

# DRIVEN TO SUCCEED

LEGACY LEADERS | BY KEVIN SPAFFORD

***This family farms almost 12,000 acres over three counties and two states***

RANDY WEBER'S "agri-preneurial" roots run deep. He hails from a corn-broom maker in one generation and a wagon maker in another. Since the mid-1800s in west-central Indiana, the Weber name has been synonymous with industry, stewardship and rural development. Tracing his heritage, Randy's family was responsible for changing the nature of



the landscape for future generations.

The Webers had planted many of the trees around northern Indiana. Randy's ancestor, Henry Weber,

developed the Weber Wagon in 1845, the "Rolls Royce of Farm Wagons" and a brand that was later merged into the International Harvester Co.

From their home base in Ambia, Ind., Randy, wife Chris and son Karl grow soybeans and food-quality corn on almost 12,000 acres across three counties and two states.

Outside of farming, Karl races on the ARCA circuit. He started racing go-karts seven years ago, and the Webers have been

supporting his NASCAR dreams ever since. Now at 18, Karl says, "I'm a farmer first, and race driver second." It's farming that supports this avocation, and it'll be farming he falls back on when he packs his racing gear away for good.

Randy and Chris acknowledge that passing the farm to the next generation, even one as eager and capable as their son, will be a big task. Tax laws, regulations, rising land prices, environmental concerns and maintaining

To stay relevant, you need a cooperative whose business is being



their own financial security could spoil their efforts. But they're willing to pay the price and do whatever it takes to plan for succession and transition the operation to the next generation.

dure. You grow into it, just like growing any other business.

"We've been very fortunate; we've had employees come along that are able to fit well into the operation and that, in turn, creates

harvest," he says.

In defining success, Randy says, "Success isn't in numbers. It's a fulfillment that you get when you do the job right and have good results. For me, it's more than just completing a task; it's the whole cycle. From finishing the planting season all the way through to the end of the growing cycle and then harvest."

A lot of work is done between planting and harvest, says Randy. "But when you get down to the end and you've completed a cycle, it's always an exciting thing. And if you think about it, in a farming career, you only get so many chances. The average farmer may only

get 35 chances in a whole career. So you really want to do the best you can with each of the opportunities."

Randy credits his good fortune to the people around him, those that have come before and the opportunities he's had to live the farming life. He admits it's a lot of hard work, but given his attitude and his outlook, Randy would be a success in any effort he set out to accomplish. "Driven to succeed" might be the Weber motto. **FF**

"You really want to do the best you can with each of the opportunities you get." — **RANDY WEBER**

In managing the operation, Randy says, "It's kind of a game. As our farm has grown, I've learned how to balance the resources and responsibilities I have, so I don't try to do everything all at once. Farming has been a learning proce-

portunity and helps us continue to grow."

Challenge motivates Randy. "I like everything about agriculture. I mean, each year, to go out and plant corn in the spring, you have eternal hope that it's going to be a bountiful

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relevant. So what you do in here makes sense

out there.

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