

Farmers are consumers too

Written by Rick Palkowitsh, Board Member for Colorado Corn Growers Association

Farmers are consumers too. We grow the grain and sell it by the bushel. When I go to the grocery store, I am amazed at the amount of corn I sold for less than a dime is enough to fill a box of corn flakes that sells for \$4. After decades of low prices, I have finally been able to sell my corn for more per bushel. What used to cost four cents in the corn flakes now costs eight cents, an increase of one percent on the \$4 box on the shelf.

Food and fuel increases have changed the way we live. Like every family, we pay attention to what we buy and where we shop. The hardest part is the news I read blaming the high price of food on farmers. If that were true, the recent drop in commodities like corn, would cause the price of food to go down. While the corn price fell by half, the price of corn flakes and everything else in the grocery store stayed high. When I read the business news, I see record profits for food companies. These are the guys who take my eight cents of corn and turn it into a \$4 box of cornflakes. They know how to turn a good profit with my corn.

What I don't understand is how these companies can blame farmers for food prices—the hands that keep America well fed, keep them in business with the grain that feeds their hefty earnings. If they are able to make record profits, I guess that is good for them, although I don't like the price I pay for groceries. But why can't they be honest with people about the money they make and not blame farmers whose hard work makes it possible for them to stay in business?