

ROD OSTHUS TEACHES

# 6 Steps That Get Farmers to Want Your Varieties to Win on Their Farms

Whether they're first-year buyers or long-term customers, if they don't want your varieties to win, they won't win.

**LIVE** **STREAM**



# Your #1 Fear is Your Varieties Not Performing on Customers' Farms

*This is the second program that teaches seed sellers how to keep from having that fear. That's how important this concept is to every seed seller's success.*

A grower has one job when planting your varieties, and that is to protect their performance at all costs so they can produce to their potential. Is he willing to do it?

## Step 1 — Create an Emotional Connection with Every Customer

### Have you given your customers the opportunity to develop an emotional connection with you?

If you haven't, your chances of your varieties winning are less than 50% on current customers' farms and near zero on the farms of new and current buyers.

#### Giving Farmers the Feeling of Having an Emotional Connection with You Means:

- Being their partner, available to them 24/7 to address challenges and help them achieve their goals
- Telling them how much you appreciate the relationship and asking them how you can improve it
- Instilling pride in them by complimenting them when they do the right things
- Communicating with them often to create trust, spark new ideas, and create a common language
- Being a good listener, offering opportunities for feedback.
- Getting them to believe in you enough to follow your protocols without supervision

***Every contact with a farmer, whether it's face-to-face, phone, email, or text message, is an opportunity to create an emotional connection.***

Anyone watching a competition of any kind will have, or will end up having, a favorite competitor in the contest. Even if they don't know anything about the competitor, they have an emotional connection to that person and want that competitor to win.

Farmers are no different. They have an emotional connection — deep or shallow — to a company, a variety, or a particular sales rep. That feeling of connection makes them want that variety or brand to win. When it doesn't win, they often make excuses for it losing.

This means your real competition when selling a variety to a new buyer is \_\_\_\_\_ varieties. It's the \_\_\_\_\_. The farmer already has an emotional connection with the company he's working with, and in some cases, that connection may be very strong. It's called \_\_\_\_\_. That's why sometimes, regardless of how well your varieties perform on his farm, he may \_\_\_\_\_ due to that emotional connection. I have won in the farmer's test plot, and I have won the side-by-side, and the farmer still would not buy due to that \_\_\_\_\_

*Stop trying to sell your varieties and sell yourself. Your goal is to make sure the emotional connection is to \_\_\_\_\_ and not your competitor.*

# Survey Your Style of Creating Emotional Connections to See If It's Working

## Indicate Yes or No

- YES | NO Am I creating emotional connections with buyers and customers?
- YES | NO Am I happy with the way my relationships are going?
- YES | NO Is my style of creating customer-to-company connections working?
- YES | NO Do my customers follow my lead and do what I want them to do?
- YES | NO Do my customers take responsibility for raising my varieties?
- YES | NO Does my average order size continue to increase across my territory?
- YES | NO Is my customer retention rate going up?

## When you create an emotional connection with a customer, you've won, which means:

- You've \_\_\_\_\_ your varieties to win because the grower wants them to win
- Your varieties produced to \_\_\_\_\_ because the grower protected them all season
- Your varieties \_\_\_\_\_ because they helped him accomplish his goals
- The grower \_\_\_\_\_ it was his responsibility to raise the crop
- Customers and buyers \_\_\_\_\_

*Why does one variety win on a customer's farm, yet that same variety loses on another farm nearby? The reason is that one farmer **wanted** the variety to win, and the other farmer didn't. One farmer had a plan to ensure the variety's success, and the other farmer had no plan.*

## Step 2 — Position the Grower Prior to the Sale

**You can't wait for your varieties to please customers after you make the sale. But you must get them to look forward to success with your products before they buy.**

Answer YES, if the following statements indicate you positioned buyers to want your varieties to win prior to selling them. Answer NO, if you haven't.

### I Delay Talking About My Varieties Until Growers Understand:

- YES | NO How I'm different from all other seed sellers
- YES | NO How to answer the 3 key questions to growing the operation
- YES | NO The 1000 variable concept and how it impacts the varieties they plant every year
- YES | NO How essential following the Top 5 Factors is to raising a top crop
- YES | NO The importance of planting one variety in a field
- YES | NO How to manage varieties to maximize yield
- YES | NO Why they should never split their planter
- YES | NO The need to plant portfolios across their farm
- YES | NO The importance of setting bushels per 1000 plant goals for each field
- YES | NO Why each step in the Blueprint is so important to the grower's success

*90% of every variety's success is based on what happens between the seller and the grower before the seed is planted.*

The statements above help growers understand their role in raising the best crop possible while enhancing the performance of your varieties.

## Step 3 — Set Two Important Goals

**Most farmers don't know how to set achievable yield goals for their farms. The following method will demonstrate how you can help them do that effectively.**

### 1. A Yield Goal for the Farm

- The fastest way to increase total farm profit and raise yields  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Changes from focusing on specific varieties to targeting the cropping plan for the entire farm
- Demonstrates the true \_\_\_\_\_ of the farm
- \_\_\_\_\_ from every other seed seller in the industry
- Shows caring for the \_\_\_\_\_ instead of just trying to get a seed sale
- Is the basis for creating a strong relationship
- Uses the bushels per 1000 plant goal as its foundation

### The Farm Goal Utilizes the 3 Key Questions

- Where do you want to take your yields next year?
  - + Bushels per 1000 plant goal for the farm
- What's your plan to get there?
- What's keeping you from getting there?

### Facts About Goal Achievement

- The \_\_\_\_\_, the more likely it will be achieved
- The \_\_\_\_\_ is to achieve, the more likely it will be achieved
- The \_\_\_\_\_ the goal, the more likely it will be achieved
- When \_\_\_\_\_, the more visible and more likely it will be achieved
- The \_\_\_\_\_, the more likely it will be achieved

A farm goal starts with identifying a new objective for the farm. Even if the grower will only plant two or three fields to your varieties, those fields impact the farm average. A new \_\_\_\_\_ for the farm must be set.

The farm goal gives farmers a \_\_\_\_\_ of where they want to take their business in the future and how they plan to achieve that vision.

## 2. A Yield Goal for Each Field

- The yield of every field adds to the \_\_\_\_\_, so it's important to set and achieve individual field goals
- Setting a goal for each field can be easy when the \_\_\_\_\_ is used
- Use the current plant population and average yield in each field from past years to determine the current bushels per 1000 level
- Recalculate it based on the goal of 8 bushels per 1000 to determine the \_\_\_\_\_
- Focus on raising bushels per 1000 plants — \_\_\_\_\_

When farmers focus on raising yields, their strategy seems to center on plant populations, row spacings, and fertility. Focusing on bushels per 1000 plants keeps growers concentrating on making sure every plant emerges

### A bushels per 1000 plant goal for each field provides...

- A \_\_\_\_\_ to yield growth
- A more accurate view of the \_\_\_\_\_ for yield growth
- \_\_\_\_\_ method of increasing bushels per 1000 and, ultimately, yield
- Significant impact on \_\_\_\_\_ versus focusing on a single field or variety

## Step 4 — Execute Field Visits that Change Thinking

**Field visits need to be a unique buying experience that nobody else delivers. It's easy to get lazy and not make these important customer contacts as valuable as they need to be.**

### Field visits are the secret to getting growers to:

- See how \_\_\_\_\_ from all other seed sellers
- \_\_\_\_\_ in the goal-setting process
- \_\_\_\_\_ to a plan for achieving those goals while in the field with you
- Stay on track towards the goal and monitor \_\_\_\_\_
- Want to enhance the \_\_\_\_\_ with you
- Make the Blueprint \_\_\_\_\_
- Be excited about every \_\_\_\_\_
- Be excited about every \_\_\_\_\_

Following is a list of things you need to know about the fields you visit with growers. Some of these will be part of your crop plan form, and others will be gathered during field conversations with the grower.

Field name	Years of experience with the field
Field size and location	Field map (draw the shape)
Dryland or irrigated (type of irrigation)	Type of tillage
Previous crop	Soil test
Soil type	Tiling pattern
Current bushels/1,000 plants	Average planting date
Average harvest date	Type of tillage used in the past
Any border issues	What the grower likes about the field
What needs to be fixed in this field	In what order the fields will be planted

## Field Visit Quiz

Indicate whether you believe the following statements are true or false.

### True or False — T or F

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Field visits can be done anytime during the year, depending on when the grower has time to do them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. When a prospect or customer can't go with you on a field visit, it's ok to go alone and simply report back to the farmer what you found.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Field visits are done primarily with customers who have orders already in place.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. The main goal of the first field visit — the Post-Planting Report Card Visit — is to assess the kind of job that was done at planting.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. The primary goal of the second field visit is to keep growers out of the Ag Cycle by starting their cropping plans for next year prior to harvest.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. The primary goal of the Winter Field Visit is to keep the grower's mind focused on the spring planting season, so he sticks to the plan that's already in place.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. You should have the prospect or customer drive you to the fields since they know the route, and it will give you more of an opportunity to ask questions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Each field visit should last about one hour, depending upon the size and variability within the field.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. The more variability within a field, the greater the number of varieties that should be planted in that field.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. One of the strategies to raising field yields is to plant one variety in each field.

Blueprint field visits are designed to keep growers on track to their yield goals in each field while creating a learning experience for them. Blueprint field visits, when done properly, provide a whole new buyer experience.

## Step 5 — Plant Every Customer

100% of the yield of your varieties is determined at planting, with a lot of that made up of the grower's attitude toward you winning or losing.

### Choose the right answer(s)

1. **Planter visits are the foundation for achieving your #1 goal, which is:**
  - a. To ensure your varieties perform to their potential
  - b. To get customers to do their crop plans prior to harvest
  - c. To get them to think like you think
  - d. To get them to start seeing the value you offer
2. **During the planter visit, you can ensure growers are not biased against your varieties by:**
  - a. Gauging their dedication to following the Top 5 Factors when planting your varieties
  - b. Gauging their willingness to make changes that you suggest during the planter visit
  - c. Telling them you're eager to see how your variety does against your competitors
  - d. Telling them if they're skeptical of your variety, then split the planter and compare
3. **A great way to increase customer perceptions of your varieties is by saying:**
  - a. We're growing fast because our customer satisfaction rate is so high
  - b. I'll have more farmers planting 100% of their acres to my seed this year
  - c. We have the strongest portfolio of varieties for your farm in the industry
  - d. We won the FFA plot last year with this variety
4. **The planter visit is a time when you can:**
  - a. Gauge customers' comments and attitudes toward the variety they're planting
  - b. Get customers to be positive and look forward to a great production year
  - c. Ask the grower what he likes about your competitors and their varieties
  - d. Reduce the number of future trouble calls you will have with growers
5. **The #1 goal for visiting planters is to:**
  - a. Ensure your varieties are planted properly
  - b. See if the grower needs any more seed
  - c. Stop by to see how things are going
  - d. Ask him what he thinks the markets are going to do
6. **The primary reason sales reps don't visit planters is:**
  - a. They don't have time
  - b. They don't believe it's that important
  - c. They have other more important duties at that time of year
  - d. They know most farmers don't want them there during planting

**Place a checkmark by the statements or questions you would use at a planter visit, and ignore the statements or questions you would not use during a planter visit.**

- You're going to love the way this variety emerges.
- Will you plant this variety in the field that has the lightest ground?
- You want this variety to help you break yield records this year, don't you.
- If you don't like this variety, I have a different one we can try next year.
- How many acres can you plant in a day?
- How many acres can you plant perfectly in a 12-hour day?
- Do you remember what your bushels per 1000 plant goal is for this field?
- How soon will you be done planting?
- Yeah, this field is a little wet — are you going to keep planting?
- How long will it take you to get your corn planted this year if everything goes right?
- Let's see how high we can take the yield in this field using this variety.
- I need to have you slowdown in this field — our goal is even emergence, isn't it.
- I need to have you drop the planter in another half-inch — we need perfect emergence.
- Your goal is perfect planting so you can raise the best crop possible, isn't it.
- Harvest results depend totally on how good a job you do at planting, don't they.
- During the entire planting season, think about the kind of results you want to see at harvest.
- Your only job this year is to protect each variety's performance at all costs, isn't it.

## Step 6 — Harvest Every Customer

Harvest is the time when your varieties are performing in front of every customer, and you need to be there.

### You need to be on the harvester to:

- Ensure the customer's mind is in balance and not focused on input costs, market prices, or how the crop is yielding. Instead, the focus must be on how to produce an even better crop next year.
- Ensure there are no problems involving your varieties that need to be solved.
- Ensure customers have the real story when product issues do happen so competitors can't propagate falsehoods.
- Ensure customers are in a positive state of mind when harvest is complete.
- Remind growers of your value, so they have a reason to tell competitors "no" when they stop to sell them.
- Ensure the harvest experience the customer has with you is more exciting, unique, and beneficial than anything the competitor will offer.
- Ensure that you have the true information of what occurred in every field where your varieties were planted. Following is a real-life story that perfectly illustrates this point.

A farmer ordered seed from a new company for the first time. The order was large enough to get the attention of the company he had been buying all his seed from. When it was time to harvest, the concerned competitor brought a weigh wagon to the grower's farm to do yield checks of the varieties the farmer planted. The farmer had split the field — the new variety in half of the field, and the competitor's variety on the other half. The farmer said he didn't have a lot of time, so the competitor picked two spots in the field for the farmer to harvest — one for each of the varieties. The competitor measured off 500 feet into each variety and had the farmer drive into the field to that point then back out. That evening the farmer called my client and told him his variety got beat by 40 bushels/acre. When my client called, I said that we get beat, but we didn't get killed. I told him to go back out and ride the combine with the farmer when he's harvesting the rest of that field. When he got there, he was expecting the farmer to be upset, but instead, the farmer was happy. What he found was that when the customer went the entire length of the field, my client's variety actually out-yielded the competitor by more than 10 bushels per acre across the field. Hearsay evidence is not admissible in court, and it's not admissible in seed selling either.

## What can you say to harvest operators during the ride to increase their perceptions of you and your varieties?

1. What are the most effective changes you made this year in raising your crop?
2. How do you feel about the progress you made this year?
3. How has planting a portfolio of varieties helped raise your APH?
4. How has planting one variety in each field helped raise the yield in each field?
5. Matching the right variety to the right field is important to your program, isn't it.
6. Crop planning for next year prior to harvest is key to making good decisions, isn't it.
7. What does the crop coming into the header tell you about the changes needed at planting?
8. Let's confirm next year's field-by-variety plan now on the harvester.
9. When will you be harvesting the fields where you planted my other varieties?
10. Are there any changes to your production plan for next year?

## Summary

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# LIVE STREAM

**“We don’t rise to the level of our expectations,  
we fall to the level of our training.”**

**-ARCHILOCHUS**

