

Acquisition Upgrade

GAVILON ADDS UPRIGHT, TEMP STORAGE, RAIL LOADING EQUIPMENT IN WISCONSIN



Gavilon

Omaha, NE • 402-889-4000

Founded: 2008

Storage capacity: 350 million bushels at 140 locations

Number of employees: 1,800

Crops handled: Corn, soybeans, wheat, sorghum, specialty grains

Services: Grain origination, storage, and handling; transportation and logistics; marketing and distribution; risk management

Key personnel at Avalon:

- Derek Reed, location manager
- Taylor Nordstrom, superintendent

Supplier List

- Aeration fans**..... Sukup Mfg. Co., AIRLANCO
- Bin sweeps** Springland Mfg.
- Bucket elevators**..... Intersystems
- Bulk weigh scale** Intersystems
- Catwalks** Tri-Co Fabrication
- Cleaner** Intersystems
- Contractor** Buresh Building Systems Inc.
- Conveyors** Intersystems
- Distributor**..... Intersystems
- Elevator buckets** Maxi-Lift Inc.
- Fall protection** Tritech Fall Protection Systems Ltd.
- Grain dryer** Sukup Mfg. Co.
- Grain temperature system** .. Tri-States Grain Conditioning Inc.
- Level indicators**..... BinMaster Level Controls
- Millwright**..... Buresh Building Systems Inc.
- Moisture meter** DICKEY-john Corp.
- Samplers** Intersystems
- Steel storage**..... Sukup Mfg. Co.
- Temporary storage**... LeMar Industries Corp.
- Tower support**.... Tri-Co Fabrication
- Truck scale**... Fairbanks Scales/Badger Scale Co.



The 60-foot-diameter Sukup steel tank at right was built in 2013 at Gavilon's Avalon, WI rail terminal. Photo by Marco Valencia, Janesville, WI.

The former Millard Grain wanted to get out of the grain business and focus on fertilizer and agronomy. So the privately held company sold its 1.2-million-bushel steel grain elevator in Avalon, WI (608-754-4673) to Gavilon, LLC in October 2011.

“We were looking for a way to expand our presence in southern Wisconsin,” says Gavilon Location Manager Derek Reed, who has been with the company for eight years, most recently at a barge-loading terminal in Catoosa, OK. “The site here is served by a short-line railroad with good truck access in a large corn-producing area.”

Following the acquisition, Gavilon set out to make the facility a more efficient operation.

Six structures were torn down, including the old office building, a wood feed mill, and some

flat storage buildings, providing more room for grain trucks to maneuver, says Superintendent Taylor Nordstrom. Taylor came to Avalon from another Gavilon location in Rockport, MO.

The upgrade that followed included the addition of a 2-million-bushel temporary storage pile with its own receiving pit and leg, a new 160,000-bushel steel wet tank, renovation of three existing tanks, two new receiving pits and legs for the elevator, a new tower dryer, and a bulk weigh loadout scale for 110-car trains.

Gavilon hired Buresh Building Systems, Inc., Hampton, IA (641-456-5242), as contractor and millwright.

Construction began in 2012, and everything was operational by October 2013.

Storage Additions

The new, oval-shaped LeMar ground pile measures 650 feet by 150 feet. It includes a nine-foot perforated steel sidewall, concrete floor, and 18 AIR-LANCO 10-hp axial fans.

A truck pit was installed adjacent to the ground pile to feed a 20,000-bph Ross receiving leg outfitted with 20x8 Maxi-Lift Tiger-Tuff buckets mounted on a 22-inch leg. The leg feeds an overhead 20,000-bph Newburn Mfg. belt conveyor running out to a center fill tower. Front-end loaders are used to recover the grain.

The new Sukup wet tank stands 60 feet in diameter, 80 feet tall at the eave, and 97 feet tall at the peak. The tank has a flat floor; outside stiffeners; 16-inch, 10,000-bph Springland sweep; seven-cable TSGC grain temperature monitoring system; and BinMaster level indicators. A pair of 30-hp Sukup centrifugal fans provide 1/5 cfm per bushel of aeration, along with four roof exhausters.

The new tank is filled with a 20,000-bph Intersystems overhead drag conveyor and empties onto a 20,000-bph drag in an

above-ground tunnel.

The wet tank was necessary during the 2013 harvest, Nordstrom notes, when up to 80% of incoming bushels required drying. In addition to an existing 1,500-bph MC dryer, Gavilon utilized a new natural-gas-fired, 7,000-bph Sukup tower dryer to keep the grain moving. Buresh retrofitted an existing wet leg to bring its capacity up to 10,000-bph and added an Intersystems 10,000-bph dry leg to service the dryer.

Grain Movement

The company hired Gilbank Construction, Clinton (608-676-2261), to build a 35-by-86-foot brick office building, similar in design to offices at other Gavilon locations.

The facility also has 80-foot Fairbanks pitless inbound and outbound scales and a Gamet Apollo truck probe. Reed says the scales utilize an automation system developed by Gavilon, but the company is looking into switching to a Cultura Technologies system.

To speed the flow of grain through the facility, Buresh installed two new receiving pits and legs, including a 20,000-bph truck receiving pit and 15,000-bph combination

truck, rail pit, and leg. Nordstrom says Gavilon takes in grain from other elevators located along the Wisconsin Southern branch line that serves Avalon.

Additional retrofits at Avalon include a new six-hole Intersystems rotary distributor, all new 20,000-bph Intersystems drag conveyors for filling tanks, and 48,000-bph above-ground Intersystems belts for reclaim.

Rail loading is done with a new 60,000-bph Intersystems shipping leg with three rows of 20x8 Tiger-Tuff low-profile buckets mounted on a 64-inch belt. This leg feeds a 70,000-bph Intersystems bulk weigh loadout scale with an Agris one-Weigh control system from Cultura. The operator has the option of running grain through a 40,000-bph Intersystems gravity screener mounted on the bulkweigher. Railcars are loaded in a Behlen steel shed, and workers are protected by a 260-foot Tritech trolley-type fall protection system.

Nordstrom says it takes about eight hours to load a 110-car train utilizing Gavilon's own remote controlled switching locomotive.

Ed Zdrojewski, editor