



CASE STUDY

DTN GRAINS®

Shady Bend Farms

Bathgate, North Dakota

Shady Bend Farms raises 6,600 acres of sugar beets, wheat, barley, and soybeans. The Browns, including Kevin, Kelly, and Rick, are the third generation to farm the land on which they were raised. The Browns have a combined total of eight children ranging in age from eight to 28 years old. Today, two members of the fourth generation are already involved in the operation. During their busiest months, they also employ as many as 20 additional people.

The Browns sell their sugar beets to American Crystal Cooperative. They sell their wheat and their soybeans to Harvest States and to local farmers in nearby Cavalier, North Dakota.

The challenge

Located as far north as the Browns are, they deal with all kinds of weather challenges, including rain, wind, and bitter cold. They need real-time weather and market information to run their operation efficiently and profitably.

The solution

Although the Browns upgraded to DTN Grains Professional in June 2006, they first started using DTN/*The Progressive Farmer* services 10 years ago. They upgraded to the newer system because they wanted better weather information for their operations.

The results

Before they invested in DTN/*The Progressive Farmer*, the Browns had to take time to listen to the radio and watch television for the market and weather information they needed. Their initial investment in DTN Grains Professional paid off, and they're even more pleased with the new system, according to Kelly, who runs the operation in partnership with his brothers. "The new system provides more detailed information. We can zoom in better with the radar for better weather information." He also finds that the graphics have more color and detail than the basic service.

They keep their system in the shop office on the farm. "If we're in the shop, the first thing we do is look at the weather and see what the forecast is. If we're working in the shop during the day, we'll look at it periodically to check the grain markets." They depend on the market information on DTN Grains for the futures contracting they do.

Weather information on the system helps the Browns determine where they should focus their time and energy. "If we're planting, weather information on the DTN/*The Progressive Farmer* helps us decide which field we're going to go to that day."



"The weather information on the system also lets us know how much time we have to get the crops in." They also depend on the service for weather information when they're going to be spraying their crops. "We look at it for wind speed and potential rain. It's just nice to know what's coming."

Because they employ 20 or more people in their busiest months, accurate weather information is especially important then. They don't want to have 20 people standing around not knowing whether they're going to be able to work. "That drives you crazy," said Kelly.

Kelly considers the service critical to his operations and would recommend it to others. "What I like best about it is that it's very handy."

The client's view

"In the summer and spraying season, it really helps that DTN Grains lets us know what kind of weather is coming because you can't spray some chemicals if it's going to rain within six hours."

Kelly Brown, partner, Shady Bend Farms