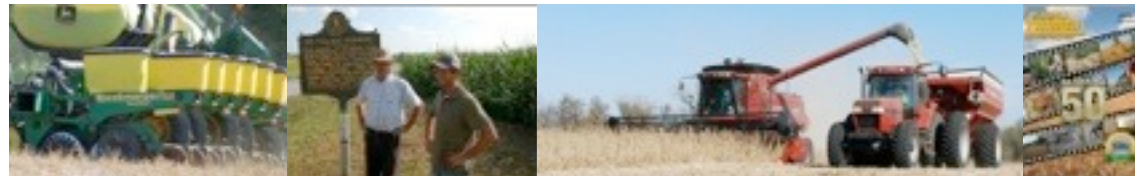


Top 10 Precision Ag Mistakes & How to Correct Them.

Tim Norris - CEO
Ag Info Tech, LLC.
January 10, 2013



Years of seeing the same mistakes

- I have seen the same mistakes repeated time and time again.
- If I can share with you, some of the things we have learned, hopefully you won't have to make the same mistakes some of our growers have made.

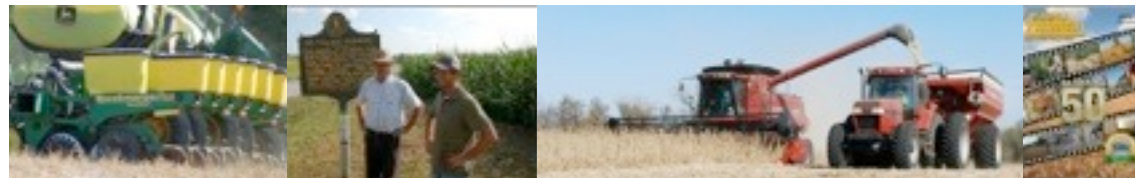


Going to Steal the



#10 Thinking You Can't Operate the Technology

- This could apply to you or your employee's
- People often times don't give themselves enough credit in their ability to learn new technology.
- People struggle and then give up.



How do we correct this issue?

- First, you need to address any new technology, with the end goal in mind!
- Remembering, or knowing why this is beneficial, is a key factor in trying to press on if you are having difficulty.



Get Training

- Read the manual!!!
- Look for on line video's of how to operate the equipment.
- Go to a customer training.
- Ask your local dealer to help you. (this may cost a little but would be well worth the investment)



Practice Runs

- Try your equipment out **before** you need to go to the field.
- Help isn't always readily available so it is better to find out if there is a problem before its time to plant, spray or harvest.



#9 Buying because of Convenience.

- I constantly run into people that have a system that won't do what they want it to do because they just purchased a piece of Precision Ag equipment because the dealer could install it, and deliver it, ready to go.



They didn't think about will it do and what they want.

- They get it home and want to run a different brand of planter or want to control a sprayer with their new display and find out it won't work with that brand.



How do we solve this issue?

- Think about what you will want to do with this system, now and possibly in the future.
- Ask detailed questions as to the capabilities of the display.
- Make sure that the system will work.
(the salesman may not really know!)



#8 Data Overload

- We have tons of data being collected on our farms.
- Time and time again I see grower with piles of books full of maps and tons of questions.
- The fertilizer dealer gave them soil test results.



#8 Data Overload

- The seed dealer printed off their yield maps.
- The grower has all of this information and does not know what to do with it.
- Sometimes the paper is the only data the grower has left.



How do we keep from getting Data Overload

- Focus
 - Think about what you want to learn.
 - Start small and glean the info that will be the easiest to benefit from. *(catch the slow rabbits)*
- Keep the raw data for later use.
- Either buy a GIS system, or hire someone to manage the data for you.



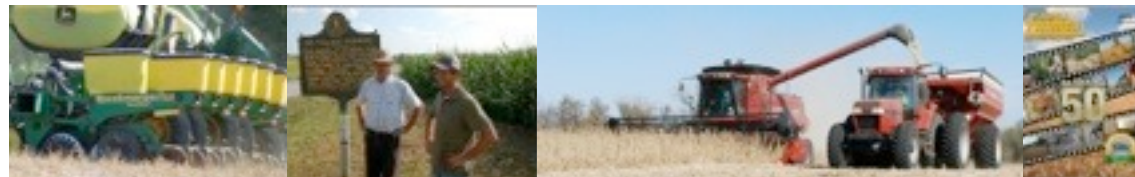
Paper maps are great, but how do you use them?

- By having a GIS or someone to manage your data for you, you're not limited to what you see on a map.
- GIS systems can drill down through the layers and provide meaningful information back to you to help you measure the results of your farming practices.



Stay involved in the whole process.

- If you are not getting the info you want ask for help.
- Record everything that you can, it doesn't mean you need to deal with it now, but you may have a question about it later.



#7 Giving Your Data Away!

- Don't do it!!!
- Too often I ask growers, where is the raw data?
- Too often I hear, "I don't know!"
- Its fine if a seed company or fertilizer dealer wants to print off your maps, sometimes for free. Just make sure you keep the raw data.



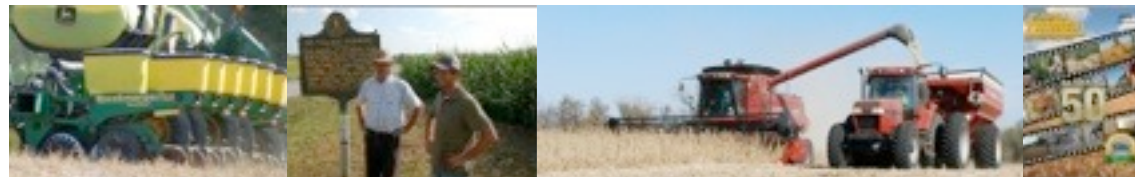
How do we correct it.

- Copy the raw files to your computer before handing a card over to someone.
- Its ultimately your data and your responsibility to make sure you keep it.



#6 Not Starting With a Plan

- We have talked about this a little before, but you need to know where you want to end up with precision and design a system that will allow you to get to those goals.
- I see people all the time that have invested in a light bar but it won't do swath control or RTK or even auto steering.



Cheaper Isn't Always better?

- No the limits of the system that your buying.
- If you think you may want to do something in the future make sure your system has that capability.



Starting with a plan also means a learning plan.

- Know what you want to try to learn when setting up a trial.
- If you change something in your operation leave check strips to compare it to.
- Also make sure that the areas where you are comparing are the same except for the variable that you are wanting to measure.



We have seen plot nightmares!

- Grower doing VRA Fertilizer, Seed and Nitrogen across 5 different soil types.
- Then they want to look at yield by pH values.
- Start with a plan and try to learn from test that are set up to provide you with good data.



#5 Multiple Field & Product Names

- To often we will look at a growers data base and there are 2-5 different names for the same field.
- The dad may have named it Home1, the son may have called it Home 1, the hired man called in H1.
- These are viewed as 3 different fields in the GIS.



How do we fix this?

- Start with an empty GIS data base. Get the fields named the way that you want them to be.
- Make sure that you have good field boundaries for every field.
- Then after the GIS is set up properly read the old data into the GIS



How do we fix this?

- Some GIS systems have a “Spatial Sort” feature.
- This feature will look at the data and see what field it belongs in based on the field boundaries.
- That is the best way to clean up old data.



After GIS is Fixed Create Setup Files for Your Displays

- Several GIS systems will allow you to create setup files for your Precision AG Displays
- This is the best way to ensure that the names are all the same.
- Some companies offer a service to do this for you.



#4 Not Calibrating

- Yield monitors must be calibrated.
- Calibration loads should be equal in size between 3-5 thousand pounds.
- Loads should be harvested at consistent grain flows. Don't let the combine clean out more than once on a cal. load.
- One load should be as slow as you can go and one as fast as you can.



#4 Not Calibrating

- Yield monitors must be calibrated each year and for each grain type.
- Calibration loads should be equal in size between 3-5 thousand pounds.
- Loads should be harvested at consistent grain flows. Don't let the combine clean out more than once on a cal. load.



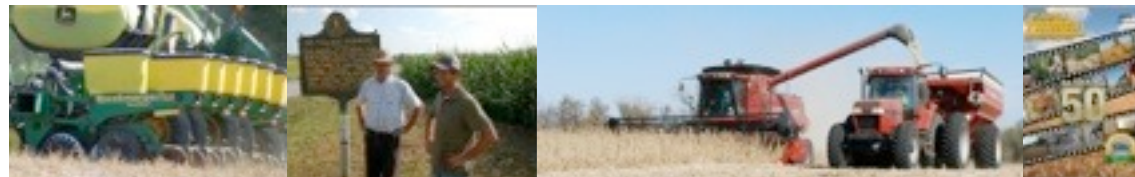
#4 Not Calibrating

- One load should be as slow as you can go and one as fast as you can and at least two in between.
- Do at least one test load after to see if you are close.
- Remember junk info in equals junk info out!



#3 Waiting to Start Collecting Data

- Once a crop is harvested, and you did not collect yield data, you can never get that information back.
- I've seen too many people say they are not ready for VRA so they want to wait on installing a yield monitor.
- Most people tell me they wish they had started collecting yield data sooner



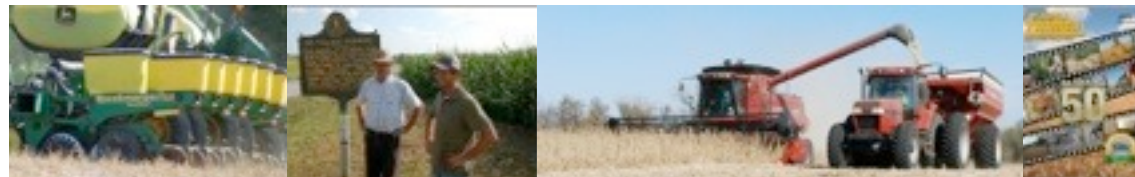
#2 Choosing the Wrong Dealer

- We get customers all the time that have purchased equipment from a dealer that can't service them properly.
- Check out the dealer before you buy equipment from them.
- This equipment is highly technical and can require a lot of service at times.



#2 Choosing the Wrong Dealer

- The difference a good dealer makes can be the difference between a good experience and a bad one.



Things to Look For in a Dealer!

- Do they offer installation?
- Do they offer training?
- Do they have phone support?
- Can they come to your farm for service in season?
- Do they have loaner displays to keep you running?



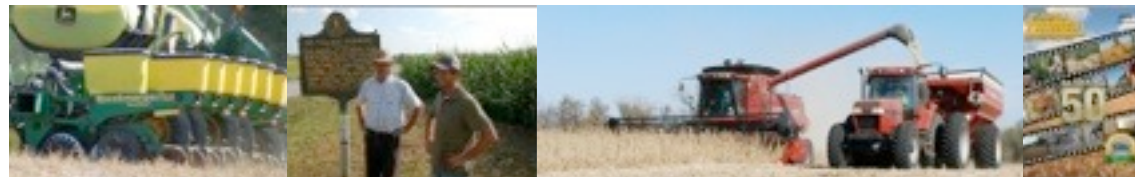
#1 Forgetting Good Sound Agronomics

- Don't implement a practice just to be doing the latest & greatest.
- If you do implement a practice make sure that you leave test strips so we know if we benefited the operation.



Good Example

- When we started to use the Infrared Sensors I questioned the way that the sensors were applying the nitrogen.
- The sensors wanted to put little or no nitrogen on the best corn and the most nitrogen on the poorer corn.
- I thought that this was the wrong approach.



Good Example

- So I created a formula that was the opposite.
- We fed the best corn the most N and the worst corn the least N.
- When talking with growers before about VRA Nitrogen this was the approach that some wanted to do.
- We actually had growers that wanted to use this approach. It made sense.



But Agronomically did it make sense?

- We did 11 trials.
- I was wrong every single time.
- If we would have varied N just for the sake of varying N we would have cost our growers a lot of money.



For Review The Top 10

- #10 Thinking You Can't Operate the Technology
- #9 Buying Because of Convenience.
- #8 Data Overload
- #7 Giving Your Data Away!
- #6 Not Staring With a Plan
- #5 Multiple Field & Product Names



For Review The Top 10

- #4 Not Calibrating
- #3 Waiting to Start Collecting Data
- #2 Choosing the Wrong Dealer
- #1 Forgetting Good Sound Agronomics



Thanks!

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