



## DTN GRAINS®

### Welcome Home Farms

Ottawa Lake, Michigan

Roger and Bill Beck, father and son, are partners in Welcome Home Farms. They raise 500 acres of corn, wheat and soybeans which they market through their local cooperative. Bill is the fifth generation in his family to farm.

#### The challenge

The Becks need market and weather information to run their operation efficiently and profitably.

#### The solution

The Becks have been DTN/*The Progressive Farmer* subscribers for about seven years. In November of 2006, they upgraded to DTN Grains Professional so that Roger could access the soft metals and fuel markets.

#### The results

Bill likes that the upgraded service uses a dashboard approach instead of a personal pages approach. The dashboard provides one screen with a variety of data that links to more detail.

"I like the fact that I can get a one-touch deal and I can see everything I want right away, and I don't have to flip from screen to screen to screen. If I go to the weather, I get the radar and the forecast and everything in one shot. If I go to my grains dashboard, I can get the overnight market, the current market, and the comments. It's quicker with the dashboard

system than to flash through my personal pages like I had to do with the system before I upgraded."

On the weather dashboard, Bill especially likes the more localized information he can access about wind. "Before, the wind information was always for surface winds over a two or three state grouping. Now my radar actually is pinpointed to my location. It gives me a lot more wind information and I can record that in my spray logs. The state's cracking down, so you have to have everything tracked. The service helps me time my spraying. I can follow the wind a lot better with the new system than the old system. I like the weather radar more than anything. Now the radar updates every five minutes instead of every 15 or 20 minutes. That gives me a little better projection."

Bill finds the PrecipTimer®, which indicates when precipitation is going to start and stop, to be a useful and accurate tool. "If I was going to spray, it gives me the opportunity with the timer to say, 'well, it's going to start raining at 3 o'clock. I've got two hours of spraying and I'm starting at 8 o'clock. I'm spraying a one or two hour rainfast spray so I'll still be inside the window,'" he said. "The PrecipTimer projections are pretty close from what I've watched so far. I've been paying attention, and it's pretty accurate, much more accurate than I thought it would be."



Bill also depends on the market information that the service provides. "The information on DTN Grains Professional helps me market and decide which direction to go, especially when I know I need some money or I know I want to market in a certain window," he said. "With the futures updates, I can sit and watch the market flow, and when it gets to a point I want it to be, I can put in a target at the local elevator or cash sell right then."

They also use the service for fuel purchasing decisions. "Even on a 2,000 gallon fuel drop, sometimes we can pick up a couple hundred bucks when the price of diesel and gasoline drops," he said.

Overall, the Becks are pleased with the service. "In one market move, I can pay for my annual subscription to DTN Grains Professional. I've marketed quite a bit of grain in the past couple weeks, and it's really paid for itself. It's done exceptionally well," said Bill.

#### The client's view

"I would definitely say that DTN Grains Professional is critical to my operations. It's easily paid for itself."

Bill Beck, partner, Welcome Home Farms