YENDA PRODUCERS CO-OPERATIVE • YENDA, NSW

CASE STUDY

DIGITISING AGRONOMY PRACTICES

"The way I see it, Agworld has allowed us to digitise a lot of our agronomy practices, which makes us quicker and better at what we do; in the end, this helps us service our clients more efficiently and improves both their and our own business results."

James Mann
Yenda Producers, Yenda, NSW

CHALLENGE

Yenda Producers Co-operative used to record their agronomic data by writing it down first and then later entering it in a computer. This way of handling data caused a lot of extra work due to double handling and did not offer an easy way to go back into historic data and find information when they needed it. Also, as a wide variety of both summer and winter crops get grown by Yenda Prods’ growers in overlapping seasons, there is no ‘slow time’ and thus the agronomists had a need to plan accurately and rapidly.

SOLUTION

The Yenda Prods agronomists use and existing provider for precision agriculture and tried to use it for planning and record keeping as well - however, they found this impractical. After testing multiple other solutions, they decided to implement the Agworld platform across the co-operative.

RESULT

By implementing Agworld in the co-op and utilising the platform for all planning and agronomy activities, Yenda Prods’ agronomists are able to save on office time and always have up-to-date information available to them, wherever they might be. They can now plan a complete season in a matter of hours and the purchasing manager can see exactly how much of each product is forecast to be used in the season ahead, which allows for accurate purchasing and minimal carry-over of stock.
Sharing resources since 1925

The Yenda Producers Co-operative Society was founded in 1925 by a group of 10 farmers in the town of Yenda, 500km west of Sydney, in New South Wales. Fast forward to 2019 and Yenda Prods, part of the Yenda Group, is one of the main agricultural retailers in the area with a team of 6 agronomists and 6 horticulturalists serving the customer base. Crops grown in this part of New South Wales range from cotton, rice, corn, sorghum and sunflowers in summer to cereals, canola and pulses in winter, so Yenda Prods’ agronomists need a wide range of agronomic knowledge and are busy year-round. “Which is why we were looking for a digital tool that could help us record our agronomic practices and speed up our planning process” Yenda Prods agronomist James Mann says.

“All crops we handle have different growing seasons, but with a sizeable shift from rice to cotton in this area in the last 5 years, the length of the summer crop season has basically changed from 6 to 9 months - so we don’t have those traditionally quiet months at the beginning of the year anymore. Once the cotton is picked, we’re already doing winter crop agronomy whilst also starting to plan for the next summer crop at the same time. This lack of office time in critical parts of the year, combined with our wide variety of crops, drove our search for a tool that makes planning quick and easy and gives us access to all our historic agronomic data while in the field. We tried a few different programs, but once we tried Agworld, it was clear to us that Agworld is the way to go for a co-operative like ours.”
Collaborating with growers

As is the case for any co-operative, or agricultural retailer for that matter, improving grower communications and relations is of high importance to the agronomists at Yenda Prods - and they have found Agworld to be an excellent tool for this. James explains: “When we check our growers’ fields, we create our recommendations in Agworld on the spot, and because we have planned everything at the beginning of the season, this doesn’t take much time. Being able to do this quickly is important for us during those times of the season when we’re really busy from dawn to dusk.”

“One once we have created the recommendations, we can either send them through to the growers via e-mail or, for those who are Agworld users themselves, they immediately see the recommendation pop-up in the Agworld app on their iPhone or iPad. The advantage for those growers that use Agworld themselves is that they can see additional information for their fields and easily get the same information to their staff as well.”

One client of Yenda Prods that uses Agworld for his own farm record keeping is Ben Crump of Benlee Rural, a farming operation in the Whitton, NSW area. “I used to keep records in diaries, but I wanted to make it easier to record everything we’ve done and so I looked for a digital solution.” Ben says. “It was important for me to be able to communicate on my digital platform with my agronomist so we’re always on the same page. This also saves me a lot of time as I don’t have to enter all data myself; I can just convert whatever recommendation I get from James or one of his colleagues into an actual in Agworld. This is very easily and quickly done as opposed to having to enter all the data yourself.”

Anywhere, Anytime.

Growers and agronomists alike have a need to have their data available to them at all times, wherever they are, so they can reference historic field data and enter new data and observations on the spot. James: “Once a grower has performed an operation, they can mark this as ‘done’ in Agworld and I immediately see it. So, when driving up to a field, I don’t have to wonder whether a field has been sprayed or not and I have all pertinent field information available to me. This makes my life so much easier; being able to look in Agworld while I’m in the field instead of having to go through my diary to find something or give someone a call to find out.”

Ben adds to this: “I really enjoy that I can go look back 3 years (or more) in my data and find what I need to know when I need it. And, because I always carry the iPad with me, I can do it on the spot.”

James concludes: “The way I see it, Agworld has allowed us to digitise a lot of our agronomy practices, which makes us quicker and better at what we do; in the end, this helps us service our clients more efficiently and improves both their and our own business results. Once setup in Agworld it can take as little
as 20 minutes to create a plan for a grower, through the use of templates. Once all growers’ plans are setup in Agworld, our purchasing manager automatically knows how much seed, chemical and fertiliser we’re forecasted to use in the season ahead. This allows him to accurately purchase and ensures that we have the products we need available. The plan in Agworld then serves as a guideline all throughout the season and helps both us and our growers stay on track at all times.”