



DTN NORTHERN GRAINS®

CASE STUDY

Diane Carlson Farm

Jamestown, North Dakota

Jamestown, North Dakota is located almost 100 equidistant miles along Interstate 94 from Bismarck to the west and Fargo to the east. On her farm in Jamestown, owner Diane Carlson grows confection sunflowers, wheat, and soybeans on 1,500 acres with one employee. She is raising 14 beef cattle and grows five acres of corn to feed them. She also grows 50 to 70 acres of oats to sell to local horse owners. Most of her crops are destined for a local elevator. She hauls the sunflowers for sale to Red River Commodities in Fargo where they are sold to consumers as Fisher Sunflower Seeds. The cattle are sold to a local livestock yard.

The third of five daughters, Diane Carlson took over her parents' farm 24 years ago. "I was the closest thing to a boy that my dad thought he would ever get," she said with a chuckle. At age 85, her father still lives in the family farmhouse, and she lives next door. The land was originally homesteaded by her paternal great-grandfather. In addition to farming, she has a part-time job measuring grain bins for the Farm Service Agency.

Carlson is the rare woman in what has remained primarily a man's occupation. "Every day it's a different challenge, and I can meet most of them," she said. "I can't tear apart an engine, but I can do most everything else."

The challenge

Carlson needs the latest market and weather information to make farming decisions.

The solution

More than 10 years ago, Carlson started using DTN/ *The Progressive Farmer* to watch weather and pricing information. Almost a year ago, she moved to DTN Northern Grains Professional which provides her with the latest information covering markets, weather, news, and production for pulse crops and small grains in the U.S. Northern Plains.

The results

Initially, Carlson reluctantly invested in DTN Northern Grains. "In the beginning I thought, 'Diane, you can't afford that,'" she explained. "Then, all of a sudden, I started thinking, 'maybe I can't afford not to have something like that, with the information that it offers.'"

Carlson uses DTN Northern Grains Professional every day. She uses it to make many of her farm weather-based decisions. If a day is forecast to be especially windy, she knows it is a bad day to measure bins, so she will plan to do something on the farm instead.



Carlson believes that DTN/*The Progressive Farmer* gives her a competitive advantage. "The information is brand new. It's right there. I don't have to call people and ask them what they think," she said. "I don't have to call the elevator. I don't have to go to the mailbox and get the paper and read what happened two days ago," Carlson said. The accuracy of the markets is what she likes best about DTN Northern Grains Professional.

She also likes DTN Fuels and Fertilizer Strategies, which allows her to access a report on the current futures market for fuels and fertilizer. A DTN/*The Progressive Farmer* analyst provides an overview of market activity as well as recommendations and strategies to help get the best prices. The information can be used to help make decisions on whether one should buy, sell, or hold. Last winter, Carlson followed the recommendation on DTN Fuels and Fertilizer to buy ahead, and she got a much better price for fuel. "It said you should buy to cover yourself for spring. I got it for \$2.16, and I think it's \$2.50 today."

Carlson finds the system very user-friendly. "I have never run a computer, and I can run DTN Northern Grains Professional," she said. "That's a compliment to how this system works, because I'm computer illiterate, and DTN Northern Grains Professional is easy to use."

The client's view

"I absolutely love everything about DTN Northern Grains Professional, and I would be lost without it."

Diane Carlson, owner, Diane Carlson Farm