



# AG ESSENTIAL

CASE STUDY

## Keene Farms LLC

Hastings, Minnesota

Nick Keene and his father have a 1,100-acre corn, soybean and hay farming operation in east central Minnesota. Keene is involved in just about every aspect of the farming business from crop planning and production to marketing and risk management. The farm office is based out of his father's home. "That is where we keep all of our records, including marketing contracts," said Keene. "When I was not in the office, I was never positive if the grain was sold or not."

### The challenge

With just two people, keeping track of their sold and unsold grain and monitoring real-time profitability, while still tending to the day-to-day farming operations, was becoming a logistical nightmare. All of the records and reports had become overwhelming. Plus, he could not access farm data away from the office. Keene knew that there had to be a better way to organize all their data while also having easy remote access to it.

"We were trying to find a product that tied our marketing, inventories and production costs together," said Keene.

### The solution

Keene was introduced to Ag Essential, DTN's new, unique cutting-edge farm enterprise management solution, during a demonstration at the DTN Ag Summit in December 2013. He recognized the potential Ag Essential had to help him and his father with their challenge and signed up for Ag Essential.

During the first few weeks using the product, Keene provided feedback to the DTN product development team on the functionality and user experience of Ag Essential.

### The results

After inputting his farm data and becoming more comfortable with the program's capabilities, Keene fully integrated Ag Essential into the operation recognizing its potential to pay dividends down the line. "I believe [Ag Essential] will save us time and money by using one program to tie in all aspects of our operation," said Keene.

Keene started to see positive results within weeks. "It has helped keep my father and I on the same page with the amount of grain sold and unsold inventory.



Now he enters the contracts into the program, and I can access them from anywhere,” Keene said. “I definitely appreciate the convenience of the marketing and inventory portions since this was an area our operation needed improvement.”

But those were not the only benefits Keene observed. With Ag Essential, he has been able to monitor the profitability of each field and quickly produce reports for business partners. He utilized Ag Essential’s ability to generate profitability reports for a landlord looking to sharply increase rent. Keene was able to compare input and land costs with profitability on a field-by-field basis using current market prices. “Since [Ag Essential] grabs current local bids, I could show the landlord increasing rent would essentially take the profit out at today’s pricing,” Keene explained.

Keene thinks other farmers would find Ag Essential a valuable farm management tool with the many features the program has to offer. “Farmers will easily be able to access their farms’ marketing and inventories and analyze their farms’ profitability on a whole and field by field,” said Keene. “I would recommend [Ag Essential] to other farmers.”

#### The client’s view

“I do believe [Ag Essential] is a useful tool for farmers. This one program can tie in all portions of your farming operation. You can also see what fields are making the most money.”

Nick Keene, farmer  
Hastings, Minnesota