

NEXT STEP: SPR



By Terry Panbecker

Every business works towards controlling their input costs while still meeting their production goals. We are all aware that the business of farming is no different, and precision agriculture practices are playing a large role in being able to control those inputs.

As we enter into this year's growing season, there are a variety of ways to achieve this business goal by pairing MAPS products with your spray operations. Today's spray controls allow you to use prescription application rates, control boom height and section shut-off, and also record information for future reference. Although prescription mapping and application is nothing new, the innovative additions to it that allow for increased accuracy are still new to many growers and can be very valuable to saving you some dollars.

It begins with spray control, a function that is normally already available on your in-cab precision display. Both Ag Leader and Trimble displays have this capability. When used with boom height and section shut-off controls, your fields are able to receive the most accurate applications possible. Accuracy means cost effectiveness and it keeps from wasting input dollars due to overlap or over-application. Not only that, but you place a large investment in your seed purchases as well. Accurate spray applications make sure that those plants are receiving the necessary crop protection and nutrients needed to reach their full potential, while making sure that they are not being harmed by over-application.

The ability to reach this level of accuracy is just a simple step away. Our MAPS team has access to the right products for your spray control goals. Both Ag Leader and Trimble have spray and rate control features to be used with their display monitors that also include section shut-off features. These shut-off features allow separate spray sections to be controlled according to field boundaries, interior non-crop areas, and already applied areas. This minimizes skips and overlaps at end rows and along waterways.

Available from Ag Leader, applicators are also able to use sensors to record and measure real-time field information from the use of sensors. Ag Leader's OptRx crop sensors uses ultra-violet light over growing crop vegetation to determine crop health while driving through the field. It sends a message to the applicator to apply less or more, based on the health of the plant. These crop sensors can be mounted on almost any type of vehicle. This information is also stored for future analysis. Technology associated with side dress nitrogen application in corn, has the opportunity to improve crop vigor and increase yields.

There is still time for you to take advantage of these spray control features to save time and money this growing season. The MAPS hardware team will work with you to find what will best fit your current precision display monitors and help you reach a full level of spray accuracy.

As you plan your spray applications, it may also be a good time to test the current nutrient levels in your soil and plants. While spring and fall soil sampling is still a good representation of your soil's nutrient levels, soil sampling in the sum-

**Ag Leader-**

Direct Command

Rate Control Liquid & Dry

Norac UC5 Boom Height Control

OptRx Crop Sensors

**Trimble-**

Field IQ- Sprayer & Planting Control

RAY CONTROL

mer has been favorable by many growers. This is because the nutrients are being taken up by plants at this time, and the soil reflects more precision nutrient levels.

Tissue sampling also provides a great representation of the nutrient and micronutrient plant uptake. During your crop's vegetative growth stages is an optimal time to perform tissue sampling. This will allow you to adjust your micronutrient application plans to best fit the needs of your growing plants.

If you are interested in summer soil sampling or tissue sampling this summer, now is the time to contact your agronomist and have your fields scheduled.

A New Addition to the Hardware Team

Our outstanding MAPS hardware team has continued to grow in product offerings and services, and due to the growing support of our customer's, we have also now added an employee to our team.

Cody Rubendall will be tackling the increasing precision agriculture business in the Lohrville and Rands areas. Cody is from Lake City, where he and his wife, Jessica, have two boys. Cody brings his expertise in crop production and precision agriculture through his past work experience in agronomy operations and management, and with precision agriculture dealers. We look forward the service that Cody will be able to offer our current and future customers. ■



Norac-
 Boom Height Control
 UC4- Stand Alone Display
 UC5- INTEGRA Display

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P L A N T I N G

DEALER...

...MAPS is able to bring you this rewarding new program.

Seed Meter Loyalty Program

To make the most of your investment in seed meters, MAPS has developed a seed meter calibration program that is designed to ensure your seed meters are optimized for planting success. Our meter calibration technicians will use a diagnostic tool that evaluates the performance of your planting meters. It will measure the ability of your meter to singulate seed based on the type of seed you plan to use. In fact, most of our technicians can improve your meters by 2- 4 percent. Based on Precision Planting tests, one percent improvement in placement accuracy can lead to earning an additional \$5 per acre.

Not only should you be making sure your meters are checked and calibrated, but it should be done regularly each year.

Participation in the Seed Meter Loyalty Program will help you do just that with guidance from your Precision Planting specialists at MAPS. The optimal time to have your seed meters calibrated is July 1 - August 15. A 10% discount per row will be offered for meters received during that timeframe.

Call MAPS (515-955-9030) for additional details on program information, pricing and meter drop off sites.