



From Paper to Precision: Digitizing an Orchard Operation



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■ Challenge

With more than 20,000 acres of pistachios, almonds, figs, and other specialty crops, The Specialty Crop Company struggled to manage its growing data and operational complexity using a manual, paper-based system. Fertilizer orders were created in Excel and handwritten purchase orders submitted to the office, sometimes resulting in errors or missing paperwork. With multiple PCAs, foremen, billing processes, and a hybrid of owned and custom-farmed ground, the company needed to improve efficiency and reduce risks.

■ Solution

Farm Manager Jacob Mendrin led the implementation of Agworld to consolidate order management, application tracking, reporting, and cross-team communication into one platform. Agworld was used to standardize processes across field operations, PCA recommendations, vendor coordination, and office billing. Field supervisors and managers gained access via iPads, and PCAs began entering their recommendations directly in Agworld, streamlining workflows and enabling visibility across teams. The platform allowed the company to track per-acre costs, reduce paperwork, and strengthen their internal checks and balances.

■ Outcome

Agworld has helped The Specialty Crop Company recover potential unbilled input costs, improve team accountability, and streamline office workflows. Supervisors now have access to critical information on the go and billing accuracy has dramatically improved. Agworld's flexibility allows the team to use the software in a way that fits their farm's needs, without forcing a one-size-fits-all approach. With increasing PCA adoption and company-wide integration, Agworld is now central to managing fertility, pest control, cost tracking, and application compliance across 20,000 acres.

The Specialty Crop Company

Madera & Fresno Counties, CA

Size
20,000 acres

Crops
Almonds, pistachios, figs, walnuts, persimmons, kiwis, pomegranates

“Agworld just makes life easy, to be honest with you, everything’s right there, on your phone, iPad, or laptop. And that’s the best part.”

Jacob Mendrin
The Specialty Crop Company,
Fresno, CA



From paperwork overload to seamless operations

Jacob Mendrin, Farm Manager at The Specialty Crop Company, grew up in a multigenerational farming family. A decade ago, he made the move from his family farming operation to managing orchards for The Specialty Crop Company, one of California's leading growers of pistachios, almonds, figs, and other specialty crops. “About 10 years ago, I made the choice to go from self-employment and farming to working for Specialty Crop, and have loved it ever since,” Jacob says.

Based in Madera and Fresno counties, the company manages around 20,000 acres of permanent crops with a full-time team of about 140 employees, supported by a mix of independent and retail PCAs, contractors, and seasonal labor. Before adopting Agworld, the team was using manual systems: spreadsheets, binders, handwritten purchase orders, and email chains to manage orders, applications, and billing.

“A good example would be a simple chemical order: you’d email the vendor, type up a bunch of stuff, handwrite a PO, and turn it in to the office,” Jacob explains. “There was a lot of scattered paperwork, and it just made sense to consolidate it.”

Plugging operational holes with Agworld

Jacob discovered Agworld through a local presentation, and the timing was perfect. The company was looking for a better system to manage input orders, recordkeeping, and communication between the field and the office. Once they began using Agworld, it quickly became a multi-department tool.

“We needed something that would work across the company: record keeping, employee communication, vendor pricing, and more,” Jacob says. “Agworld is a system that works across all aspects of the business.” With Agworld, Jacob and his co-workers can enter orders digitally, attach pricing and vendor data, and automatically generate a printout for applicators. Each application has an ID number that serves as a PO number, linking the field application to both vendor invoices and billing for landowners or managed ranches.

This end-to-end visibility created the checks and balances the company needed to avoid mistakes. “Having a solid process in place creates a scalable and repeatable way for us to do business and ensures that our administration is on-point at all times,” Jacob says. “That alone pays for having the Agworld software in my opinion.”

Agworld also helped prevent any possible field-level application errors. With clear, detailed work orders, including rates, tank mixes, and application methods, sprayers and irrigation teams can follow instructions with less confusion, even mid-task.

“Agworld has simplified things for us on a field level,” says Jacob. “Fertilizer applicators don’t have to go back to the office to check a paper sheet with the details of their next operation; they’ve got the Agworld app on their iPad which shows them all the information they need so they can start the next job without delay.”

Eliminating mistakes through easy data access

Billing has historically been one of the most vulnerable areas for operational losses in custom farming. The Specialty Crop Company often farms land for clients, requiring them to rebill costs for applications and inputs. “Previously, something may have slipped through the cracks and not been billed to a land owner, so the company owner would’ve eaten that cost,” Jacob explains.

Now, when a recommendation is created in Agworld, the same record flows to the applicator, the office, and the accounting team. This has closed the loop between departments and eliminated billing discrepancies, and even vendor invoices are easier to audit. “Now we’re catching price discrepancies too,” Jacob says. “If I got quoted a certain price and the invoice says something else, I can flag it before it gets paid. With the old system, that would’ve just gone through.”

Agworld has also empowered supervisors and foremen in the field by giving them digital access to recommendations, even before the paper copies arrive. “Our foremen and supervisors can access Agworld from



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The Specialty Crop Company, Fresno, CA



their iPads or phones. If they don't have time to get to the office to grab a recommendation, they can just pull it up and get the job rolling," Jacob says.

While applicators still carry printed copies, as required by regulation, the ability to double-check rates, tank mixes, and application history on the go has helped avoid miscommunications and reduced errors in the field.

PCA adoption and long-term integration

Initially, Agworld was used mainly by Jacob and his team. But over time, several PCAs, both independent and retail, began using Agworld for writing their recommendations, significantly improving coordination and data flow. "That streamlined our process even further," Jacob says. "It pops up in the system, I grab it, convert it to a work order, and I'm done. I don't have to retype anything."

Even PCAs who were hesitant at first are now adopting the platform. The ease of use, combined with the ability to integrate pricing and make real-time adjustments, has proven valuable for both sides. "It's the same data, just in a different place," Jacob says. "They've realized how easy it is to use once they know where everything is." The Specialty Crop Company continues to onboard additional PCAs and expand Agworld's footprint across departments, from field planning to nutrient management, pest control, and compliance reporting.

For Jacob, the flexibility of Agworld is one of its greatest strengths. Rather than forcing a rigid workflow, the system adapts to how his team prefers to work. "You don't have to use it in the exact workflow it's built for. You can manipulate it to make it fit your farm," he says. "It spits out the same data either way, but it works so great for us, and that's what I've told other growers."

Today, Agworld is the backbone of day-to-day management for Jacob and his team. It provides the visibility they need, the audit trail they rely on, and the agility to manage operations across 20,000 acres of diverse crops. "It just makes life easy, to be honest with you," Jacob says. "Everything's right there, on your phone, iPad, or laptop. And that's the best part."



Improving profitability in agriculture

- ✔ Collect data at every level in a structured way.
- ✔ Easily share data with anyone important to your organisation.
- ✔ Un-paralleled insights into your operation.
- ✔ Empowers you to make more profitable decisions.

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