

SPRING 2015

*Ag Leader®*

# Insights

PRECISION FARMING MAGAZINE

**THE ROAD  
TO RECOVERY**

**INNOVATOR  
OR GUINEA PIG**

**A LEGACY NURTURED**



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SPRING 2015



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# IS THE SOUND OF PROFITABILITY MUSIC TO YOUR EARS?



Not long ago, I heard someone compare our company and industry to the auto industry. The comparison was, when you buy a car, it already comes equipped with an audio system that plays music. For some people, that works just fine. For others who have higher expectations and specific needs, there is an aftermarket for high-end systems that can replace the standard equipped one already factory installed. For those people, when their budget allows, they typically upgrade so they can have a system that has the high-end features they need.

The parallel obviously being that a lot of farmers buy tractors with precision systems already installed. For many that don't want access to higher-end features, that's just fine. For others who expect better and need more, an Ag Leader system is a necessity.

I agree with some of this comparison, but I'm not sure it is entirely accurate. It's great that our products are held to such high esteem. However, there are a few differences.

First, a premium audio system is strictly a luxury item. It

doesn't offer the benefits of lower gas mileage. It doesn't get you to your destination any faster or more safely. It doesn't reduce your maintenance costs.

Ag Leader products, on the other hand, are designed to help collect data and improve your decision-making so that you can be more profitable. Replacing your standard-equipped precision system with an Ag Leader one often allows you to collect more accurate data, more precisely control your field equipment, improve performance, reduce input costs and increase yield potential. So, where a new audio system is a luxury expenditure, upgrading to an Ag Leader system is an investment that will show a payback long into the future.

Additionally, when you install a new audio system, it likely just stays there. Every time you get into that vehicle, you can listen to great music. But hop into the driver's seat of another vehicle and you're at the mercy of its audio system.

One of the great benefits of an Ag Leader system is that it works with virtually any color of equipment. So you can have a green tractor, a blue planter, a yellow sprayer and a red combine and still use the Ag Leader system in all of them. That means you have the benefit of flexibility when deciding what field equipment you want to operate. You're not stuck trying to figure out how to make a system installed in one color tractor work with a different colored implement.

That's been one of the benefits we've touted for years, because



we've always felt that giving our farmer customers control of their operation is what is in their best interests ... and ours.

If you've been considering upgrading the equipment in your machine shed, it might make more sense to look at the more economical option of upgrading the precision technology from a factory-installed system to one of ours.

Visit with your local Ag Leader dealer. I guarantee you won't be disappointed. You'll be singing the praises of lower input costs and higher profits from inside your cab. And that's music to my ears.

*Al Myers*

Al Myers

# INNOVATOR *or* GUINEA PIG?





## No matter the title, for nearly two decades, this Maryland farmer has been one of the first in the community to adopt new technology.

**A**s most likely the first producer in the state of Maryland to own an Ag Leader yield monitoring system and the first again to utilize RTK guidance, Jonathan “Jon” Quinn doesn’t know whether to call himself an innovator or a “guinea pig.” Either way, Quinn says he wouldn’t go back to a time when he didn’t have the latest that ag technology has to offer.

Based near Warwick, Maryland, Quinn is the fourth generation to manage the family operation, having taken it over from his father around 27 years ago. Although one field has a center pivot irrigation unit on it, the majority of the 3,000 acres he currently farms consists of dryland parcels devoted to corn, soybeans, wheat, barley, lima beans and non-GMO food grade beans.

“The farm totaled just a little over 500 acres when I took it over,” Quinn explained. “But most of it is still within a 15-mile area. I’d love to be able to farm just 500 acres like Dad did and have the lower level of stress that comes with only 500 acres but you can’t make a living on that little ground with traditional row crops.”

The need to add and manage more acres with each passing generation was part of the catalyst that led Quinn to adopt ag technology nearly two decades ago, when he started monitoring crop yields by the acre.

“I bought my first Ag Leader yield monitor in 1996,” said Quinn, who currently serves on the American Farm Bureau technology committee. “I believe it was just called a Model 2000 at that time. Later, I got a PF3000, which I’m still using in one of the combines. In addition to that one, I have two Versa displays and one InSight, which I’m getting ready to replace with a new Ag Leader Integra display.”

While Quinn continues to use Ag Leader yield monitoring systems in his John Deere 9500 and 9750 combines, he has since added a satellite-assisted steering system on the newer combine to help with guidance, especially when cutting dusty

crops with a large header. In the meantime, all four tractors — two John Deere models and two Case IH models — are equipped with RTK guidance.

“That’s another reason I went with Ag Leader,” he said. “My neighbor calls me a chameleon because I run different colors; but Ag Leader is compatible with all of them. Another factor is the great service I get from Hooper, Inc., which is my dealer for both Ag Leader and my Case IH equipment.”

Although the auto-steering systems certainly do their part in relieving stress, Quinn says the real value comes from the AutoSwath system he added approximately six years ago.

“I’m currently using a Versa display in my main planting tractor for sectional control of both the planter row units and the starter fertilizer,” he added. “It’s also serving as the planter monitor, running the GeoSteer auto-steer system and controlling the variable-rate seeding on corn acres.”

Meanwhile, an InSight display in another tractor is used with RTK guidance to plant soybeans in wheat stubble and lima beans in barley stubble. In both cases, satellite guidance helps avoid the skips and overlaps that can occur when planting a second crop in standing residue. However, Quinn stressed that RTK auto-guidance is just as valuable for sidedressing nitrogen right alongside the corn he planted earlier in the season. Although he has hopes of eventually using his Ag Leader system to variable-rate the amount of nitrogen injected in each grid, Quinn said that is still in the future.

One of the Versa display units, meanwhile, is used to control the auto-steer system on another tractor, while managing DirectCommand Spinner Spreader Control for a dry fertilizer spreader.

“The first big savings I noticed was on the starter fertilizer that I put on with



*“Since I added SeedCommand's AutoSwath feature, whatever I order for 50 acres is exactly what it takes.”*

— Jon Quinn, Maryland

the planter,” Quinn recalled. “Of course, the savings on seed has been equally dramatic. We don’t have any big, square fields around here, so there isn’t a field anywhere that doesn’t have point rows on at least one side. Having AutoSwath automatically shut off seed and fertilizer at the headlands and points adds up to a fairly dramatic savings.”

“It used to be I’d order a couple extra bags of seed per field just to make sure I didn’t run out,” he said. “And then you might still end up running after another bag or two. Since I added SeedCommand’s AutoSwath feature, whatever I order for 50 acres is exactly what it takes.”



*"The last two years I've been variable-rate seeding, it's probably increased yields by around 20 bushels per acre."*

— Jon Quinn, Maryland

**7% AVERAGE  
INPUT  
SAVINGS**

**FROM AUTOSWATH**

**= 2<sup>YEAR</sup>  
ROI\***

\*University Study

Calculate your ROI with AutoSwath at [agleader.com/products/directcommand](http://agleader.com/products/directcommand).

On the other hand, Quinn is quick to point out that variable-rate seeding really hasn't saved any seed on its own. Instead, it has just redistributed based on soil type, past yield history and irrigation, which means some areas get more seed while others get less.

"I only variable-rate corn and the seeding rate typically ranges from 28,000 to 32,000 seeds per acre on dryland fields," he explained, noting that he plants about 1,000 acres of corn annually. "On irrigated fields, I'll bump that up to as much as 36,000 seeds per acre."

"It has made a difference, though," he continued. "Last year was one of the best years ever for corn. Still, considering the last two years I've been variable-rate seeding, it's probably increased yields by around 20 bushels per acre. Of course, the row shutoffs have helped, too, since you don't have extra plants on



the headlands and point rows competing with each other.

The corn around the edges yields just as well as corn in the middle of the field." Quinn says he does have his own Ag Leader SMS software, too, which would allow him to write his own prescriptions. However, given the time it already takes to manage 3,000 acres, he says he has chosen to have one of his suppliers create prescription maps.

So what's Quinn's next goal as a guinea pig/innovator?

"I want to do a few more things to better match soil type to the input prescriptions," he explained. "We're already taking yield maps and overlaying them on the soil maps; but one of the things I'm experimenting with now is using a Veris® machine to determine the electrical conductivity of our soils so we can more precisely map the variation in soil types, considering that the NRCS maps are rather out of date. This should also allow us to write a more accurate seeding prescription."

Fortunately, he knows that his Ag Leader systems will be right there to support any endeavors he has in mind. ■



# A LEGACY NURTURED

*"There's not a lot of long-term family farms around anymore, not like there should be."*

— Dale Bent, Michigan

There was a time when the transfer of family-owned land from one generation to the next was a given. A farmer would teach his children how to raise crops and animals and tend to the business side of things, and upon heading out to pasture later in life, he could rest easy knowing the family farm was in good hands.

Of course, this isn't as common in America as it once was. Other professional opportunities outside agriculture are luring younger generations to the city. Sometimes the cost and stress of farming becomes too much, prompting farmers to sell off their land. In some cases, a next generation simply isn't in waiting to inherit the family farm.

"There's not a lot of long-term family farms around anymore, not like there should be," said Dale Bent, a 55-year-old farmer whose family has owned and farmed the same land in southwestern Michigan since his great grandfather migrated from Germany in 1842. "It's unfortunate. But it just turned out that way."







*"It means a lot to us to keep the farm in the family. Our heritage means a great deal to us. We have centennial farms that we'd like to keep in the family for a long time."* — Dale Bent, Michigan

In the beginning, the Bent farm was home to a variety of animals as they raised pigs, sheep and dairy cows, as well as feed crops for the animals. Eventually, the focus shifted exclusively to hogs, until the late 1980s when Bent and his father, June, decided to leave the hog industry and start growing seed corn.

Today, Bent, along with his 87-year-old father and 18-year-old son, Forrest, farm 2500 acres of premium land — half of it corn and soybeans, the other half seed corn for Pioneer. In that regard, they're not alone. Most of the farmers in the area have seed contracts with either Pioneer or Monsanto.

"This is the largest seed corn growing area in all of North America," said Bent, who's had a seed contract with Pioneer since the early 1990s. "Competition for land is very high around here because Pioneer and Monsanto raise so much seed corn in the area. Up here land will sell for \$10,000 an acre because of the competition. Because of that, seed corn growers have a lot of pride. It takes a good farmer to get the seed contracts."

Bent estimates that Pioneer has some 50 seed corn farmers in the area and that Monsanto likely has about the same. The companies, which have processing

plants in the area, pay the farmers a competitive premium for the seed corn. This suits Bent just fine, as growing seed corn, he said, entails a lot more work than traditional row crops.

"There's a lot of work that goes into growing seed corn. You don't just plant it and spray it a few times a year. Sometimes you have to plant two, three times. Some fields you spray up to seven times a year. Then you have to detassel it. Overall, it's just a lot more time-consuming," Bent said.

Just about every piece of equipment Bent uses comes from John Deere, which he





attributes to the fact there is a Deere dealer located less than four miles from his farm. When it comes to sprayers, however, he has always relied on Hagie models equipped with Raven monitors. Recently, though, he upgraded to the Hagie STS 12 sprayer and switched to an Ag Leader Integra display with DirectCommand.

"My salesman, Chad Middlemas, pushed me hard to switch to Ag Leader because he knew I didn't care for the Raven (monitors) 100 percent," Bent said. "I wanted more accuracy and ease of use, because with the seed corn we put quite a few hours on the sprayer. Using the Ag Leader display has been a lot nicer. I've really noticed a difference when spraying soybeans, too. Auto-steer seems to work a lot better than the Raven system did."

According to Bent, center pivot irrigation is ubiquitous in the area because rolling hills make flood irrigation impractical and active aquifers make water readily available. For example, Bent said he could

*"I wanted more accuracy and ease of use, because with the seed corn we put quite a few hours on the sprayer. Using the Ag Leader has been a lot nicer. I've really noticed a difference when spraying soybeans, too. Auto-steer seems to work a lot better than the Raven system did."*

— Dale Bent, Michigan

dig a well about 150 feet down and get 1,200 gallons per minute. This accessibility to water leads to greater yield consistency from year to year, a major reason why Pioneer and Monsanto are so attracted to the area — an area Bent's family has farmed for over 170 years. With three sons — ages 18, 15 and 5 months — the legacy of the Bent farm may very well continue for another few generations. That's certainly the hope.

"Hopefully in our case, my sons take an interest and keep things going," Bent said. "It means a lot to us to keep the farm in the family. Our heritage means a great deal to us. We have centennial farms that we'd like to keep in the family for a long time." ■

# 5 NEW FEATURES of DIRECTCOMMAND

## 1 NEW WAY TO MANAGE PRODUCT MIXES

Create collections of products that are typically used for specific purposes throughout the year and store them in the display (e.g., pre-emergence corn, post-emergence beans). Built-in calculator identifies how much of each ingredient is needed to achieve the user's desired tank volume.

## 2 NEW ISOBUS LIQUID CONTROL MODULE

Compatible with ISOBUS standards for Virtual Terminal and Task Control, allows using the system with other brands of Virtual Terminal and Task Control compatible displays.



## 3 NEW CONTAINER SEQUENCING

Container Sequencing for the Ag Leader Integra display allows application of the same product (discrete products or blends) sequentially from multiple containers on a spinner/spreader machine.



## 4 NEW EASY EXPORT SMART AgFiniti REPORTS TO AGFINITI

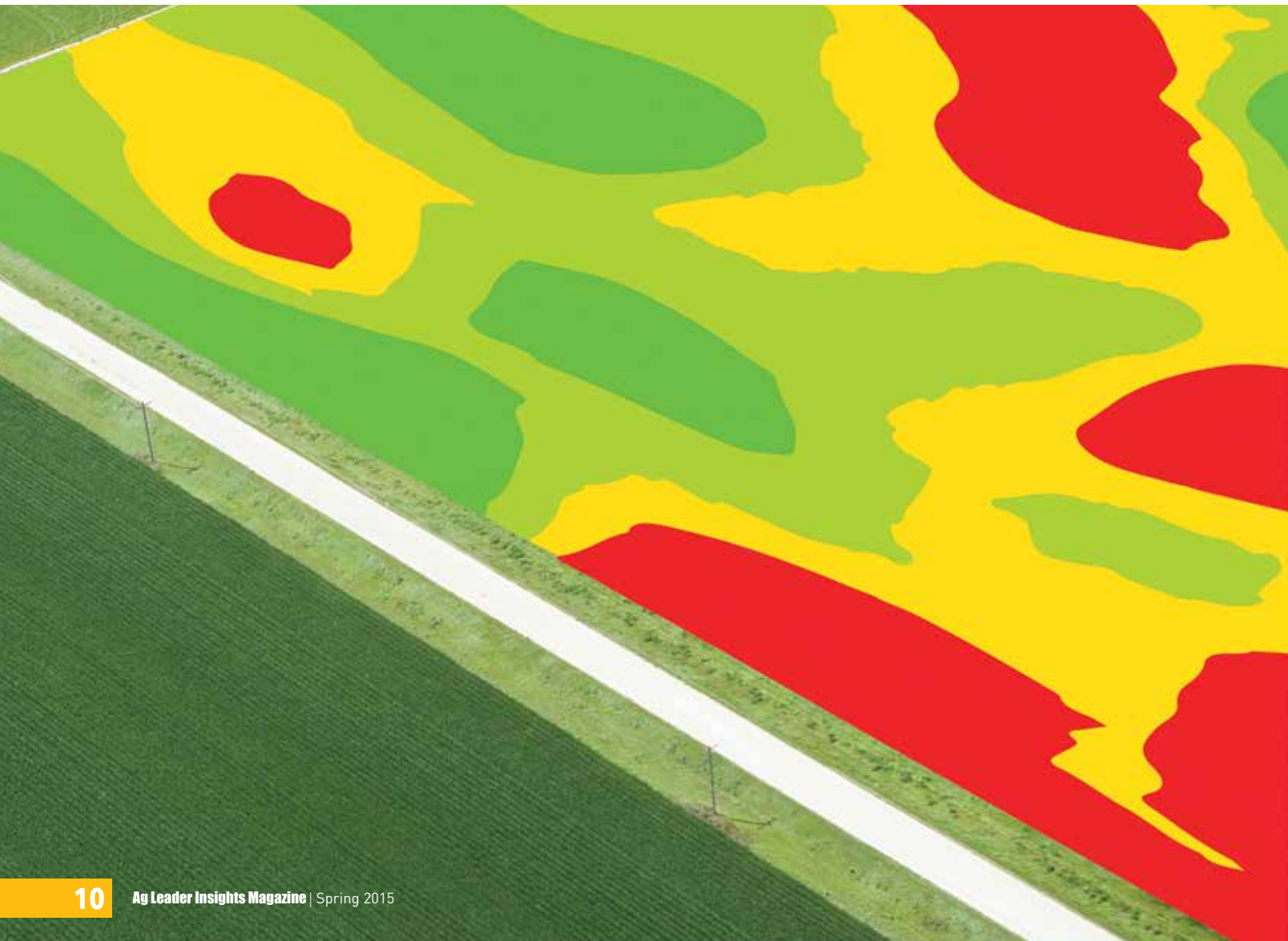
Simplify application reporting (both liquid and granular) with an easy way to generate detailed Smart Reports and export to AgFiniti for government recordkeeping.

## 5 NEW SUMMARY SCREEN TRACKING

Filter application data by field, event, configuration, operator or date. Batch Smart Reports by day, week, month or entire season for easy recordkeeping.

# MANAGEMENT ZONE CREATION

Precision ag data has an immense value for making management decisions. It's about improving your operation, driven by your collected data. And it's no surprise, the data you collect has tremendous value beyond the benefits you see in the cab. When deciding which fields need management zones, it's best to choose the fields that show large amounts of variability, as management zones benefit some fields more than others.





## STEP 1 Identify data to be used for creating management zones

Management zones can be created using many different sets of data, including: soil fertility, average yield (3+ years' worth), irrigation practice, topography, field history and more. Often times, management zones are created using a combination of maps.

*If using SMS Advanced, multiple maps can be combined into a single zone, such as topography, yield and fertility. SMS Advanced can be used to average multiple years of harvest data. When averaging data with varying yield ranges, such as two different crops, normalizing is recommended. This will convert differences in yield ranges to a common scale.*

## STEP 2 Create and divide the management map into zones

Zone 1 will typically represent the most productive zone and Zone 4 the lowest producing zone.

Understanding a zone's productivity along with yield stability can be very beneficial when managing your zones. Coefficient of variation (CV) is another value calculated when averaging multiple years of harvest data. High CV values indicate yield fluctuation from year to year; lower values indicate yield stability.

## STEP 3 Set up test areas

Set up test areas within the zones to determine response to different application rates. Use SMS desktop software to create a prescription map with test strips. For example, within Zone 1 add a couple low rate and high rate strips. Replicate this across all zones to have a good sample set of data for comparison against yield and profitability. Generally three or more replications are required for statistically sound results.

## STEP 4 Export to your precision ag display

Export the prescription to your precision ag display, such as an Ag Leader Integra display, for in-field control within your zones. Make sure to save your application data, as actual application may differ slightly from your prescription. You'll want accurate records for analysis later in the year.

## STEP 5 Analyze the results

After harvest is completed, overlay the application map over top of the harvest map, and using the SMS desktop software, determine yield response to the different test rates.

*Consider the cost associated with each application rate. For example, if you applied different rates of nitrogen within a zone and the higher rate of nitrogen resulted in a yield increase of 5 bu/ac, but cost an additional \$18/ac, assuming corn is worth \$3/bu your net is actually a loss of \$3/ac.*

## STEP 6 Make a plan for next year

Consult with trusted advisors and make a plan for next year. Perhaps that plan includes variable rate N based on your management zones. The key is, now you have some local data on which to base your management decision. Continue using test strips within your zones as a check that your decisions are working as intended.

**Consult with your local trusted advisor when generating management zones for agronomic advice. For more information and to view SMS resources and tutorials, visit the SMS resources page at [agleader.com](http://agleader.com).**



***Ag Leader®***

# FROM PRECISION FARMING PIONEER TO PRECISION FARMING... PIONEER





To understand the reason why Ag Leader got started, you have to go back to the rocky agriculture economy of the early 1980s.

American farmers were in the midst of the most severe economic crisis since the Great Depression. A perfect storm of farm debt, land and commodity price booms and busts, bad policy and high interest rates combined to drastically change the agriculture industry and rural America. At the height of the recession, as many as 250 farm families lost their farms to bankruptcy every day.

At the same time, companies that supplied products and services to farmers struggled as well. In fact, just like their farmer customers, most were just looking for ways to withstand the awful economy. Expensive investment in innovation and new technologies by these companies was nearly non-existent during those years, which was quite frustrating to ambitious product engineers who were working at these companies. Al Myers was one of those frustrated engineers.

While the 1980s were a bad time to be running a farm or a business in the agriculture industry, it was a great time for entrepreneurial types to start preparing for when things would turn around. That's exactly what Myers did. In his off hours, he started sketching different product ideas until he finally landed on one he thought had great potential – the yield monitor.

Myers suspected he wouldn't be the only one to find value in the idea. He spent six years prototyping and testing yield monitor concepts at home while he continued to work at his engineering job (Myers had a young family to support and needed the economic security of his day job).

After several years, he had a product he felt was worthy of the market. And, with the ag economy scratching its way back to stability, he felt the timing was right, too. In 1992, Myers felt the yield monitor market was promising enough to quit his day job. He left his engineering job and depleted his savings to start his new company, Ag Leader Technology.

The first year, he sold 10 yield monitors. Within four years, he sold more than 2,000 yield monitors, and the company's reputation started to spread among innovative farmers who saw the value in the information the yield monitor could provide. Over the next few years, the Ag Leader yield monitor would evolve and become the cornerstone upon which the precision farming industry would be built.

Fast-forward a short 20 years and the company, still owned and managed by Myers, is considered the leading innovator in the precision farming industry. Helping farmers collect and use data is still the company's mission, but the products have quickly evolved. Input controls, crop sensors, planter and application controls and water management tools have expanded Ag Leader's offerings.

But with more tools and data comes more need for support. It became apparent that farmers were swimming in the data they were collecting, creating another opportunity for Ag Leader: helping farmers use the data to make better decisions.



For years, SMS software has been one of the leading precision farming software packages. The combination of SMS Advanced, primarily developed for complex precision farming analysis by agronomists and crop consultants, and SMS Basic designed for farmer use has been a great system that tied the farmer together with their trusted crop advisor. Farmers could share their field information with their advisor and, together, they could develop strategies designed to maximize yield and profitability.

As technology has advanced, so has the importance of farmers' relationships with their local advisors. Technologies like variable rate and multi-hybrid planting, variable rate application, water management technologies, as well as new seed and crop protection technologies

have made it important for the farmer to be able to share his or her data with multiple partners, suppliers and service providers. For example, a farmer may work directly with an agronomist to plan input prescriptions, but will also need to be able to send those plans to a custom applicator who is working in fields 10 miles away.

At the same time, as many other companies are trying to move into the farm data area, they have done so using an approach that puts the control of the data into the hands of someone besides the grower. Ag Leader's approach? To put the decision power in the hands of the farmer.

Ag Leader's AgFiniti cloud-based storage and data management platform allows farmers to share only the data they want to

share, and only with the trusted advisors they want to share with. The service continues to evolve and expand with new capabilities that will allow the farmers to build even stronger relationships with their trusted advisors.

As more and more companies try to establish a foothold in the farm data management arena, it's important for growers to understand not only the agendas behind some of these offerings, but also their capabilities, expertise and experience, and their long-term commitment. AgFiniti was built on the same principle that Ag Leader started with more than two decades ago: helping farmers collect and use data from their own farms. ■

# NOW & THEN



## ***Ag Leader***®

A recent survey conducted by Farm Journal Media resulted in Ag Leader being chosen as the strongest brand in precision agriculture.

To view the survey, visit [farmjournalmedia.com/research-brand-quality/](http://farmjournalmedia.com/research-brand-quality/).



# THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

**T**rent Satterthwaite doesn't wear hooded sweatshirts much anymore. They're completely out of the question if he's going to be around heavy equipment. And who can blame him, really? In fall 2013, a pulley on a grain cleaner hooked the hood of the sweatshirt he was wearing and nearly cost him his left arm, if not much more than that.



Satterthwaite was able to pull himself free and while the hood and left sleeve of the sweatshirt were torn to shreds, he appeared to have escaped without any physical injury. At least so he thought.

"Luckily it didn't get hold of any skin or who knows," said Satterthwaite, a 55-year-old grain farmer from Chelsea, Michigan. "To this day, I won't wear a hooded sweatshirt if I'm going to be around moving equipment."

Satterthwaite hit the fields the following spring nursing a sore shoulder. At first, he didn't pay it any mind. After all, as you get older, joints start to wear and ache. That's how it goes. But the pain slowly intensified. Steering the tractor was now an insufferable chore and eventually became too much to bear. That's when Satterthwaite knew it was time to seek medical attention.

A doctor's office visit revealed nothing too alarming: tendinitis of the shoulder. A Novocain shot later, Satterthwaite was back in the fields tending to 400 acres of corn, soybeans and wheat. He's been farming this land since he was 10 years old, back when he used to help his neighbor put up hay. Then, in the early 1980s, Satterthwaite and

his father purchased the land and, over the years, he's come to lease a few surrounding fields. After 40 some years, he can just about work the land with his eyes closed. But with one arm? Well, that's a daunting task.

The Novocain shot helped some, but eventually the pain crept back. Steering a tractor all day, every day, planting and spraying the fields, certainly wasn't aiding the recovery process. Still, Satterthwaite pressed on. By late summer, nearly a year after his run in with the grain cleaner, his

shoulder started giving out, at which point he knew it must be something more than tendinitis. Something another Novocain shot couldn't remedy.

Satterthwaite visited a specialist and got the full diagnosis: "I had a torn bicep that was basically hanging on by a thread. I had a lateral tear, which is the muscle underneath the arm. It was completely torn off. And I had a large rotator cuff tear. So at that point they told me to stop using my left arm altogether."

That harvest season, Satterthwaite drove the combine with one hand – his injured left arm tucked safely in a sling – and, with some help from a neighbor on about 60 acres, managed to finish by early November, just days before he was scheduled to go under the knife. Prior to surgery, doctors told him the best-case scenario was that after six months of physical therapy he would regain 60-80 percent use of his arm. That kind of news causes worries.

"I was really concerned, having gone through harvest with only the one arm, that I wouldn't be able to plant corn the following spring with the system I had," said Satterthwaite. "I had an EZ-Guide 500

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PER ACRE OR MORE!**

\*University Study

*"I still had pain and some days I was ready for somebody else to steer since I still had to turn the tractor around, but there were a lot of days I probably wouldn't have planted at all if I didn't have the system steering the tractor for me."*

— Trent Satterthwaite, Michigan





and that just didn't cut it. I'd tried planting with it before and it just wasn't accurate enough. I needed something else."

Satterthwaite spent that winter rehabbing his surgically repaired shoulder, which the surgeons assured him was the worst they had ever fixed arthroscopically. His second mission was to find a precision farming system that would ease the physical burden of planting in the spring, spraying throughout the summer, and harvesting in the fall.

"I talked to my Ag Leader dealers in Charlotte (MI) and they recommended the Ag Leader OnTrac2+. They plant with it themselves and have had great success with it, so that was basically good enough for me," said Satterthwaite, who pulls a 6-row planter with a John Deere 4240. "It takes the stress right out of planting. I'm putting three fertilizers on with my corn planter so I have a lot of things I have to be watching. At the end of the field I just disconnect (AutoSteer), turn around and step on the button again. It works great. It's actually harder to find the check rows now, it's so perfect."

The Ag Leader system paid off for Satterthwaite and so did physical therapy.

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*"It was amazing, we put the yield monitor on this fall (2014) and went into beans and it was perfect calibration right out of the box. It was spot on."*

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— Trent Satterthwaite, Michigan

By May, he had regained 100 percent use of his surgically repaired shoulder.

"I still had pain and some days I was ready for somebody else to steer since I still had to turn the tractor around, but there were a lot of days I probably wouldn't have planted at all if I didn't have the system steering the tractor for me," he said. Satterthwaite put Ag Leader on his new hydraulic fold sprayer and his John Deere 9400 combine as well. He was amazed by how simple it was to integrate the Ag Leader Integra, Versa displays across all three phases (planting, spraying and harvesting) of his operation.

"It was amazing, we put the yield monitor on this fall (2014) and went into beans and it was perfect calibration right out of the box," he said. "It was spot on. I could tell the guy using the grain wagon how much weight I had on the combine before the dump. The correction on the corn was 0.1. This is right out of the box."

On the topic of data, Satterthwaite said an unexpected benefit of his Ag Leader precision farming package was how much it simplified data collection and reporting.

"The system has automatic reports for me and my spray reports are all done for me at the end of the day," he said. "I don't have to sit around at night and fill out paperwork. Used to be there were nights you'd take off, and you'd have to go back and think, what did I do here, here and here? It's important to have that data and now I have it all right there."

That leaves Satterthwaite a little more time to relax and recover after a hard day in the field. Maybe even throw on his favorite hooded sweatshirt and sip a hot drink. On second thought, a crew neck will do just fine. ■



## ONTRAC3

The next generation of assisted steering from Ag Leader.

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# BRAZIL: TECHNOLOGY & YIELDS ARE ON THE RISE



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*\*Yara International's Agriculture in Brazil: Vast Resources Video*

Spring is upon us, which means the familiar hustle and bustle of planting has swept most of the nation's heartland. It's a familiar drill for farmers and their families. All plans are put on hold in hopes of getting the crop planted, and a poorly timed rain can wreak havoc on a farmer's morale. Luckily, summer will be here before long, and a much needed lull will ensue for hard working farmers... unless you're a Brazilian farmer. Farming in Brazil isn't for the weary. Due to the temperate climate, the busy season lasts year-round.

"In some regions it's time to harvest, and in others it's planting season. There really isn't much downtime. If they aren't planting or harvesting, they're spraying or spreading," explained Marcio Muraro, Ag Leader Regional Business Manager - Latin America.

By mid-spring, harvest is underway in the southern region of the country where there are corn and soybeans left to harvest. The northern half of the country, however, is busy planting winter crops, such as pasture and wheat.

In spite of the need for efficiency, both in time and resources, precision agriculture is new in the region, and the yield monitor is just beginning to take hold. Andre Fabri, Ag Leader Territory Manager, said, "Yield monitoring technology is really taking off in the area. As more and more farmers

adopt precision ag practices, doors are continuously opening for other systems, such as guidance and steering, planter controls and data management."

Fabri also described how pleased users are with the ease of use and accuracy of the Ag Leader system.

"Both dealers and customers like the layout of the displays and the accuracy of all the systems. Most dealers are drawn to the reliability of the products and great customer support," added Fabri.

As adoption of precision farming practices spreads across the country, so does the need for data analysis tools.

"Farmers in Brazil are a little different than other farmers in the fact that not many study data to make management decisions yet," Muraro shared. "Tides are turning, though, and farmers are starting to look to advisors to learn what to do with their data and how to make management decisions based on it. This opens a huge opportunity for data focused tools, such as AgFiniti and SMS Software. We hope to have a high adoption rate of this technology in the next three to five years."

The flurry of the farm will never entirely go away, regardless of the technology in place. There are just too many variables. It is Ag Leader's hope that it can help farmers around the world become more efficient by providing tools that help plan, plant, apply, harvest and manage, both water and data. And just maybe provide a few minutes of much needed relaxation. ■



# THE INNOVATION UPDATE

## NEW RELEASE!

### TERRASTAR-C

With the release of new receiver firmware in April 2015, Ag Leader GPS 6500 users have the option to utilize TerraStar-C satellite corrections. TerraStar-C offers improved accuracy and faster convergence with the ability to quickly regain full accuracy when GNSS signal is temporarily lost.

- Ag Leader customers who currently have a TerraStar-D subscription can upgrade to the new TerraStar-C, free of charge. TerraStar-C will be available in two subscription durations:
  - 3 month \$400
  - 12 month \$800
- The firmware update can be accessed in the downloads folder at [dealer.agleader.com/kpb](http://dealer.agleader.com/kpb).

**NOTE:** TerraStar-C is not a replacement for a RTK correction service. Where accuracy, repeatability and reliability are needed, Ag Leader highly recommends a RTK correction service.



## NEW RELEASE!

### ISOBUS LIQUID CONTROL MODULE

In December, Ag Leader launched the new ISOBUS Liquid Control Module. This allows Ag Leader liquid components to communicate with Ag Leader and other ISOBUS compatible displays. Features of the new system include:

- Easy-to-use, structured methods to calibrate the flow, pressure and ground speed sensors that are critical to accurate system performance.
- Continuous monitoring of the relationship between product flow rates and system pressure. This permits early detection and warning in event of a sensor failing or drifting off previously calibrated baselines.
- Settings to automate boom prime and maintain a standby pressure to ensure accurate product flow rates without lag in performance after initial machine fill and every time boom is cycled on/off/on turning around at field headlands.
- Supports up to 24 boom sections for less overlap of product application. (Additional sections supported in the future.)



## 4 USES FOR AGFINITI MAP VIEW DURING APPLICATION

- 1 Analyze your as-applied application maps
- 2 Review crop health maps
- 3 View your fields' profit/loss maps
- 4 Reference your fields' terrain analysis

Learn more about these features by visiting our blog, or our website at [agleader.com/products/agfiniti](http://agleader.com/products/agfiniti)



## CONNECT WITH AG LEADER

Social media is a common way people are communicating today. Not only can Ag Leader fans interact with the company on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube, but also on Ag Leader's blog – Precision Point. These platforms allow Ag Leader to inform and educate, and also have a conversation with those interested in precision farming technology. Connect with us today!



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