](#) is placing connected sensors in cows' stomachs to transmit health data over wifi. The sensors, each the size of a hot dog, track minute-by-minute data about the temperatures of the cow, the pH of her stomach, movement and activity, and they identify when the animal is in heat. They early signal can help predict whether or not a cow is pregnant with 95% accuracy, therefore letting farmers take advantage of increased milk production prior to calving. When changes are monitored, the farm staff receives a text update. How it works is the device, which has about four years of battery life, is inserted into the first of four stomachs through a cow's throat using a metal rod and lodges in the rumen. If you work with cattle you understand it can be hard to tell a cow is ill until there are visible signs of sickness. However, these sensors can pick up and report changes even before there are physical symptoms. Nearly 350 farms across two dozen countries are reportedly using this technology to monitor livestock. Over the last few years the devices have been implemented in over 15,000

cows in Britain. From what I understand, the setup costs for the network itself is around \$600, then a monthly charge of around \$10 per cow for the service. Ultimately, the 24/7 monitoring may not be able to pinpoint the exact reason for bodily changes, but it can still help with earlier and more accurate detection of the onset of any illness. SmaXtec says that with 90 million cattle on dairy farms around the world, the market for the sensors is huge. They are targeting industrial operations in China, the Middle East, and the U.S., where herds of 25,000 aren't unusual. It seem to be like the livestock industry is definitely moving in this direction! (Source: Bloomberg)



Reduce Chances Of Your Next Flight Being Delayed and Find Good Pricing

Airlines have actually been improving their on-time performance records in recent years amid a strong backlash from customers and, in some cases, the risk of regulatory fines. That is of course good news for travelers, no matter how frequently we fly! Still, some airlines have a much better track record than others. If you're flying a carrier that ranks at the low-end of the scale, your odds of a delay are as high as 55%. However, choosing an airline at the top of the heap shrinks that risk to around 11%. Luckily, [FlightStats](#) keeps track of this sort of information and is out once again with their annual list of the best and worst performing airlines over the last year. It's worth noting that FlightStats combs through a tremendous amount of data to put these lists together. In fact, the compilation is a pretty major undertaking, which is why it's so hard to find from any other sources. VP of aviation Jim Hetzel explains that for domestic carriers, the only comparable resource is a monthly PDF report put out by the U.S. Department of Transportation that is based on self-reported data from the biggest carriers in the U.S. It does not include those carriers' international flights, though. FlightStats ends up collecting their data from over 500 different sources such as flight-tracking and positional services, airport runway times, radar services, airline records, airport data, and such governing bodies as Eurocontrol and the Federal Aviation Administration. They then have to parse all the different formats and try to unravel data sets that don't agree. Hetzel's says that this year's data shows carriers have made big improvements in overall performance as the industry becomes more and more competitive. On-time performance has actually become a major selling point, which is in turn a big win for travelers. I personally like to use Google Flights when searching for airline tickets for my next trip. [Google Flights](#) allow me to search by various dates and see discounts that exist simply by moving my trip one day ahead or staying a day longer. It also tells me if a particular flight is generally on-time or delayed and by how much. This also allows me to make what I feel is a more informed decision. Just go to the link above and play around with the site. There's no commitment or charges. Once you enter the airport you are flying out of and the destination airport you will need to select the dates. When you select those dates from the calendar make certain you are paying attention to the \$\$\$ amount listed on each individual day. Some days are simply much more expensive than others. Below are the 5 top ranked airlines among both North America and international carriers:

Best 5 North American Airlines of 2016

1. *Alaska Airlines*
2. *Delta*
3. *WestJet*
4. *Southwest*
5. *United*

Best 5 International Airlines of 2016

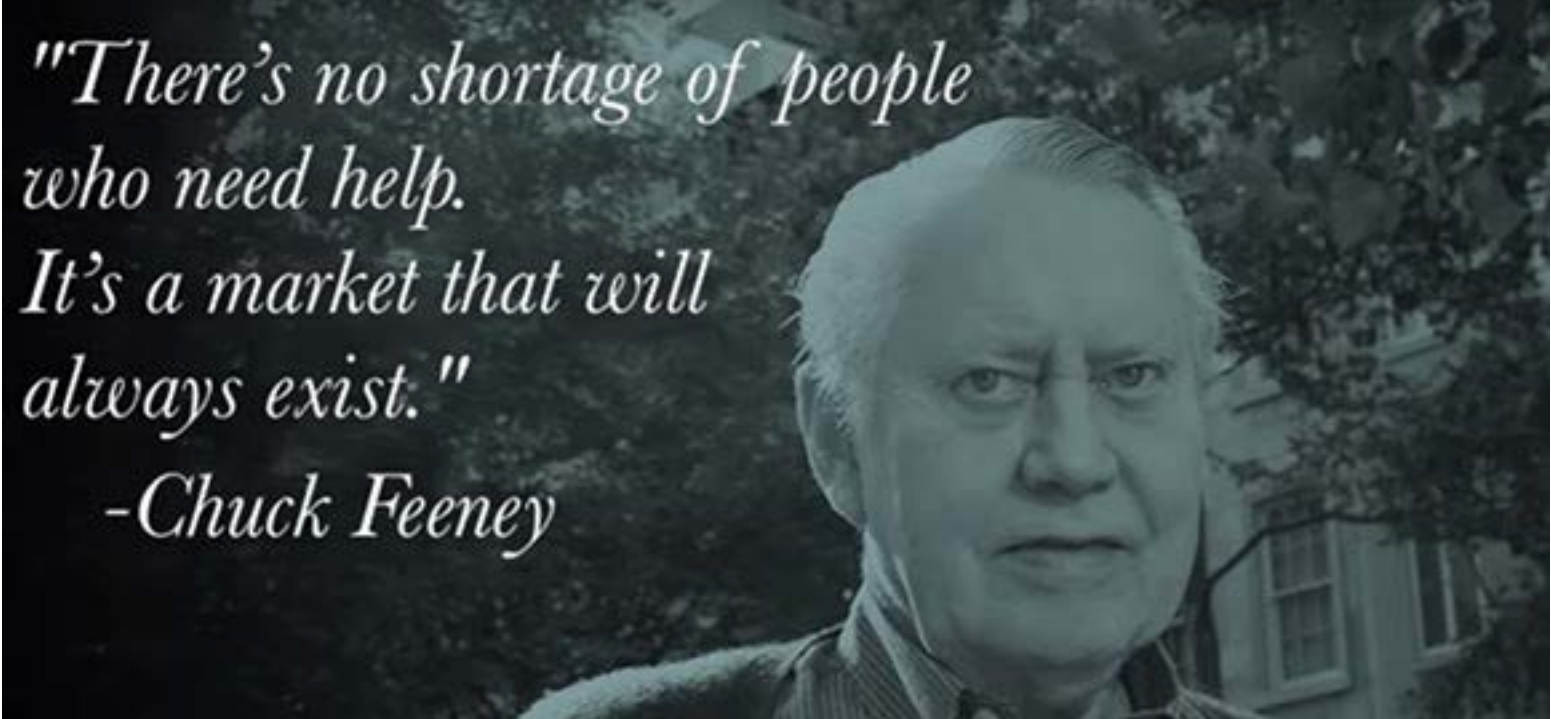
1. **KLM**
2. **Iberia**
3. **JAL**
4. **Qatar Airways**
5. **Austrian**



Chuck Feeney Successfully Gives Away The Rest Of His Fortune

Charles "Chuck" Feeney was a billionaire until this past December, when he signed over several million to Cornell University in his one final act of philanthropy. Over the course of his lifetime, his acts of giving have amounted to more than \$8 billion in grants, doled out across 23 countries on five continents. He is a personal hero to Warren Buffett and Bill Gates, two of the most celebrated philanthropists of our time. Feeney founded Atlantic Philanthropies back in 1982. Then in 1984 he gave the foundation 38.75% of his ownership in the very successful company he cofounded, [Duty Free Shoppers](#) (DFS). Feeney was born and raised in New Jersey to Irish-American parents. His mother was a nurse, his father an insurance underwriter. He spent his first four years out of high school serving as a radio operator for the U.S. Air Force intelligence in Japan during World War II. That stint, thanks to the GI Bill, made it possible for him to become the first person in his family to attend college. His entrepreneurial spirit was evident on the Cornell campus, where he became known as "the sandwich man" for selling bologna sandwiches to fellow students. One of those sandwich buyers, Robert Miller, later co-founded Duty Free Shoppers (DFS) with him in 1960. The company sold items like brandy and cigars to travelers in duty-free shops at airports, a concept that was in its infancy at that time, but managed to become a booming success, making both partners billionaires. In 1984, he secretly transferred all his assets, including his 38.8% ownership of the DFS, to Atlantic Philanthropies. He grew the Atlantic pot with shrewd, early investments in companies like Facebook, Priceline, E-Trade, Alibaba and Legent. His motivation for keeping the move secret was so that he could conduct his philanthropic activities anonymously. He managed to do just that until

1997 when a business dispute forced him to reveal his financial involvement in Atlantic. Even then, he still managed to fly mostly under the radar, never using his charitable activities to gain personal accolades. In fact, a recent profile of Feeney pointed out that not one of the 1,000 buildings he has funded over the years bear his name. The way he lived his everyday life was equally "anonymous" in that there was no attention drawn to his vast wealth. He flew coach up until he was 75 years old, lugged papers and books around in a plastic bag and prefers cheap burgers from local pubs to fancy dinners at 5-star restaurants. Feeney's philanthropic endeavors have always been deeply personal. In each of the eight regions where Atlantic has made major investments, Feeney either had a business or personal connection. Wherever he or Atlantic made bets, they did so believing there was a promising opportunity to make something good happen. The foundation was set up as a limited life organization and was designed to complete its grantmaking by 2016 and shutter completely by 2020. With his \$7 million donation to Cornell last month, he has completed his goal. Meanwhile, Feeney has left himself with approximately \$2 million to live on and looks set to continue promoting the "giving while living" philosophy. The foundation of the idea, and Feeney's personal philosophy - "It's a lot more fun to give while you're alive, than to give while you're dead" - has proven an inspiration to many others, some of which have also signed "The Giving Pledge", a commitment by some of the world's wealthiest to dedicate the majority of their wealth to philanthropic efforts. Amazing to think that he was able to give away \$8 billion during his lifetime and help so many!



*"There's no shortage of people
who need help.
It's a market that will
always exist."
-Chuck Feeney*

CASH SALES & HEDGING TOTALS

CORN 2015 CROP

100% SOLD
0% HEDGED
0% Cash Remaining



SOYBEANS 2015 CROP

100% SOLD
0% HEDGED
0% Cash Remaining



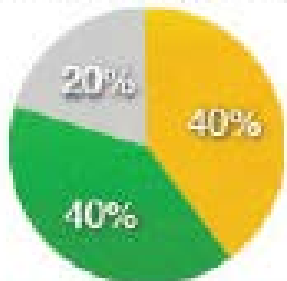
WHEAT 2015 CROP

100% SOLD
0% HEDGED
0% Cash Remaining



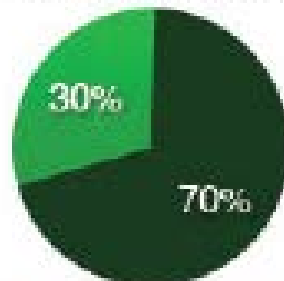
CORN 2016 CROP

40% SOLD
40% HEDGED
20% UNPROTECTED



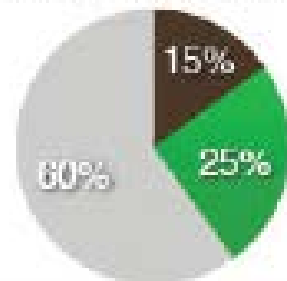
SOYBEANS 2016 CROP

70% SOLD
30% HEDGED
0% UNPROTECTED



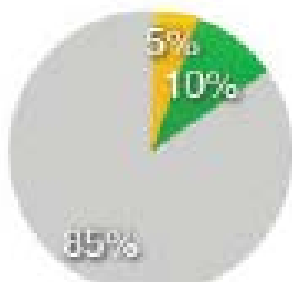
WHEAT 2016 CROP

15% SOLD
25% HEDGED
60% UNPROTECTED



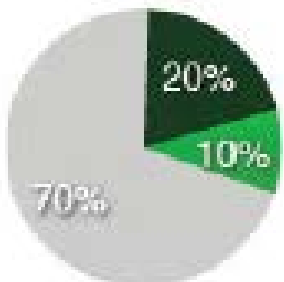
CORN 2017 CROP

5% SOLD
10% HEDGED
85% UNPROTECTED



SOYBEANS 2017 CROP

20% SOLD
10% HEDGED
70% UNPROTECTED



WHEAT 2017 CROP

0% SOLD
10% HEDGED
90% UNPROTECTED

