



DTN LIVESTOCK®

Schneider Farms

Wabash, Indiana

Schneider Farms is located in Wabash, Indiana, 90 miles north of Indianapolis. The farm is a furrow to finish operation with 300 sows. Bill Louck, manager of the farm, has worked at Schneider for three years. Familiar with farming from his childhood, Louck grew up around hogs on his parents' hobby farm. He has worked in the business for 13 years. In addition to Louck, owners George and Norma Schneider have two other employees, one full-time and one part-time.

The challenge

To successfully manage Schneider Farms, Louck needs market information to determine when to lock in hog prices in the futures market and when to purchase feed. He also needs the latest weather information to plan work on the farm.

The solution

Louck started using DTN/*The Progressive Farmer* when he joined Schneider Farms. In June 2006 they upgraded to DTN Livestock Online.

The results

Louck uses the service to follow the corn markets for purchasing feed and for lean futures to hedge their production. He also monitors the weather.

Louck depends on the weather information that the service provides to see if and when it's going to rain or if it's going to be getting cold so that

they can inject manure, which they use for fertilizer on 200 acres that they rent out. "We use the weather information to see what kind of window of opportunity we have to do what we need to get done. We inject all the manure and, if the weather is going to be cold enough, we can inject when it's frozen. We also use DTN/*The Progressive Farmer* to see how much time we have to wait to get the ground in the right condition so that we're not compacting the ground when we're injecting."

In addition, Louck uses the weather information that the system provides to watch for an extended dry spell. "In general, the system runs pretty close to accurate. I rely on it quite a bit as a planning tool."

Louck looks at the weather on a daily basis, typically first thing in the morning. Then he moves on the futures markets. "I look at the markets two to three times a day. We use the market information to hedge for the future. We'll sell contracts to lock in our prices for what we receive."

"Mainly, I watch the comments regarding what the analysts are anticipating. I like the 'Early Word' comments which I get first thing in the morning. I sometimes check the grain comments, but I mainly focus on the livestock," he said. "If the prices are up, I'll check the close as well."



Louck also uses the service when he's buying feed. "I use it to check the corn and soybean markets to see if they're up or down and whether we should or shouldn't buy at that time. We buy feed daily. We just have one supplier and we go through them for all our feed purchasing needs," said Louck, explaining that they use the prices to determine the quantity and timing of their purchases.

"Having pricing information available on the DTN/*The Progressive Farmer* is a huge convenience. You don't have to wait until you see the price on the statement." Louck also likes that he can see what other elevators are charging for their feed as well as what his elevator's supplier is charging.

Louck likes that with the service, instead of waiting for his broker to call him with price updates, he can contact his broker when he wants to take action.

The client's view

"What I like best about using DTN/*The Progressive Farmer* is the speed and how up-to-date the information is. I also like the weather information and the 'Early Word' comments which give me a heads-up on what could be happening in the market in the day ahead."

Bill Louck, manager, Schneider Farms