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Farmers Optimistic about Current State of Agriculture, Agribusinesses Raise Concerns About the Future

The DTN/The Progressive Farmer Agriculture Confidence Index reaches all-time high for farmers

Minneapolis (September 26, 2018) – Farmer optimism for the state of agriculture, their current business health and their outlook on the future continues to climb, according to the results of the [DTN/The Progressive Farmer](#) Agriculture Confidence Index. In fact, farmers indicate they are more confident than ever, pushing the index to 164.8, exactly 30 points higher than the most recent index in spring of 2018.

When asked, farmers rated their present situation at 172.4, up 68 points from spring of 2018 and 100 points above what they felt about conditions one year ago. In comparison, farmers in the recent index rated their optimism for the future at 161.1, which is 11 points below their optimistic rating for the current situation, but still significantly positive.

"These results are not just record-setting, but they are also extremely surprising," said Greg Horstmeier, DTN editor-in-chief. "What's more is that we found consistency across all regions and types of farmers studied in the survey, whether Midwest, Southeast, or Southwest, and whether crop grower or livestock producer."

DTN/The Progressive Farmer also surveys agribusinesses and developed a separate index for their rating of the current and future situation. In that survey, the DTN/The Progressive Farmer Agribusiness Confidence Index also indicated an improvement over the last 12 months in the present situation, but much less dramatic of an increase. The overall Agribusiness Confidence Index is 95.6, which is down 15.4 points from spring of 2018 and down 11 points from a year ago. Agribusinesses are positive about their current situation, rating it at 110, up 15.8 points from a year ago.

"Overall, agribusinesses sharply disagree with what farmers are saying," Horstmeier said. "We believe this is due to the overall farm economy; farmers have slowed their spending with agribusinesses over the past four years and those businesses are feeling the pinch."

"When you boil this down to what it means for agriculture in America, there are trends that farmers have adapted to the current farm economy and are positive about their present and future conditions. Conversely, we are starting to see rural agribusinesses that support America's farmers begin to struggle and may be a leading indicator of where agriculture is heading over the next few years," Horstmeier said.

About the Agriculture Confidence Index

Since 2010, DTN has surveyed farmers three times a year to determine their opinions about their current economic situation and about that situation in the year to come. Those answers create a score for

farmers' "current condition," how they feel about their businesses at the time of the survey; and a score for their "future expectations" for the coming year. Those two scores are combined to create the DTN/The Progressive Farmer Agriculture Confidence Index. Index levels above 100 are considered optimistic, those below 100 are viewed as a pessimistic attitude.

The full report from the DTN/The Progressive Farmer Agriculture Confidence Index is available on www.dtnpf.com.

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