



CC-S buckets

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New 4B buckets said to perform well for Illinois grain company

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Grain amounts reported in bushels. To convert to tonnes of maize, divide by 39.36825; to convert to tonnes of soybeans, divide by 36.7437.



EAST PEORIA, ILLINOIS, U.S. — Finding an elevator bucket that is durable, discharges product cleanly and maintains capacity over time is essential for the efficient operation of a grain elevator.

When Twomey Company, Smithshire, Illinois, U.S., heard that 4B Components Ltd., East Peoria, Illinois, U.S., had introduced a new line of stackable, cc-style polymer elevator buckets last year, Twomey officials decided to give them a try at the company's newly upgraded facility in Yorkshire, Illinois.

Bob Davis, maintenance director for Twomey, said the results have been positive.

"We've checked the ones that we installed last year and there were no failures," said Davis, noting that two new 10,000-bph legs at the 5-million-bushel facility were fitted with 16-inch-x-7-inch buckets. **"They were essentially distortion free. We're happy with the outcome so far."**

In August 2005, Twomey installed another set of the cc-style, 14-inch-x-7-inch buckets on a new 7,500-bph elevator leg at its Larchland, Illinois, facility.

Twomey operates seven grain storage and handling facilities in Illinois, including two terminals located on the Illinois River, and has an overall storage capacity of about 45 million bushels. With its facilities located in one of the U.S.'s most prolific maize and soybean production regions, Twomey says it must purchase durable buckets because they will have to handle large volumes of product each year.

"Buckets wear out, just like anything else," Davis said. "The plastic ones get brittle and break, not as much now as they used to years ago.

"The polymers that companies are using are better, so we're getting more longevity out of them. The biggest thing is the front lip will cup out or wear down, causing the bucket to not throw product properly into the throat of the leg, which will mess your capacity up."

Davis said the thick front lip section on the CC-style buckets helps alleviate those concerns.

"We put a four-inch urethane liner in and checked frequently to see where the corn was hitting and how the buckets were performing," Davis said. "As expected, they were throwing down into the throat and carrying over pretty well."

Because the buckets are wingless, contractors were able to put the buckets a little closer together (8.5 inches) to improve capacity, he said.



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Davis said ***that there has been no sign of material buildup in the buckets, partly because of the bucket's smooth, rounded-curve design.*** He also noted that buildup has become less of a problem in recent years because the newer combines are designed to reduce the amount of foreign material that slips into the harvested grain and the proliferation of genetically modified soybeans has led to fewer weed seeds in each load.

Another feature that Davis likes is that the buckets, which come in 35 sizes, are "stackable," meaning they nest inside one another for reduced storage and shipping space and greater freight savings due to increased density and lower freight classification.