

Fawcett Farms

West Branch, Iowa

West Branch natives Helen and Ken Fawcett own Fawcett Farms, which has been in the family for over a hundred years. With their nephew, they farm 1,500 acres of corn and low-linolenic soybeans. The Fawcetts sell their soybeans to Asoyia, and their corn to Quaker Oats, Cenex, and Cargill, among others.

The challenge

The Fawcetts need the latest weather and market information to ensure that they are getting the best prices for their crops and to monitor the weather for their farming operation.

The solution

The Fawcetts have been DTN/*The Progressive Farmer* subscribers for many years. "I had it back when it was just an FM signal." After getting high-speed Internet, they updated to DTN Grains Standard Online in December 2005.

The results

Ken Fawcett likes the simplicity of the online system. "I like not having to keep the extra equipment around that the satellite system requires. I like just having DTN Grains on my computer. There's a lot more detail for the weather, the market and the news items on DTN Grains Online. I like the easy access to all the news items and other information."

"I like that you can tailor the system to 'your favorites,' so that way you can just focus in on the screens that are most important to you," said Fawcett, who adjusts his favorites throughout the year. "I'm not as concerned about drought monitors in the wintertime, for example. When I'm spraying, I'll use more information on the wind predictions, and at other times I'm not as concerned about what the wind is going to be at 2 o'clock in the afternoon."

He also uses the service to monitor precipitation. "I keep track of the current and the longer-term precipitation to see what areas are getting rain and what areas aren't. I find the two to three day forecasts that DTN/*The Progressive Farmer* provides to be more accurate than what my local weatherman gives."

He likes to use the market information on DTN Grains to get the best price for his crops and to check whether the bids they're getting are good. "It's nice to be able to compare with markets you might not even go to. You can see how their basis is in comparison to where you're going."

Fawcett also uses the service to do his futures contracting. "I use a discount broker, and I put orders in online. I like to switch back and forth between DTN/*The Progressive Farmer* and where I put market orders in."

He likes to use the system's moving averages. "Information on moving averages on the charting pages is important for me to check when I'm considering making some trades on the board." Although learning how to set up his favorites was a new step for Ken, once he learned how to do it, Ken said he found the system very easy to use.

The client's view

"I explored my options before signing up for the online service. What made me decide to stay with DTN Grains was the total package of weather, market commentary, news commentary, the markets, and the charting — especially the very detailed options charts which are hard to find on other sources."

Ken Fawcett, owner and operator, Fawcett Farms