CREATING A FARM RECORDKEEPING SYSTEM

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**CHALLENGE**
Up until 2013, Anna Binna Farms relied solely on a pen and paper system for their farm records. This system did not fit well with the abilities of all team members and didn’t offer owner Ben Wundersitz a good way to track important information such as withholding periods, amount of fertilizer or chemicals that need to be purchased or any other spray-related information.

**SOLUTION**
Agronomist Sam Holmes with Central Ag Solutions had started to use Agworld in 2012 and after using by himself for a year, showed Ben how Agworld can help the team of Anna Binna Farms. Ben realised how, through Agworld, they can collaborate as a team on the same platform and minimise the need for data entry through receiving the recommendations from Sam on the same platform.

**RESULT**
By using Agworld, the whole team at Anna Binna Farms now has access to the farm records in Agworld and are able to turn recommendations from their agronomist into actual records as soon as an operation is finished, enhancing accuracy. By having his rotation for the season ahead planned in Agworld, Ben Wundersitz is now able to forward order all his chemicals and other inputs. Ben is also able to create accurate budgets through his farm records, which allow for in-depth analysis.
Aligning a team

Keeping records is important within any organisation and Anna Binna Farms is no different but up until 2013, they struggled to keep accurate records of everything that happens in the field. According to owner Ben Wundersitz: “We were trying to write down physical records, but it really wasn’t working well. Especially when it comes to withholding periods and extracting other crucial information from these records, we were struggling. We knew for some time that we had to do something to improve this part of our operation, but it wasn’t until 2013 that our agronomist Sam showed us Agworld as an alternative to pen-and-paper records.”

Anna Binna Farms is a 6,500-hectare farming operation at Maitland on South Australia’s Yorke Peninsula that grows a rotation of lentils, wheat, barley and Canola with hay production happening as well in some years, depending on the season. Owner Ben Wundersitz runs Anna Binna Farms together with a team of 4 full-time staff and therefore has to make sure that any systems put
in place are well suited to both the size of the farm and skills of the team. Ben: “Because of these parameters I knew that a system which requires minimal data-entry would be ideal for us. As soon as people have to constantly enter lots of data in a farm management system, it becomes prone to errors and inaccuracies.”

Collaborating with their agronomist

It was Anna Binna Farms’ agronomist Sam Holmes, of Central Ag Solutions, who introduced Agworld to Ben after he had started using Agworld himself in 2012. Sam explains: “I was using a legacy system until 2011 but it got discontinued, so I had to look for a different system to implement. The main criteria for me were to be able to use something in-field, so I didn’t have to first write things down and then enter them in a computer again at a later stage. I looked at a few different systems and ended up adopting Agworld as it seemed the best option for what I was looking for. It takes a bit of time to enter all basic data into Agworld and get your head around how to use it most efficiently, but after a year I was ready to get my grower clients to join me on the platform.”

Ben comments: “Our connection to Sam is one of the major benefits of Agworld for us. Sam creates recommendations in Agworld and then sends them through to us. All 4 staff members and I have an iPad with Agworld on it and can see those recommendations and action them. All it takes from there is a few taps to turn a recommendation into an ‘actual’, at which stage we have created the record that I need on the other end. I’m all for keeping it simple and Agworld keeps it simple for us. The simpler we keep things, the less error-prone we are as a business.”

Sam adds to this: “Working together with growers on Agworld really makes things easier for me. Ben and I sit together twice a year for planning purposes. We pull up Agworld and work on the rotation for next year and create the reports of exactly how much seed and other inputs we’ll need. As soon as this is done, everyone involved in Anna Binna Farms can see what the plan is and what needs to happen at what time; that kind of information sharing is definitely beneficial for everyone involved. Of all my clients, over 70% use Agworld themselves as well, which makes my life easier that’s for sure.”

Fine-tuning the farming operation

By having a system in place that provides Ben with accurate farm records, he is able to become more accurate with other parts of his business as well. Ben elaborates: “Because Sam and I plan the season ahead on Agworld, I have a good idea of the volume of inputs I’m going to need. This ‘shopping list’ from Agworld is really useful for me as it allows me to forward order chemicals with the resellers, which allows us to save money and gives more certainty that we’ll have the right chemistry available when we need it.”

Ben continues: “Another advantage of planning ahead of time in Agworld is for using pre-emergent herbicides. Because we know what will be planted in each field next year, we can tailor our pre-emergent herbicide program to the rotation and ensure we don’t run into any issues down the line.” Sam adds to
CASE STUDY

ANNA BINNA FARMS • MAITLAND, SA

this: “We want to avoid getting resistant weeds in this area as much as possible, and so pre-emergent herbicides are a key-part of our strategy. Because Agworld allows us to plan ahead whilst also offering us a good overview of field history, for chemical applications as well as weed-related observations, we are able to diversify our chemistry and therewith avoid resistance issues as much as possible.”

Ben concludes with: “Our business needed a system to create accurate farm records as we knew that we needed the benefits it brings us. Agworld is the ideal system for us as it fits our team and the way we do things; it requires minimal effort from the team whilst offering us all the outcomes we were looking for. Agworld is easy to operate and offers me the kind of information I need as owner/manager to pre-emptively make decisions that improve our results.”

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