

It's more than just a cover crop



# Family & Farm

- Farm: Diversified Crops & small square bale business in combination with Dad
- 3 crop rotation- oats, sweet corn, canning peas
- Livestock on farm include butcher cattle and custom grazing
- Operate a cover crop sales and ground application business



# Things to cover

- A brief background of tillage transition and cover crop use
- Adding Value to from cover crop use:
  - Yield, profitability and inputs since adoption of cover crop use
  - Adding revenue stream from grazing
  - Generating income from seed sales and custom hire



# The Transition





# The years it began

- Fall 2014- FIRST cover crop; EQIP contract of 130lbs Winter Rye
- Fall 2015- Cereal rye on all corn stalk going to beans
- Spring 2017- first no-till corn. Continued some strip-till



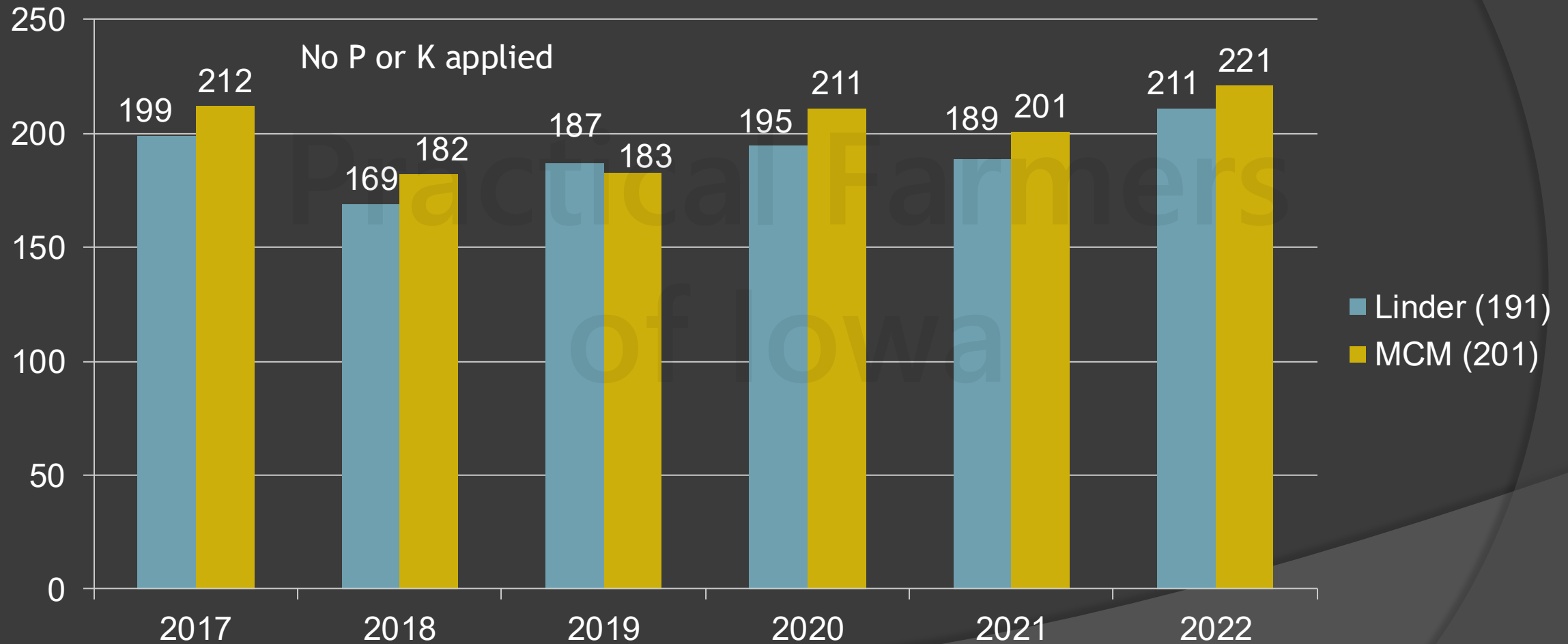
# Figures for Corn Profit

## Corn- 2021

- 2pass tillage: \$35
- Dry Fert. Spreading + Fertilizer: \$8+
- Fungicide + App: \$25
- Linder potential expenses:
- U of M Sustainability approach to Fertilizer
- Cover crop seed & app: ~ \$30-35
- May still Strip Till - \$23

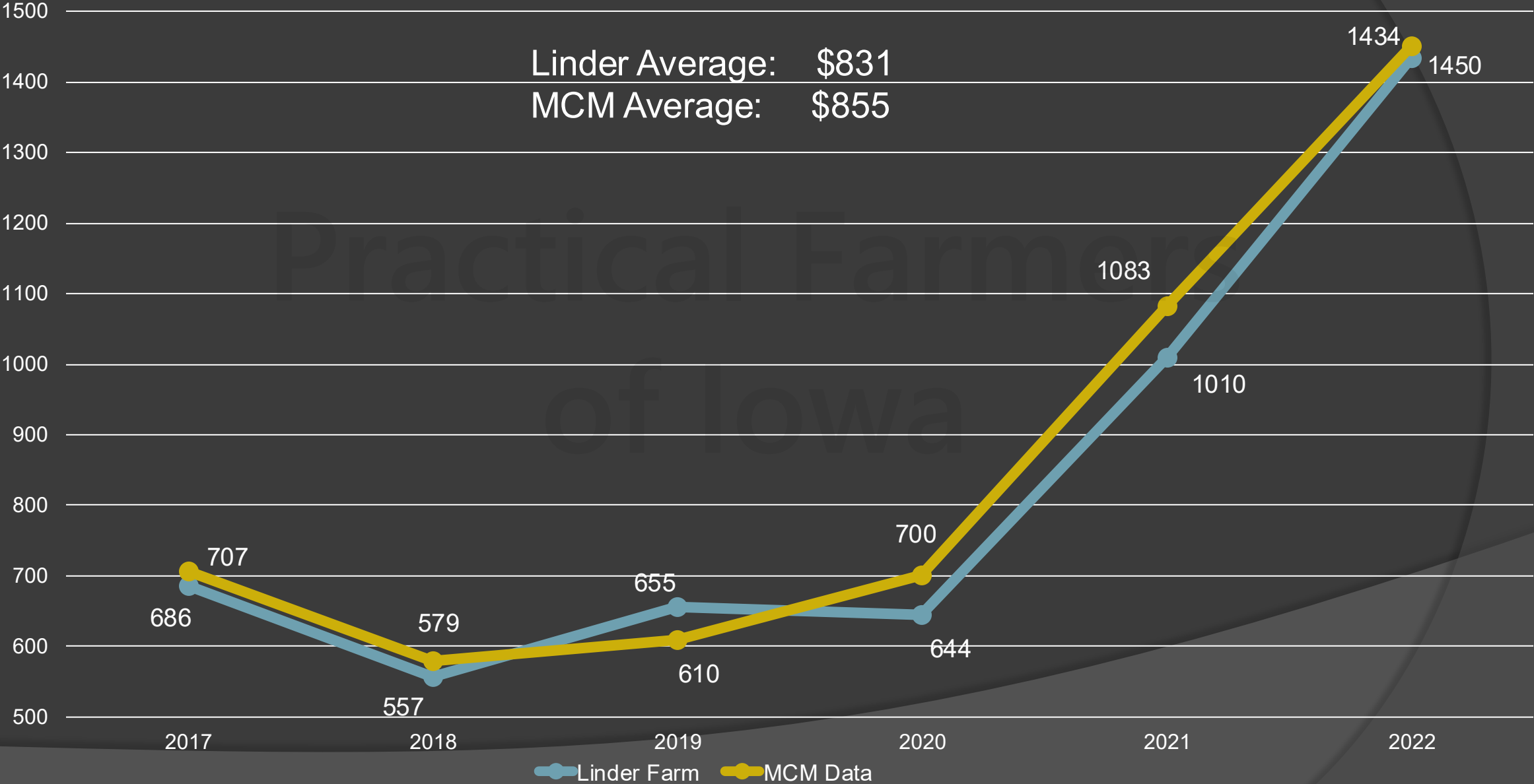
CBOT price used for calculating Gross Revenue

# No-till Corn Yields



# CORN Net Revenue

Linder Average: \$831  
MCM Average: \$855





# Figures for Soybeans Profit

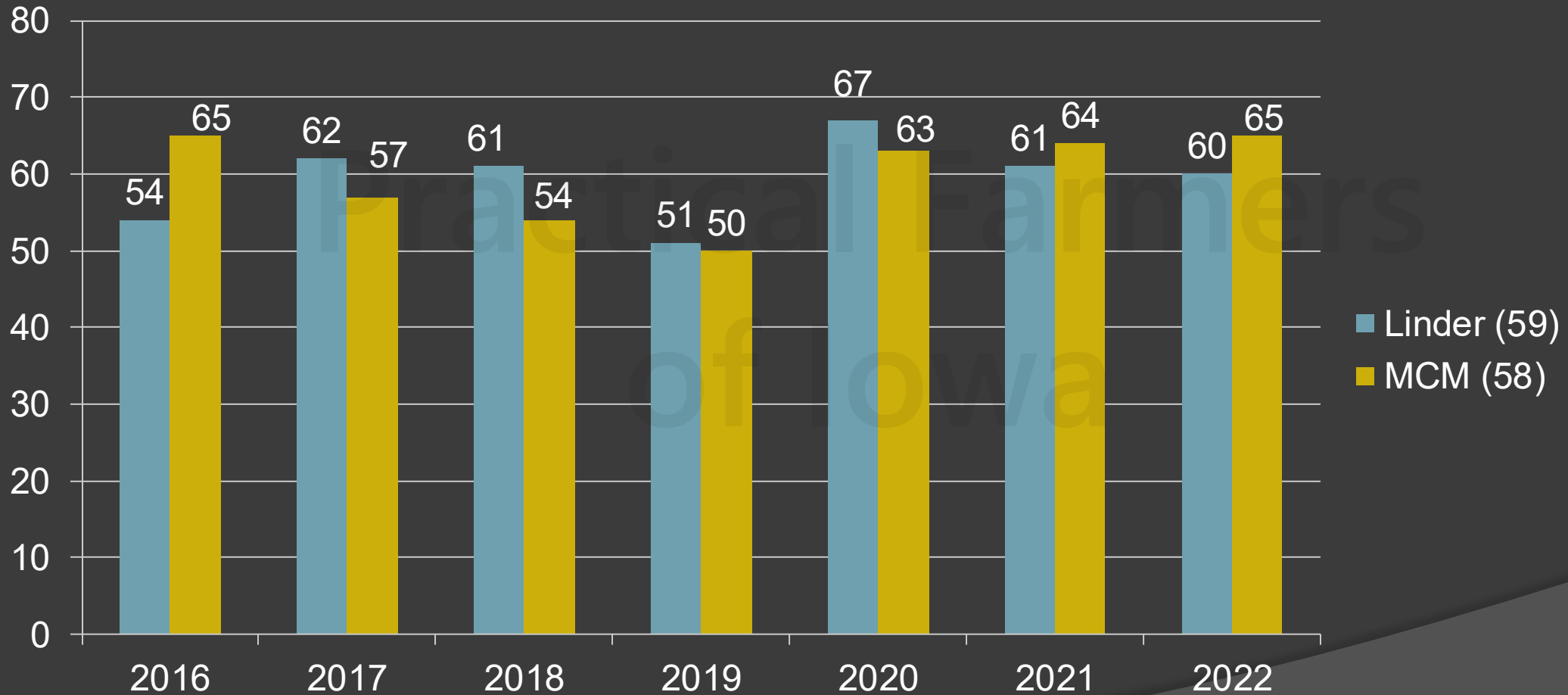
Soybeans- 2021

- 2 pass tillage: \$40
- Seed treatment: \$15?
- Fungicide + App: \$25

Linder potential Soybean cost:

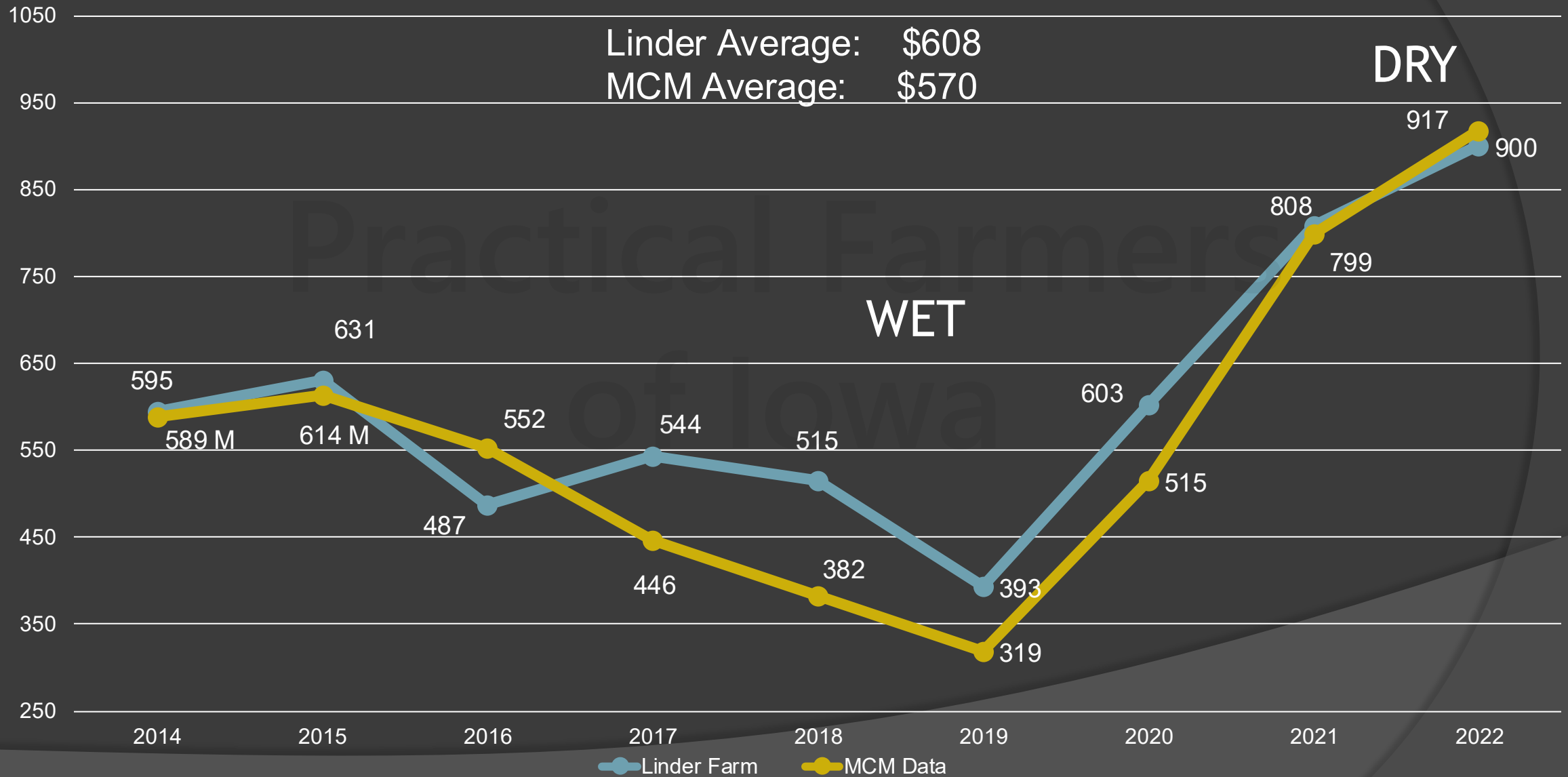
Cover Crop seed and app: ~\$30-35

# Notill Soybean Yield





## SOYBEAN Net Revenue



# Integrating livestock-

- Converting cover crops to manure
- Residue Management





# Intro to Cocktail Cover

Practical  
of lo



# Grazing Figures:

- Cover crop: \$40, plus Drill @ \$25= \$65
- 2022: \$72/acre gross revenue
- Daily moves on moderate cocktail
- 2023: \$45/acre gross revenue
  - 5 paddocks on 100 acres
  - Maybe slightly less feed than 2022?
- What about- soil benefits and manure benefits?
- Funding for fence construction through MN Clean Water money and/or NRCS



# Make them work for you





# Grazing after Corn & Soybeans?

Consider V3 seeding or  
wide rows





# Temporary Water Solutions





# The easy opportunities:

Doesn't have to be expensive:

- Poly wire and pig tails
- Cheap plastic "post"





# What if I plant a cocktail & don't want cows?

- Chop it down for soil food
- Is there a cow owner to do the work?
- If you're not grazing, be mindful of your mix and potential biomass
  - Legumes for N
  - Brassica for quick decomposition
  - Grass for diversity and scavenge





# Adding value through seed and application

(A form of employment beside the farm)



# The Beginning of Something

Sub-dealing with a mentor/dealer and Industry support from Saddle Butte/TJ Kartes

Started by moving a load or two of rye through an air plane



# Transition to Custom application

- How we got the idea:
  - V4 seeding
- What it turned in to: 3600 acres fall ap





# Custom application today

Giving the customer what they want





# Things You'll Learn Custom Application

- Navigating farmer directions “You can’t miss it!”
- Hitting things you didn’t know were there, and sometimes they didn’t either
- You’ll break stuff
- Some think you’re getting rich and charge too much



# Things to make it a successful business

- Find a good way to keep fields/customers organized
- Build relationships with those who do the opposite of you:  
Aerial, drill, vt, ground applicators
- Build relationships with those who do the same thing as you
- People usually buy from YOU, not the company you sell for/represent





# For the farmer/customer

- Make decisions plenty of time BEFORE application starts
- Respect the applicator
- Provide quality maps
  - Climate maps and google pins not always that useful
- Be patient
- For both parties: good communication

# Keep it in perspective

If you quit now...  
you'll end up right back  
where you first began.

And when you first  
began, you were desperate  
to be where you are  
**RIGHT NOW.**

**KEEP GOING!**



Thank you

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