

INSIGHTS

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PLANNING ISSUE

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Nobody likes technology more than I do, but I know there are those of you who like it a whole lot less. (The only speed-dial number on your phone reaches your implement dealer or your local elevator.) Your approach is purely practical: you want tools and solutions.



That's all you'll find in this issue of our newsletter. We're showing you technology that will help you control your input costs. And we've come up with some solutions that minimize the down time you'll spend learning the ropes and hooking up cables.



In addition, we're opening a window on the farming operation of an Indiana producer who has proven he's interested in precision agriculture *for the money!*



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Winter 2002

From One Ag Leader To Another: The Universal Question



Al Myers
President

No matter what crop you grow and where you raise it, you think just like other producers in one essential way. Anytime you consider adopting a new procedure in your farming operation, you wonder how it has worked out for other growers. That's just natural.

And that's why we're inaugurating a new feature in our newsletter. Each issue, we'll spotlight different producers explaining actual on-farm results from precision agriculture. They're going to describe the process and the payback, in their own words.

What works for one farmer may not have any application in your operation. That's why we'll feature a series of growers with different approaches to precision farming as well as a variety of crops and growing practices. We hope these stories will give you new ideas for getting the most from precision farming technology.

Kent can prove it

To launch our series of conversations with farmers, we called on a guy with plenty of experience. **Kent Brewer** is a longtime **Ag Leader** user, who started using our products in 1993.

He hit on an outstanding way to prove the effectiveness of this technology. You'll find his story on page 2. (By the way, if you have a great precision ag story of your own, let us

know. Drop us a line at support@agleader.com.)

Guiding you into the future

Lightbars offer many benefits over foam markers. Foam can get lost in a tall crop or wind can take foam off course. Sometimes foam evaporates too soon in warm weather. In cold weather, units can freeze up. And once the sun goes down, having foam markers can leave you totally in the dark.

On the other hand, even under difficult field conditions, and with a variety of equipment, a Lightbar helps you stay on target. In fact, Lightbar guidance is often more accurate than visually following the edge of your last pass.

This technology is a good fit with a variety of field operations. If you spread fertilizer or lime with a spinner spreader, you know it's tough to guide by fertilizer on the ground. If you apply your own chemicals, I bet you'd like to reduce both skips and overlaps. And

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Ag Leader In Action: How He Does It: Kent Brewer Makes Precision Ag Pay

By Kent Brewer, *Johnson and Brewer Farms*
Frankfort, Indiana

From the beginning, watching the yield monitor's readout going up and down didn't entice me. Printing out the map and analyzing the data is what caught my interest. I look at a field and ask, "Why did that area change?" I use technology to find out and then do what I can to correct the problem.

You see, I'm not looking for more acres to farm; I'm looking to get more bushels out of my current acres. VRT (Variable Rate Technology) has an all-around effect. The information you get lets you look at a field and see what it really needs. That's better than just throwing inputs at a problem.

I've seen an average 14-bushel improvement in my corn yields. My soybean yields are up 7 bushels. Most of that comes from changes I've made in variable seeding rates.

Here's what I do: On the higher and less fertile ground, I plant higher populations. Those higher populations give my crops a push on poorer soil. Where I have black dirt, I lower populations and get a lot less lodging.

Back in 1993, when I started with my first Ag Leader monitor, a Yield Monitor 2000, I laid out corn tests. I'd plant 24 rows of different flat rates, then put strips with popula-

tions of 26,000 plants in between. For three years I harvested and collected yield data.

"The change that has made the biggest difference in my operation is variable-rate seeding. I've seen an average 14-bushel improvement in my corn yields. My soybean yields are up 7 bushels. Most of that comes from changes I've made in variable seeding rates."

Then I compared all of the data to determine what rate to plant for each type of soil.

But I still wanted to know more. So four years ago, I struck a deal with my neighbor. I put a monitor in his combine, and he lets me manage the data.

He farms conventionally—without VRT. Most of his farms are just across the fence from mine. The soil types are roughly the same, and we plant some of the same hybrids. The difference is our farming practices.

When my neighbor returns the monitor to me after harvest, I have his data to compare to mine. I make maps that he can use anytime he wants. I suspect other farmers could work the same sort of deal with neighbors. It would be easier than you might think.

Ag Leader has put together a tremendous product. I can find uses for it year-round. I use the PF3000™ Pro to mark tile lines, pull soil samples, control chemicals, and, of course, to seed. My Pro does rest in the summer, but that's the only time it isn't working. ■



"But I still wanted to know more. So four years ago, I struck a deal with my neighbor. I put a monitor in his combine, and he lets me manage the data."

Guiding you into the future

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then, a Lightbar will let you keep spraying after dark, so you don't have to stop work just when weather conditions become ideal.

Maybe I don't have to tell you all that. It's possible you want a Lightbar but haven't been ready to make the investment.

A cost-effective, new solution

Look at **Corey Weddle's** article on

page 3. He'll walk you through the use and benefits of our new EZ-Guide™ stand-alone parallel swathing system. At \$3,750, it's an attractively priced unit packed with high-performance features.

This system may be your answer to several questions.

- Install EZ-Guide in ten minutes and learn to run it in just ten more.
- EZ-Guide works with free WAAS

or fee-based satellite differential correction.

- A Lightbar, an all-in-the-antenna GPS receiver, and everything else you need to get started are included in the package.
- EZ-Guide was developed to be used without owning a PF3000™ or PF3000™ Pro¹ monitor.

Check out Corey's article for the rest of the story on EZ-Guide. ■

Ag Leader Advances: Staying on Track Just Got EZ-er!



Corey Weddle
Product Manager

Here is Lightbar guidance that isn't complex or costly, and it's packed with an array of features you would expect from **Ag Leader**.

This system is simple, yet effective. EZ-Guide™² cuts to the chase, installing in ten minutes or less. It's just three components and a connecting cable. In less than ten minutes more, you can read the concise set-up directions and be ready to roll.

We see EZ-Guide as an economical solution to your guidance needs at only \$3,750. There are no additional fees either, because this package uses the free WAAS system for differential correction (though it is capable of using a fee-based L-Band satellite subscription correction if you prefer).

Great features, less cab clutter

This is what we call a stand-alone system. You don't need to own one of our yield monitors to make it work. The EZ-Guide system is the answer for those of you who aren't currently interested in logging data or making maps. If you just want to spray chemicals or apply fertilizer faster and without any

waste, now you can.

The Lightbar's clear and bright LED display will allow you to easily stay on track without having to focus on the Lightbar all the time. You can keep your mind on where you're going and what you're doing in the cab. EZ-Guide is meant to simplify your operation and reduce your fatigue, not complicate things or wear you down.

Maybe you already have one of our PF3000™ or PF3000™ Pro units and want to add lightbar capabilities to another field rig. Here's your low-cost expansion package.

And eventually, if you want, you can upgrade your EZ-Guide with the extended features that are available when used with the PF3000 or PF3000 Pro.

What will it do in your fields?

EZ-Guide provides straight-line guidance. Just start working and watching the display. After you make your first trip around the field, your headlands are defined. From then on, when you approach the end of the spray zone, EZ-Guide will warn you by flashing an orange light and sounding an audible alarm.

The alarm will also sound when you're drifting too far from your spray or application path. Use the system to calculate field area if you like. All you have to do is drive the boundary on your first pass around the field.

Another helpful feature is called LookAhead. Set the LookAhead to tell you, based on the path you're following at any point, how far off track you'll be if you stay on that path for a few

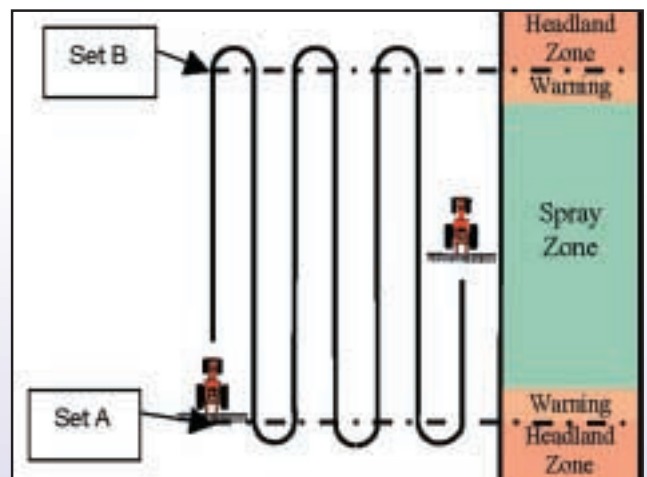


Uncomplicated and accurate, the new EZ Guide system puts you on the straight path for less.

seconds. With that information you can correct your course.

Make it easy on yourself

You can mount the keypad wherever it's handiest for you. That's the beauty of owning something so compact and versatile. A sturdy suction cup attaches



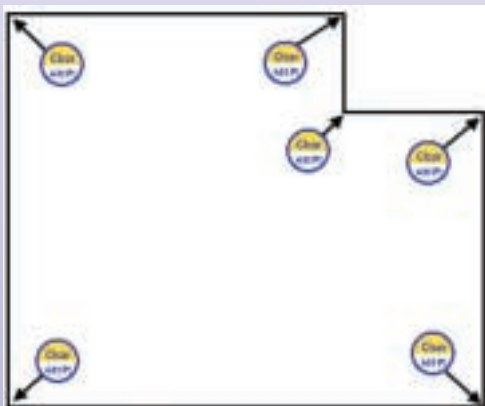
Setting up your spray zone is this easy. Just drive it once and EZ Guide remembers.

the Lightbar wherever you can see it best. The system can be moved easily from one cab to another.

All the components of the EZ-Guide system are designed to be rugged and practical to meet the needs of your operation. Though this system is less costly, it is no less durable than our other units.

EZ-Guide truly is EZ-er to install, EZ-er to see, EZ-er to use, and EZ-er on your pocketbook! ■

²EZ-Guide is a trademark of Trimble Navigation Limited.



The simplified EZ Guide keypad lets you calculate field area as you drive the perimeters. Push just one button.

Visit Our Web Site! www.AgLeader.com

Ag Leader Advantages:

Go Direct



Roger Zielke
Product Manager

The PF3000™ Pro makes driving the planter or lime and fertilizer rig simple and easy. The PF3000 Pro direct drives the Rawson Accu-Rate or New Leader Mark III, Mark IV, Mark IV.2, or Mark IV.4 hydraulic drives without the Rawson or New Leader processor.

By running the hydraulic drive, Lightbar, GPS, and variable-rate commands through the PF3000 Pro, operation is easy. There is just one monitor in the cab to learn and operate. Installation takes only a few minutes. Mount the monitor in the cab using a U-bracket. One adapter cable connects the PF3000 Pro to the Rawson or New Leader wiring harness.



Scott Hillebo

“The PF3000 Pro controlled the Accu-Rate flawlessly. My rates were exactly what I had planned,” Scott explains. “The benefits of using the PF3000 Pro are fewer cables and boxes in the cab and ease of use. When I get to the point that I’m planting by prescription maps, everything will be in one box.”

Scott Hillebo of Polk City, Iowa, saw the advantage right away. He bought the Rawson Accu-Rate system to improve planter accuracy. Within a year, he decided to replace the Rawson console with the PF3000 Pro.

“The PF3000 Pro controlled the Accu-

Some farmers aren’t convinced of the value of variable rate seeding (for more on side-by-side seeding tests, see page 2). Producers who use center pivot irrigation have seen impressive results. Those growers trim seed costs by 8 to 10 percent using **Ag Leader** equipment. They insert a prescription file that calls for a higher seed rate in the irrigated center of the field and a lower rate for the non-irrigated corners.

Spread this news around

Custom applicators like **Scott Neil** of Oran Ag Services in Oran, Iowa, can make good use of the PF3000 Pro to control the functions of New Leader Mark III and Mark IV spreader drives. Last spring, Scott retrofitted a PF3000 Pro, a GPS, and a Lightbar unit to his L2020, Mark III spreader truck. The PF3000 Pro runs all components.

Scott applied 20,000 acres of fertilizer with the PF3000 Pro and Lightbar in the spring of 2001. “I wouldn’t spread without it.” He admits he’s never been a big fan of computers, but “once I learned how the Pro works, it was easy.”



Scott Neil

Trade up to a PF3000 Pro

If you already have a Yield Monitor 2000 or a PF3000, you can trade in either for a PF3000 Pro. For more information visit www.agleader.com/pro-rawson.htm or www.agleader.com/pro-newleader.htm. ■

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Inside:

A new, economically priced guidance system. It's called EZ-Guide.

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