

## Letter from the Executive Director, Agribusiness

Happy New Year to all my colleges at ACI. As you all know ACI Agribusinesses is always looking forward to introduce new and innovative products to our product line. Today I would like to talk about GrainPro GrainSafe, a one-tone capacity storage solution made from heavy duty, all-weather capable PVC with a rugged plastic casing for extra durability. The GrainSafe's inner compartment is completely gastight when sealed providing total hermetic protection of stored seeds and crops.

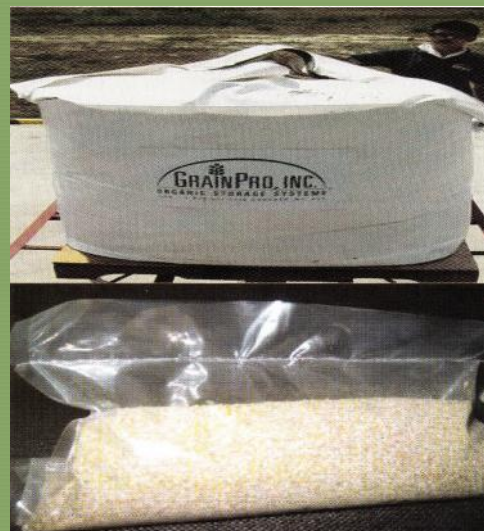
GrainPro's patented hermetic technology allows organic storage of dry agricultural commodities. It offers the benefits of complete protection from insect damage, rodent damage, moisture damage, molds, fungi and its consequent health hazards without the use of harmful fumigants and other chemicals. The benefits of the product are as follows.

### Product Benefits:

- Convenient, reliable and quick set-up storage system ideal for seeds and other dry commodities
- Easy loading and discharging
- Discharge desired quantity at any time, while still keeping hermetic protection
- Rodent protection
- Proven benefits of GrainPro's hermetic technology
- A green technology, eliminates the use of fumigants and prevents cross infestation of stocks
- Reliable storage system that offers complete product protection from contamination, insects, moisture, oxidation, and molds

On the other hand, low cost Super Grainbags are intended for re-sealable safe storage of dry commodities in reusable or disposable bags in sizes from 10-1000 Kg capacity. SuperGrainbags act as a gas and moisture-proof barrier and larger sizes may be placed inside any convenient protective cover such as woven polypropylene or paper bags for physical protection. The distinctive gas barrier properties of the multi-layer plastic used for the bags, enable excellent protection against ingress of water vapor, while retaining low O<sub>2</sub> and high CO<sub>2</sub> levels created by the respiration of the commodity.

I am happy to inform you all that ACI Motors has introduced GrainPro and is working as their marketing partner in Bangladesh. We hope this year, we bring more innovation by introducing new products in the market and further enhance ACI Agribusinesses' brand image as a leading player in the agriculture industry.



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## Low Rice Prices Put Farmers in Tight Spot

### Farmers loose interest in paddy farming as their purchasing power erodes.

A low price of rice has brought comfort to many, but not to Abdul Hai, a small farmer in Pabna. Rather, the reduced prices have blotted out much of his happiness he earned by growing the staple food. In February last year, Hai was worried over an erosion of his purchasing capacity amid the falling prices of paddy. His anxieties deepened in the later parts of the year due to a higher yield in the following harvesting seasons and the prices of rice continued to remain lower than those in the previous year. All the money that received from selling rice was spent on household needs. He is not alone. All the rice growers bore the brunt of reduced prices due to the higher yield since the harvest of aman in 2011. Higher stocks at public warehouses and the government's sale of rice at subsidised rates also added to their woes. Record production, a slump in import bills and rice output rose nearly 1 percent to record 3.38 crore tonnes in fiscal 2011-12 from 3.37 crore tonnes the previous year. The rise in production made the country almost self-sufficient in food and that was possible mainly due to farmers' hard work, favourable weather and the government's support by means of subsidised fertiliser and quality seeds. At the same time, food grains' import bills also fell by \$1 billion to \$925 million during 2011-12 from the previous year, according to LC (letters of credit) settlement data by Bangladesh Bank. Production during the first two crop seasons of aus and aman is also expected to be good in the current fiscal year, 2012-13. Food and Agriculture Organisation in a recent forecast said production of aman, the second biggest crop after boro, may be 1.3 crore tonnes this year, up from 1.28 crore tonnes a year ago.

### Low impact of government purchase

The increased output prospect has kept the prices of rice down till date. On December 22, the prices of rice, depending on quality and variety, were up to 12.77 percent lower than the same day a year ago in the markets of Dhaka, according to Trading Corporation of Bangladesh. The low prices continue at a time when farmers have to spend higher on irrigation and tilling due to a hike in electricity, diesel prices and labor costs. To protect farmers from losses, the food ministry bought rice from the domestic market, mainly from millers. On the other hand, it also kept distributing rice through various safety net schemes, including the Open Market Sale. The result is no impact on the prices.

### Impact of low prices

The low price of paddy is a big concern as it has brought down farmers' income. Farmers produce more crops but do not get fair prices. The momentum of increasing production cannot be sustained by making the farmers disappointed. Farmers who produce surplus may shift from rice cultivation. At the same time, majority of producers, who depend on rice, are poverty-stricken. The government should also consider their interests. The country is rice-surplus with the prices in the domestic market remaining below the current international prices. Rice exports could have helped bring a bullish trend in the domestic market. But the government appears to be reluctant in taking the risk. Increased production of industrial commodities in the past three-four years reflected the rising domestic demand and this growth will not sustain unless farmers are in a good condition. The government should target the prices not the quantity, while planning to buy from the market. He said the government should declare a price range.

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## **Using the Sun to Crack Almonds**

Conergy Projects Group has broken ground on a 725 kW photovoltaic system for T&P Farms out of Arbuckle, California. The system will power T&P Farms almond hulling and shelling operations – allowing the power of the sun to supply the energy needed to “crack” the nuts out of their shells so they can go into your mouth. The system will supply T&P with 95% of the energy they use and allow T&P to offset thousands in high utility costs.



## **New Urban Farming Structure Breaks Ground**



Developers of a new concept in urban farming, the Plantagon Greenhouse, broke ground for the first structure in Sweden this week. The new type of greenhouse for vertical farming in cities provides a way to use excess heat and CO<sub>2</sub> from industries while growing crops.

The greenhouse is being built in Linköping, Sweden and is expected to be completed in 12-16 months, according to a statement released by Plantagon International. The plant will produce vegetables from the recycled resources. Linköping is the chosen site for the first vertical greenhouse. Linköping will be the first city in the world to test the new technology and the systems involved to develop sustainable agricultural solutions for future cities

According to Hans Hassle, CEO of Plantagon, this ceremony marks the realization of the vision of creating functional sustainable solutions for the growing cities of today and tomorrow, where food can be grown in the cities in a resource-smart way, making use of the special conditions of the city.



### ACI Motors Successfully Tests R24 Power Tiller in Natore

Recently ACI Motors have introduced **R24** power tiller which is the most advanced power tiller available in the industry with the motto "Save time, more cultivation, more income". In December 2012 ACI motors arranged a field testing program for its new advance model **R24** power tiller which is a 24 blade & 16 HP power tiller. Local mechanics, farmers, dealers and expert team were present in the test. The result of the test was highly appreciated because the results were promising. Fuel and time efficiency with better cultivation was proven in the field test that created buzz in the field. In the test it was proven that **R24** Power tiller can cover approx. 20 to 22 percent more cultivation compared to the traditional 18 blade power tiller. Because of 24 blades it also provides better depth (1 inch deeper than usual) in cultivation with 5 to 10 percent fuel efficient compared to the traditional model. Farmers will be highly benefited from **R24** because of better cultivation and higher return on investment in shortest possible time.



### White Star Cauliflower Variety Showed Excellent Result in Lalmonirhat



White Star: a cauliflower variety of ACI Seed has performed admirably across the country. However, recently we found the variety excellent in Lalmonirhat. The variety was found satisfactory in card colour, compactness and its card weight (700-1000gm). The farmer and dealer were satisfied by observing the field performance of this variety. The returns of this variety were also satisfactory for the farmer due its shape, size and card weight. Moreover, this variety can generate more revenue in coming season with the satisfaction of its all stakeholders.

## ACI Cropex Puts More Concentration on Farmer Alignment Products

ACI Cropex has sold farmer alignment product 67% and imported products 33% and they desire similar sales in 2013. In this year, to scale up farmer alignment product, Cropex is going to start contract farming of various crops and vegetables for bulk sale.

## ACI Animal Health Launches Four New Products

ACI Animal Health introduced a new product named Pondkleen for the Aqua sector. It is used to remove different harmful gas like ammonia, hydrogen sulfide and methane from culture pond. Pondkleen does this by binding the ammonia molecules and nitrites, transforming them into other nitrogen compound that is utilized by the zooplankton and phytoplankton in the ponds as a nitrogen source for its development. It increases the survival rate of fish and shrimp and keep the PH level in water stable. Moreover it also increases the feed conversion ratio. Moreover ACI Animal Health also launched CD-vet (Water soluble Calcium supplement with vitamin D3 powder) for the first time in Bangladesh, Calvet – DB bolus which ensure balanced calcium phosphorus ratio for the cattle portfolio and Gut-Fix Powder which improves microbial health as well as intestinal health for the poultry portfolio.



## ACI Fertilizer Relaunched Bumper Monogold and Conducted Successful Promotional Campaign of Excel Gold

Re launching of Monozinc as Bumper Monogold

Monozinc was re launched in newly attractive packaging in the name of Bumpur Monogold to gain better share in the market.

Successful Promotional Campaign of Excel Gold

Moreover ACI fertilizer successfully promoted Excel Gold which is an amino acid based chelated liquid mixed fertilizer. Considering the market potentiality of the product, fifty people were engaged to promote the product. As such successful demonstration of Excel Gold took place in different places of the country and heavy promotion of the product took place.



## ACI Agribusinesses Participated in Agro Tech Fair 2012



ACI Agribusinesses has participated in Agro-Tech Bangladesh - 2012 at Rural Development Academy, Bogra from 13 -16 December 2012. The programme was jointly organized by both RDA and LIMRA Trade Fairs & Exhibitions Pvt. Ltd. Honorable Minister, Ministry of Industry inaugurated the Fair. The different business units of ACI Agribusinesses such as ACI Seed, ACI Fertilizer, ACI Motors, ACI Animal Health, ACI Premiaflex, ACI Seed, ACI Cropex and ACI Cropcare and Public Health participated in the fair. ACI Agribusinesses displayed its wide array of products in two separate stalls, displaying a three sixty degree solution to farmer's problems. The stall was greatly appreciated by the visitors and lots of farmers and potential clients learned about our products and greatly appreciated the response and guidance provided by ACI Agribusinesses individuals present.

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*Prosperity through Food  
Security*

*ACI Agribusinesses, the leading agriculture integrator in Bangladesh, is dedicated to gaining prosperity of Bangladesh through food security. ACI Agribusinesses offers complete solutions to farmers and also educates them about the technical know-how.*

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