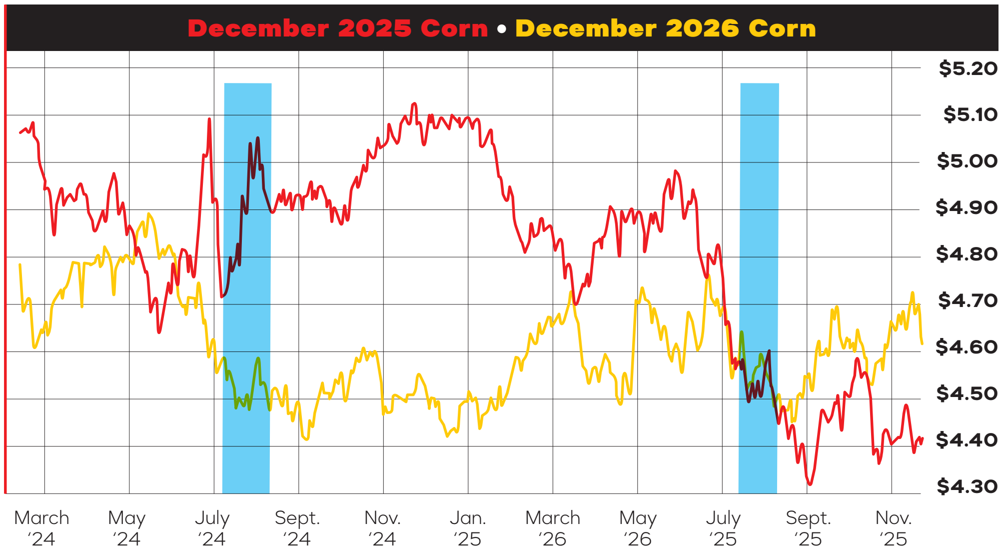
By **Al Kluis**
Commodity trader, trading grain futures since 1976. Sign up for his daily and weekly reports at **kluiscommodities.com.**



This chart shows December 2025 corn and December 2026 corn. In the shaded blocks, this chart shows the losses in July 2024 and July 2025 were 6–8¢. Prices moved lower into the end of August. With the basis levels widening out, the cash markets lost more than the CBOT futures.

Will We See Another Bearish July?

Consider using a time plan on some of your bushels.

In July, I enjoy attending and speaking at industry conferences. Farmers are usually in a good mood; they have finished spraying and are checking the fields weekly to evaluate yield potential. However, during the last several years, they were upset with crop prices in July and looking for someone to give them some hope. Unfortunately, hope is never a good marketing plan.

I get a lot of questions in July from producers who have some or all of last year's corn in storage. A few also say they have a lot of cash soybeans on hand. This is a tough position. When the futures finally rally, the cash basis bids widen out. And when the futures get hit, basis does not improve. It is a lose-lose position if you are holding cash grain.

Meanwhile, I think we are close to major lows. Here are some alternatives to consider if you sell cash corn and soybeans this month.

Deciding When to Sell

First, let's review the decision-making process. When I put together a marketing plan, I always set up two plans for deciding when to sell. Plan A (the Price Plan) is based on price; Plan B (the Time Plan) is based on time, and should be used if Plan A doesn't hit the targets I want. In an ideal world, the scale-up Price Plan works, and the price targets are hit. In the real world, however, the price targets are sometimes too high, and the orders I have in place don't get filled. That's when I turn to Plan B.

For example, we had a price target to sell the last 10% of the cash corn when July 2026 futures rallied to $5.08. However, when our Time Plan deadline came up, that sale hadn't gone through at our target price. We made the sale anyway. As it turned out, the soybean scale-up Time Plan worked great for us, with the last cash sale made when July soybeans rallied to $12.28.

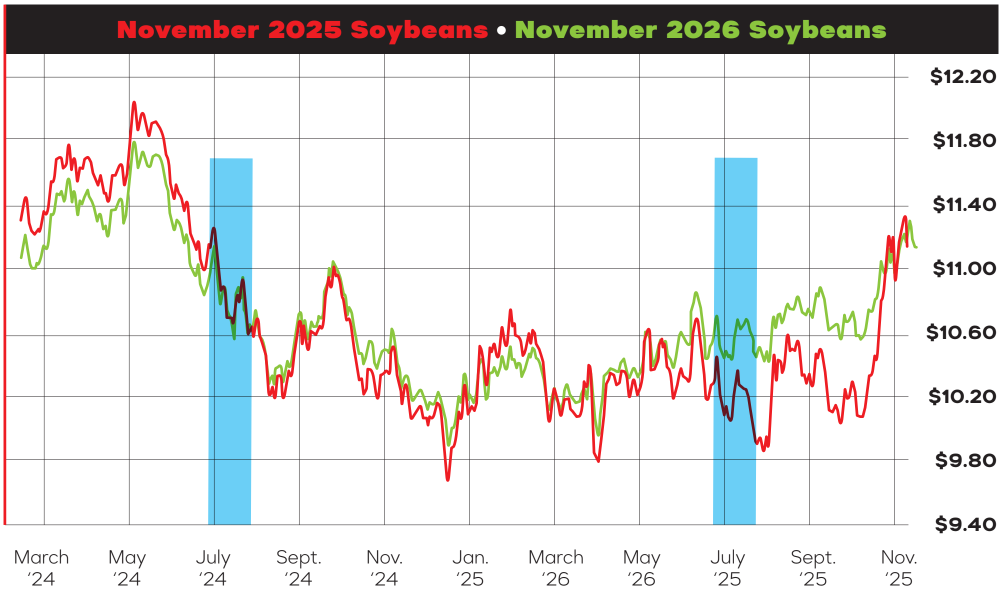
I have written about seasonal selling of corn and soybeans for many years. This is part of the Time Plan. There are some key weeks when you simply should make a sale — or definitely avoid a sale — regardless of the price.

Here is a look at how that worked for us with the 2025 cash corn and soybean crops. I am proud of the results and the disciplined way we made the sales. Note that we made incremental sales, usually in 10%–20% increments. I often have one or two sales I am not happy with, and several near the top. What counts is the average selling price when all sales are done.

2025 Corn (Total Bushels)

Sale Date	Contract	% Sold	Sale price
May 14, 2024	Dec. 2025	10%	**$4.99**
Jan. 13, 2025	Dec. 2025	10%	**$4.56**
Nov. 13, 2025	March 2026	20%	**$4.53**
Feb. 23, 2026	May 2026	20%	**$4.44**
March 9, 2026	May 2026	20%	**$4.68**
April 29, 2026	July 2026	10%	**$4.78**
		Avg. Price:	**$4.66**

When I look at the sales, naturally, my reaction is, "I wish I sold more ahead in May 2024, and I wish I sold less in late February 2026." But when you pull the trigger on a sale, you ➔



This chart shows November 2025 soybeans and November 2026 soybeans. In the shaded blocks, this chart shows the losses in July 2024 and July 2025 were 10–35¢, with prices moving still lower into September.

can't know the future. You have to stay disciplined and spread out the risk. In any case, the average was in the top third of the range that was possible last year. That is good.

Next, here's the result for soybeans:

2025 Soybeans (Total Bushels)			
Sale Date	Contract	% Sold	Sale Price
Jan. 2, 2025	Nov. 2025	10%	**$10.28**
Jan. 23, 2025	Nov. 2025	10%	**$10.58**
Aug. 13, 2025	Nov. 2025	10%	**$10.44**
Oct. 27, 2025	March 2026	10%	**$10.88**
Oct. 28, 2025	March 2026	10%	**$11.18**
Nov. 18, 2025	March 2026	10%	**$11.68**
Jan. 21, 2026	May 2026	10%	**$10.78**
Feb. 4, 2026	May 2026	10%	**$11.14**
Feb. 6, 2026	May 2026	10%	**$11.49**
May 12, 2026	July 2026	10%	**$12.28**
		Avg. Price:	**$11.07**

You can see that the best sale was in May 2026, and the lowest sales were in January and August of 2025. No sales were made below $10. The average came in the top 40% of the trading range that was possible for the year.

Some of the farmers who are best at growing crops are often the ones who really struggle to get them sold. They are bulls and optimists — and optimists often stay too bullish for too long. Part of my job is to talk them into making sales on a plan that takes advantage of the seasonal price pattern that works 80% of the time in the corn and soybean markets.

Auto-Pilot Plans

Now, let's close with some sample (and simple) plans, starting with my No. 1 Auto-Pilot Sales Plan. My long-term charts show four key weeks to make cash sales. In 2026, the first was March 20, the second was April 17, the third was May 15, and the last was June 19. With this basic plan, you simply sell 25% of the cash crop on Wednesday of those key weeks. This is a Time Plan, not a Price Plan.

The No. 2 version of this plan is even easier, has less risk, and possibly offers more reward. Here it is:

For 10 consecutive weeks, you sell 10% of your cash corn and soybeans every Wednesday. You start the first week of April and wrap up cash sales by the second week of June. This timing means you take advantage of the usual seasonal pattern in the corn and soybean markets, and you are sold out before the July/August debacle we have seen the last several years. If prices rally in July and August, I would focus on getting some new crop sold. Fancy? No. But any plan is better than hold-and-hope.

Final Thoughts

This year, I am optimistic that prices are likely to move higher from the July/August lows into the end of the year. If you are forced to sell at these low prices, try to re-own using long-call options or futures. The price and profit outlook into the spring and summer is quite bullish. •

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. •

Source: Barchart