

your

PROFIT



By **Al Kluis**
Commodity trader, trading grain futures since 1976. Sign up for his daily and weekly reports at kluiscommodities.com.

DEC. CORN YEARLY LOWS 2015–2025		
	Date of Yearly Low	Futures Prices
2025	July 1	\$4.16' 4
2024	Aug. 26	\$3.85
2023	Nov. 29	\$4.47
2022	Jan. 3	\$5.42' 4
2021	Jan. 25	\$4.23' 4
2020	Aug. 4	\$3.20
2019	Sept. 9	\$3.52' 2
2018	Sept. 18	\$3.42' 4
2017	Dec. 12	\$3.35' 2
2016	Aug. 31	\$3.14' 6
2015	Nov. 10	\$3.56

DEC. CORN YEARLY HIGHS 2015–2025		
	Date of Yearly High	Futures Prices
2025	Feb. 20	\$4.79' 6
2024	Jan. 2	\$5.02' 2
2023	June 21	\$6.29' 6
2022	May 16	\$7.66' 2
2021	May 7	\$6.38
2020	Nov. 30	\$4.30' 4
2019	June 17	\$4.73
2018	May 25	\$4.29' 4
2017	July 11	\$4.17' 2
2016	June 17	\$4.49
2015	July 14	\$4.54' 2

August: the New October?

Seasonal highs came in very early the last two years.

This summer, a farmer came up to me and said, “I thought you were crazy to sell new-crop corn, soybeans, and wheat ahead in January and February.” He said he hesitated, but he followed my advice. “Now, I wish I would have done more,” he said.

I admit, I haven’t advised selling ahead in January and February very often over the last 20 years. I did that in January and February of 2025 — not because of seasonal patterns, but because the markets had rallied up to price/profit targets, and most areas had excellent basis levels.

Over the last few years, I have written a few articles about how the seasonal price pattern has changed — mainly because of the large increase in South American production. The highs come in earlier, and now the lows are in August — the new October.

Another important change is the large increase in farm storage. Many elevators now offer to pick up your crops right after the combine, as they are buying a lot less corn and soybeans during harvest than they did 5–10 years ago. This helps them get grain bought at harvest, which is usually the most profitable time for elevators to buy, and usually one of the worst times for farmers to sell.

How Corn Marketing Has Changed

From 2015–2019, seasonal selling from May to early July worked great. Grain prices were low and in a long-term basing pattern. The harvest lows in that five-year period

occurred from August through December. Farmers who hedged ahead or contracted grain for harvest delivery were pleased with the results.

But in the last six years, selling from May through early July gave very mixed results. The highs have been coming in earlier (as early as November). The last two years, the high was in January or February, but in 2021 and 2022, it was early or mid-May. On the other hand, the lows in the last six years were in July and August half the time, and in January in 2021 and 2022.

What About Soybeans?

From 2015–2019, the seasonal highs occurred from May through July, except 2019, when the high

This table shows how well seasonal (April–July) hedging worked from 2015–2019. In 2020, prices put in an election-year high in November. Since 2021, the highs and lows have been more random.

was in February. The lows usually occurred from July through September. Since then, the highs, and the best time to sell, were June and July ... 50% of the time. But in the last two years, the highs have been in January or February. Meanwhile, in the last six years, the lows have been random, with major lows in January of 2021 and 2022. (January has now changed into a key change-of-trend month.)

One rule that comes from all of this change: If you rally into January, be ready to sell. If prices move lower into January, then it sets up a great buying opportunity. ➔

your

PROFIT

(continued)

NOV. SOYBEANS YEARLY LOWS 2015–2025

	Date of Yearly Low	Futures Prices
2025	April 9	\$9.71' 2
2024	Aug. 16	\$9.55
2023	May 31	\$11.30' 4
2022	Jan. 3	\$12.74
2021	Jan. 25	\$10.97
2020	April 21	\$8.31
2019	May 13	\$8.15' 4
2018	Sept. 18	\$8.12' 2
2017	July 23	\$9.07
2016	Jan. 6	\$8.68
2015	Sept. 11	\$8.68' 4

NOV. SOYBEANS YEARLY HIGHS 2015–2025

	Date of Yearly High	Futures Prices
2025	Feb. 4	\$10.75' 6
2024	Jan. 2	\$12.37
2023	July 24	\$14.35
2022	June 9	\$15.84' 6
2021	June 7	\$14.80
2020	Nov. 11	\$11.50' 2
2019	Feb. 2	\$9.69' 2
2018	May 29	\$10.60' 4
2017	July 11	\$10.47
2016	June 13	\$11.86' 2
2015	July 14	\$10.45

Final Thoughts

As I studied the charts for this article, the one observation that jumped out at me is how choppy and “non-trending” the markets have been the last several years. Grain prices have not been driven by supply and demand. Instead, they are moved primarily by outside markets and geopolitical events. Unfortunately, those markets are harder to forecast and trade.

Here are some suggestions I think will help you with your 2025 and 2026 crops:

#1. The best sales I have recommended in the last five years have been those that were made on rallies when prices hit my chart objectives and profit targets.

#2. A lot of the sales made 18 months to two years ahead have been great hedges on which to deliver. The 2025

hedges made in the spring of 2024 show large gains and were at higher prices than the new crop hedges placed between late January and February 2025.

#3. If you are not happy with the nearby futures prices, then check on the new crop 2026 and 2027 prices. The corn and wheat markets offer a huge carry. At this time (early July), December 2026 corn is trading 34¢ higher than December 2025, and December 2026 CBOT wheat is trading 56¢ higher than December 2025. Stay aware of those prices and take advantage of the price of deferred futures two to three years out on 10–20% of your production.

#4. Making a series of scale-up sales has worked great. We have averaged up most years, except the last two, when we have averaged

down. But making a series of 10% sales keeps some cash coming in and allows you a lot more flexibility.

#5. Be aware of your best merchandising opportunities. When we had some premium basis bids in January and February, some farmers sold all their cash corn and replaced the cash corn sale with call options or call spreads. They lost money on the corn option trades, but it was a lot less than riding the cash corn market lower. By summer, futures were lower, and the basis was much wider.

In general, these new strategies mean you especially need to be aware of your own price targets. What prices can you sell at and still make a profit? If you know those numbers, then you will be ready to sell when the time comes. •

From 2015–2018, selling ahead in May–July worked great. In 2019, prices put in a counterseasonal high in February. From 2021–2024, selling your crops ahead in May–July worked the majority of the time. This year has been a counterseasonal trade year.

Note: The risk of loss in trading futures and/or options is substantial, and each investor and/or trader must consider whether this is a suitable investment. Past performance — whether actual or indicated by simulated historical tests of strategies — is not indicative of future results. Trading advice reflects good-faith judgment at a specific time and is subject to change without notice. There is no guarantee that the advice given will result in profitable trades. •