

## CropTech Solutions manages agronomic data

Written by Elizabeth Barrett  
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With today's technology, farmers amass tons of data, from planting prescriptions and spray logs to grain sales, harvest results and more.

Most agricultural producers have good intentions of sifting through and analyzing data during and at the end of a growing season but that doesn't always happen.

Enter CropTech Solutions, a Gothenburg-based management service that ties all of that information into a cloud-based program and analyzes the numbers.

"It's a one-stop shop for farmers," said sales representative Justin Strasburg.

Sales representatives download data into a CropTech program on the Internet, analyze expenditures for seed, inputs like fertilizer and water, fuel, and harvest estimates, and come up with a bottom line of projected revenue and spending for the next growing season and beyond, Strasburg said.

Jim Aden of CropTech Solutions said the numbers are tied to market fluctuations which makes it an even more accurate agronomic management tool.

"In today's environment, knowing what your break even is on a day-to-day basis and having a tool like this available is invaluable," Aden said. "You not only can predict what your costs are going to be in advance of the growing season but you also have all your information accessible in one spot for future reference and decision making."

When using the service, farmers have a secure password to log into their information which is managed by a programming firm in Lincoln.

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Each sales representative manages a certain number of the farmer's acres and meets with them.

Weather events like hail, wind and other crop threats are also built into the program, Aden said, since the kinds of insurance coverage farmers carry can be part of the management program.

"We can customize for each individual farmer," Strasburg said, noting that clients can use parts of or the whole program.

With programmers on call, he said Crop Tech employees can make quick work of ideas or suggestions by their client base—some things can be tweaked in a matter of minutes, he said.

By knowing inventory, Aden said the program helps farmers not over purchase when buying inputs like fertilizer.

"The farmer knows exactly what they need going into the next year," he said.

Sales representative J.C. Smith noted that if farmers don't buy fertilizer during the time when it's most affordable, they pay much higher prices if they have to buy more during the planting season.

Likewise, Strasburg said the data also shows different soil fertilities in a field which can fluctuate from year to year.

As a result, he said more inputs may be needed on certain acres and less or none on others.

"We're utilizing the data to grow more efficient crops," Strasburg said. "Because if you have areas that won't produce as much, why put the same amount of inputs into it?"

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Because the program is cloud-based, Smith said farmers can pull up their information, and update it, on smart phones while they're riding in their tractors.

Information managed this way is also an important tool for older farmers so sons or daughters taking over the business can see the bottom line, Strasburg said.

"It's a great tool for the transition of the farm from one generation to the next," he said.

The company is based in Gothenburg in a former Pony Express Greenhouse building and has additional offices in Kearney and Princeton, IL.

CropTech Solutions has clients in Nebraska, Iowa, Illinois, Wisconsin and South Dakota.

At this point, Aden said he doesn't know of any other company in Nebraska and surrounding state that offers the depth of personal service and a fully functional program like CropTech Solutions.

The company was started in 2012 and, as more years of data are added to each client's profile, Smith said more trends will become evident.

In addition to Aden, Strasburg and Smith, the company employs agronomist Jared Aden and accounting manager Amy Schwarz in the Gothenburg office.

Sales representatives Justin Bash and Greg Richey and marketing/communications manager Amy Yancy work from the Kearney office and sales representative Kevin Bauer works from Princeton, IL.

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To learn more about Crop Tech Solutions, view their website at [www.croptechsolutions.com](http://www.croptechsolutions.com).

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