

DTN GRAINS®

Southern Accent Farms

Decorah, Iowa

Southern Accent Farms is located near Decorah, lowa. The business is run by the three Hovden brothers, owner, Daryl; Dan, who manages the cattle operations; and Dave, the crops manager. They also have one full-time employee. The Hovdens farm more than 2,000 acres, including 1,300 acres of corn, 650 acres of beans and 200 acres of hay. They raise 320 beef cows and calves. The Hovdens sell their grain to Peavey or Agro at Prairie du Chien, although they anticipate some changes in their grain sales as the ethanol plants become more competitive. They sell their calves locally to sale barns in Decorah and Waukon, lowa.

The challenge

The Hovdens need up-to-the minute, locationspecific weather information and the latest market information for a thriving operation.

The solution

Until about two years ago, Dan ran a dairy farm operation with his father. He now handles all cattle operations for his brother. For 10 years, Dan and his father had depended on the weather and markets information that DTN/The Progressive Farmer offers. "Daryl didn't have a DTN/The Progressive Farmer system when I came here, and I said, 'you need to get one, you make all these phone calls to the grain terminal trying to figure out what's going on, you might as well have a DTN/The Progressive Farmer so

you can see it." In August 2005, Daryl added DTN Grains Professional to his business tools.

The results

"I'm the one who's always on the DTN/The Progressive Farmer system, and my brothers are always asking me what it's doing. The first thing I do every day when I get out here is log on to the early morning grain markets and comments and see where the market is headed." He especially likes to read columnist Jerry Gulke, who writes a marketing column for DTN/The Progressive Farmer. "I read him religiously. I think he's pretty sharp. He keeps upto-date on the market, and he can look out into the future a little bit to give you an idea what might be coming down the pike. Plus, I like the fact that he is a grain farmer himself. He's in the same boat we are."

Dan depends on the system to research the specific market information they need. "I bring up the futures on the DTN/The Progressive Farmer. We also look up the sale barns when we're going to sell some of our cattle. They let you know what last week's prices were and what's being offered this week."

"The weather information on the DTN/*The Progressive Farmer* is pretty important for us, too.

When we're harvesting or planting in the spring,



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we're checking the system on an hourly basis some days. You bring up the radar and put it in motion and see how much time you have to get something done. It's pretty handy."

Dan praised the accuracy of the weather information he finds on DTN/*The Progressive Farmer*. "I think it's pretty close to being right on." He especially likes the highly localized nature of the information the system offers. "That's very important to us. I like that we can focus in on our county."

Dan finds the satellite version of DTN Grains perfect for their needs. "Since we can't get high-speed Internet out here in the country, when you use the Internet you have to sit and twiddle your thumbs for two minutes waiting to bring up something, but with DTN/The Progressive Farmer, the information you need is right there."

Dan considers DTN Grains critical to their operations. "I would definitely recommend it to others."

The client's view

"Information is valuable. That's the long and short of it. I learned a long time ago that the more you know, the better your position you are in to make decisions. I think that DTN Grains Professional really helps us with our decision making."

Dan Hovden, cattle operations manager Southern Accent Farms

