“Because we now capture all our crop inputs as well as planting dates, harvest dates etc. in Agworld, it has become very quick and easy to create exactly those reports that we need to send to NZGAP.”

Todd Crozier
Co-owner, Lynchris Farm, Leeston, NZ

SIMPSONIFYING SPRAY RECORDS

CHALLENGE
The Crozier family produces carrots, potatoes and onions for New Zealand based wholesalers and retailers as well as export. In order to remain NZGAP certified, they have to keep very accurate spray records. They used to do everything on paper but realised that they had to start digitising this process in order to simplify their information flow.

SOLUTION
In 2014, Todd Crozier discussed their digital record-keeping needs with their agronomist, Roger Blyth at Rakaia based Seed & Field Services, who uses Agworld himself. Roger recommended the Crozier family start using Agworld as well so they could collaborate on the same platform.

RESULT
By using the same platform as their agronomist, the Croziers only need to convert recommendations to actuals in Agworld in order to create their records. By having their records in a standardised digital form, they are able to quickly create any report they need for certification and other purposes.
A family operation with deep roots in Canterbury

When Lynn Crozier’s father started growing potatoes, he had no idea that his farm on Cranford street would be part of the centre of Christchurch 60 years later. The rapid growth of Christchurch forced Lynn and his wife Christine to move their farming operation away from Cranford street. First to Kirwee, west of Christchurch and then in the late 1990’s to their current location at Leeston, 35 kilometres south of Christchurch, on the Canterbury Plains. It is here that Lynn and Christine farm with their three sons Andrew, Todd and Glen and grow a variety of crops on 400 hectares of owned land and some leased fields.

“We grow 55ha of carrots, 80ha of fresh potatoes and 60ha of onions every year”, Todd Crozier explains, “this is mixed into a rotation with grass seed production, maize, sweetcorn, rycorn and some cereals. All of our fields are irrigated by laterals and hard-hose guns, which is a necessity for us in order to be sure that we can produce our crops to the exact specs we need for our customers.”

“We supply the large New Zealand supermarket chains, so both Progressive and Foodstuffs, as well as a domestic wholesaler, with our carrots, onions and potatoes. We also export a large part of these crops to anywhere from Fiji to Japan, Indonesia and Europe. Europe is mainly a bulk market for us, so we ship 1200kg bags, whereas Indonesia, for example, is all in 20kg bags. Everything depends on the size of the potatoes, carrots or onions and what the exact target market is. Because we have our own sorting and packing shed, we can be very flexible and deliver in whatever packaging is needed.”
Administrative requirements

Growing crops for human consumption and export markets carries a lot of extra responsibility and administrative requirements for growers, which was something that the Croziers were keen to automate. Todd explains: “We started to look at an alternative solution for our spray-record system in 2014, as we were keen to automate as much as possible. We wanted to find an easy way to take down all critical information connected to our crop input applications, while also being able to report on any metric we needed to. For our NZGAP, New Zealand Good Agricultural Practices, certification, for example, we need to be able to run specific reports that show exactly what has been used to grow a crop.”

NZGAP is a fully benchmarked GLOBALG.A.P. scheme, which is very specific as to the kind of reports that growers have to supply in order to become and remain accredited. Todd: “We need to be NZGAP certified and we fully understand the need to be compliant and able to guarantee high food-safety standards; we just don’t want this kind of administrative requirement to take a lot of our time.”

“We with this in mind, we spoke to our agronomist Roger Blyth with Rakaia based Seed & Field Services. He was already using Agworld at the time and he recommended that we have a look at it as well. Once we realised that Agworld would do everything we needed and allowed us to collaborate with Roger on the same platform, we went ahead and adopted Agworld. Because we can now work with our Agronomist on the same platform, we save a lot of time entering data. We automatically receive Roger’s recommendations in Agworld and only have to convert it to a work order, make any changes to rates etc. as they have occurred, and then create an actual – which is our record. You can’t make it much easier than that!”

“Because we now capture all our crop inputs as well as planting dates, harvest dates etc. in Agworld, it has become very quick and easy to create the reports that we need to send to NZGAP.”

Working together as a team.

Lynchris farm has its own packing shed, with around 20 staff that sort and pack carrots and potatoes 10 months out of the year and onions 4 months out of the year. Todd comments: “This combination of crops works well for us because it allows us to provide year-round employment to our staff, which means that we are able to retain staff instead of relying on casual labour. This also means that my brothers and I can divide our focus between the farm and the packing shed instead of all of us having to be on the same job due to peaks in labour demand.”

“It’s either my brothers and I or one of our employees that drives the spray rig or other equipment. Before we used Agworld, everyone would fill in a spray diary their own way; good luck trying to decipher that at the end of the season! All the different handwriting and ways to write things down made it a nightmare to get an accurate set of records at the end of the season.”

Todd concludes with: “Agworld allows us as a business to collaborate with our
agronomist, which saves us a lot of time and hassle and it also allows all of us in the business to seamlessly work together. By using Agworld, we now always have an accurate spray diary available as well as the ability to easily send our records to third parties for accreditation purposes. We don’t nearly use Agworld to its full potential yet, although we will start using a lot more of its functionality this year - but digitising and automating our spray diary has been very helpful for us already.”