

## Because We First Received

By: Cori Wittman

We're a headstrong bunch in the agriculture community. If we weren't, we would have chosen a different career path that doesn't rely heavily on defying nature year in and year out. But we love to feed the world. To be the helpers. The hard workers. The ones spending early mornings and late nights delivering calves, putting up hay, harvesting crops and doing the million other things that the average person doesn't know is required of a farmer or rancher. Why? For our families and for our communities.

I've seen this phenomenon of generosity modeled by my parents and their farm partners, by our neighbors both locally and globally, by many that may not be farming but have pursued careers in agriculture. The ag community, in my experience, is a generous one by nature.

But are we as good at *receiving* as we are at giving?

It's uncomfortable to be on the receiving end. Especially for our stubborn, self-sufficient breed. Believe me, after spending five years as a missionary reliant on the support and generosity of others, I know this well. But I eventually came to understand that **receiving well is a beautiful and vital dimension of generosity.**

It's remarkably easy to focus either on the giver (how noble!) or on the needy recipient (the poor dear, how sad). But when we stop and recognize that **we can only give because we have first received**, the gap between the two narrows considerably.

When we practice gratitude for the many things we have received—love, grace, June rains, spectacular sunsets, forgiveness, education, opportunity—our giving is seasoned with humility rather than pride. Our generosity is sustained by the knowledge and beauty of first having received. It is a well that can't run dry.

Top of my gratitude list this week: a good, good Father, and a really incredible dad. What's on yours?