



Farm Management Software

Using farm management software to support
your operation



The use of more and smoother connections (enabled by 5G and IoT networks) between soil, farm equipment and farm managers could unlock **\$130 billion to \$175 billion in value by 2030**, according to management consulting firm McKinsey.

Farm management software gives you the tools to work smarter, not harder

Between planning, equipment, storage, commodity prices, staffing and weather, you are responsible for managing all assets and risks that have a direct impact on the success of your operation.

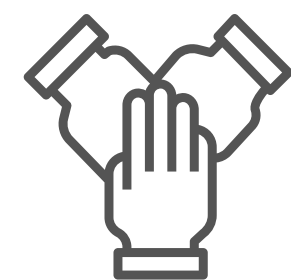
As a farmer today, you have more information available at your fingertips than ever before. Farm management software can help you centralize your records, optimize productivity and make more informed decisions – when you pair your expertise with technology, growing can become both more efficient and profitable.

Five key advantages of digitizing your farm records

As hand-written notes and conventional spreadsheets become a thing of the past, digital record-keeping is becoming a mainstay – even in agriculture. Farm management systems (FMS) and apps are taking on much of the heavy lifting of record-keeping making your experience more seamless.

By embracing digitalization on your farm, your information and data are conveniently stored and can be instantly shared at the click of a button on the device of your choice, to the team members of your choice. It’s time to put down the pen and use an FMS to save time, increase accuracy for planning, make timely decisions and streamline relationships. Start managing your farm the way you’ve always wanted.

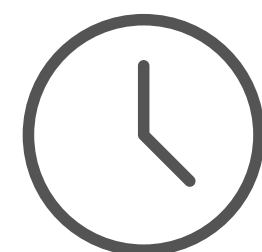
Let’s look at some key advantages digitizing your farm records brings:



1. Improve collaboration between farm team [▶ Watch video](#)

When everyone on your farm team has access to all on-goings, collaboration improves significantly. With the click of a button, your team, including your trusted partners, can share and communicate activities within your operation. The ability to connect with your partners and/or link different information sources will strengthen your relationships.

Concerned about privacy around your information? Digitization requires top-notch security and a good FMS would consider the use of permission-based sharing. With the right FMS, you can set up custom permission settings and alerts to allow for the flow of information between the team of your choice.



2. Provide timely decisions

In critical seasons where there’s never enough time, having access to current farm records right at your fingertips will help you act quickly and with confidence in near real-time. Furthermore, having your historical information also on hand means you can easily reference your records for future planning. More importantly, the digital transfer of information works both ways so in addition to providing your farm team information, you’ll also receive recommendations from your trusted advisors through the FMS or app.

Any action you require to take place throughout the season is at your fingertips, whether it is communicating with operators, manager, scouts or even your independent agronomist.



3. Have an accurate picture of your farm [▶ Watch video](#)

Digital record management means you now have constant, up-to-date knowledge around all the moving parts of your operation. Features like auto-capture relay information such as field weather and growth stage back to you to help with in-season decisions. You can generate reports on seeded acres, applications and products, and efficiently track movement of inventory. Schedule and assign tasks to your team instantly so everyone knows what's happening at all times without having to stop what you are doing.

Concerned about connectivity on farm to ensure proper communication between the team? It's important to explore FMS's that successfully leverage offline capabilities.



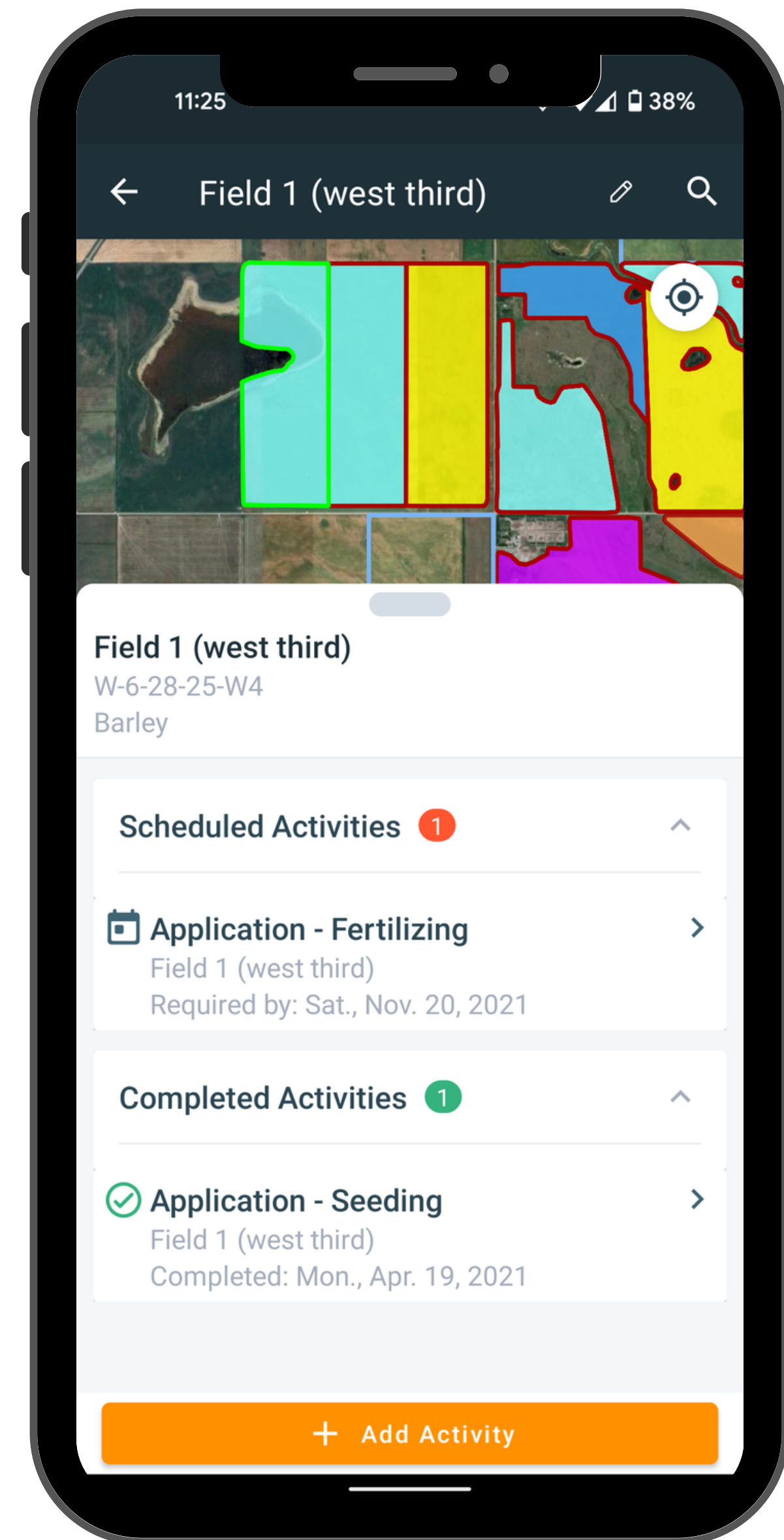
4. Improved access to information

Acting as a central hub for your operation, digitized records are accessible and sharable from virtually anywhere within your team. Share the broader farm plan with your team or specific details with your partners. The right FMS can improve operational functions while keeping information secure and confidential. Eliminate time consumed by searching for paperwork of your farm's historical records – they are now kept safe for the future.



5. Saving hours back in administration time

We all know time is money and incorporating an FMS for your farm records can save you time and manpower hours. Where you may have previously spent many late nights performing traditional record keeping tasks, automated features within an FMS can give you the time back you need.



Which system is right for your farm:

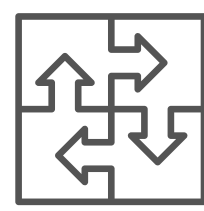
Seeing the benefits to adopting an FMS for farm record keeping is easy - deciding which one suits the needs of your individual operation may be a bit overwhelming. As you are increasingly faced with a vast selection of digital tools, you should consider a complete solution that acts as a central hub to deliver accurate information at your fingertips to improve your overall productivity and also keeps disruptions to daily operations and workflows to a minimum. So, how do you select and integrate the best FMS for your record-keeping needs?

Let's look at some of the things a complete FMS should provide:



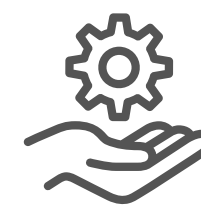
Collaboration

This would include things like connectivity with the entire team for more efficient people management, the ability to see crop plans, a way to keep track of inventory and manage equipment records; even offline.



Integration

The platform should have numerous connections with sensors, hardware and other software. The more application programming interfaces (API's) that the FMS has, the less data you will have to enter and the more powerful the FMS will be for the farm.



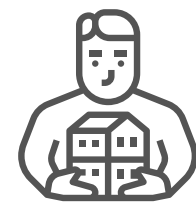
Service providers

The platform should work with trusted service providers while enabling those service providers to be more efficient in the delivery of the services on the farm.



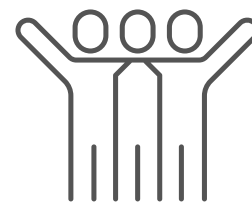
Security

Strict guidelines for data security and privacy should be important to every member of your team, including your FMS provider. The use of permission-based settings and alerts should be a top feature incorporated into a good FMS or app. You should be confident your data is in good hands.



Data ownership

Uncertainty around data ownership may make you wary about which company to work with. A high-quality, efficient FMS will communicate who owns the data and what ownership really means.



Empower the farm

You know your land best and the FMS will act as a central hub for your operation making digitized records accessible.



Independence

You want independent advice that is in your best interest and not connected to the sale of other products.



Training

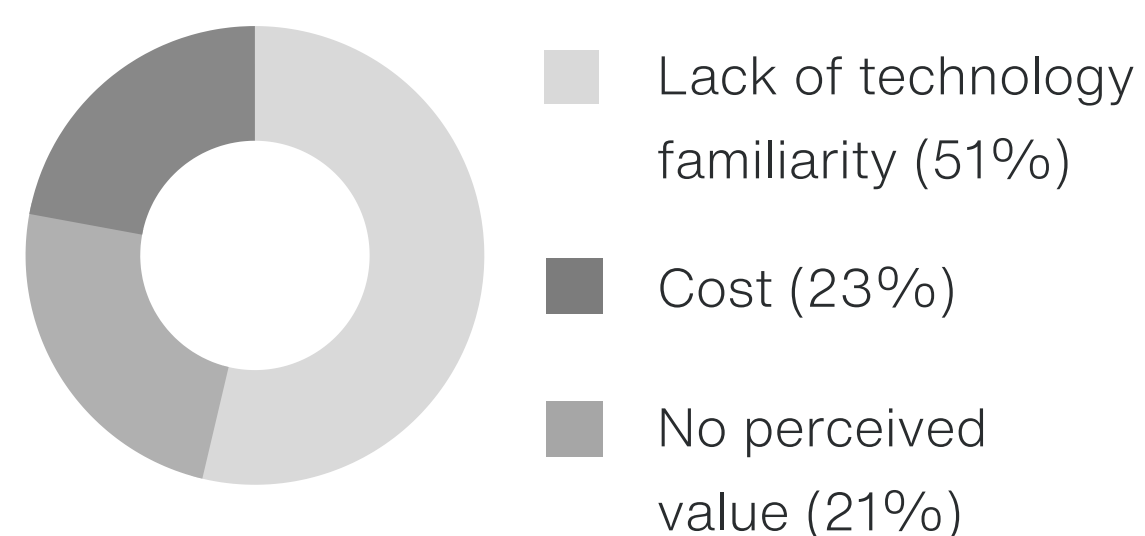
Things are busy. That's not going to change. By building a strong team around you to bring new ideas, expertise and tools for record-keeping will make decision-making easier and impactful.

Are you too busy to implement new technology?

As the future of agriculture demands increased productivity, traceability and sustainability, your role as a farmer becomes progressively more diverse. Throughout any given day, you're managing everything at once – from overseeing financials in the office, to implementing best management practices in the field, to outsmarting markets around the world.

So why not embrace technology like farm management software to give you more headspace and time to spend where you'd like? Farm management software can centralize and connect the varied divisions of your farm, streamlining your team with easy access to tools for field activity-tracking and collaboration.

According to Purdue University Center for Commercial Agriculture, objections to farm data software include:



When your information is stored in a central digitized hub or platform, you no longer have to spend hours searching your office for old notebooks or binders containing your historical information or current crop plans and/or crop marketing information.

Debunking the myth

You may believe that implementing new technologies like farm management software on your farm will add time and pressure to your already busy schedule, however, the opportunity to rely on information embedded in farm management software can transform how you approach crop planning and overall operation care.

Some benefits include, but not limited to:

- ✓ Saving hours back in administration time
- ✓ Improved collaboration between farm team
- ✓ Provide timely decisions
- ✓ Have an accurate picture of your farm
- ✓ Receive timely recommendations from trusted service providers
- ✓ Improved access to information

The point of implementing farm management software is to simplify your life. Even though the requirements and features built into the farm management software may be complex, your user experience shouldn't be. Learning new technology is a process and let's face it, it's likely there will be moments of uncertainty. In this case, a complete farm management software in one complete, integrated platform that includes one-on-one expert support will build that trust and confidence you want to ensure implementation on your farm is successful.

Making the switch doesn't have to be overwhelming

Don't beat yourself up by saying "There's too much to learn" or "I don't remember how to do something on the

platform or app". You don't have to learn alone or remember detail – who could possibly memorize it all? A complete farm management software solution will help streamline integration on-farm and ensure minimal interruptions to your routine.

For instance, instead of devoting hours sitting down to enter records, work with a partner that will enter your information for you and provide you with flexible training to walk you through the implementation process (or even a reminder session) that fits with your schedule. Time is the most precious commodity we have. Yet, farming being the labour-intensive endeavor it is, means you often must put in very long hours – so why not get time back from performing traditional record-keeping tasks? The right farm management software can save you valuable hours and not add extra work to your already full plate.

Staying connected

With so much at stake, you can't afford for your farm management software to let you down. In fact, it should give you peace of mind, freeing up your time for family and fun. Part of trusting your new system, especially when living and working rurally, is ensuring it will stay reliable even when internet connectivity may pose an issue.

Farm management software with autosave features takes the guesswork out of ensuring your information is safe and up to date. You'll be able to rest assured you can rely on the digitally-stored data embedded in farm management software, helping to ensure the overall care of your operation.

How farmers are using farm management software to support their operations



Over the years, many farmers have adopted new processes to adapt to an ever-changing agricultural landscape; no-till farming, advances in crop protection and the inclusion of drought-tolerant crops allow farmers to grow more with less while adhering to industry regulations. Precision agriculture uses technology to produce crops more efficiently through the use of GPS, drones, sensors and precision machinery.

With that, farmers are becoming increasingly friendly with the use of technology to support their operation.

"61% of Canadian farmers are using farm management software solutions – of those, 62% use a single platform," Stratus Ag Research 'Dynamics of Data in Ag', CDN 2021

More informed decision-making is the most frequently mentioned benefit of software use on-farm, followed by improved crop planning and determining profitable farm practices.

That means that others are likely still using notebooks and spreadsheets for record-keeping, and using their smartphone for Twitter and weather updates.

Why use farm management software:

It's one thing to keep accurate (sufficient) farm records, and another to empower this information to access operational insights in an instant. Farmers today are using farm management software "to make more informed decisions, to optimize crop planning and to determine which practices/decisions are most profitable."*

While technology often sounds complicated, great farm management solutions put the farmer at the centre, making it easy-to-use and accessible for all. Think about the first time you used a smartphone or the first time you navigated social media – it takes a little time, but the best technology exceeds user adoption and engagement goals.

* Stratus Ag Research 'Dynamics of Data in Ag', CDN 2021

Top Features

Farmers are using these features most often when accessing their software solution*:



Grain Inventory

Manage inventory and bins, track movement from field to storage or storage to contract, including who hauled it and when.



Crop Planning

Input crop planning needs by the field for seed, fertilizer, crop protection and other practices.



Profitability Analysis

Calculate potential profit by mapping out revenue, variable costs and fixed expenses for planned crops, while summarizing budget(s).



Activity/Task Management

Facilitate efficient workflows and streamline the team. Collaborate from anywhere.

The most common objection: data ownership & protection

The primary objection farmers have to adopting farm management software is concerns over data security*, specifically, that government or regulatory agencies will access agronomic data or that companies may access and profit from it.

Farmers have questions around privacy, proprietary rights and how the ag industry balances a farmer's need for confidentiality, the economics at play and the public good.

The information produced on a farm is valuable in many ways, and, therefore, is in high demand. It is understandable that farmers may have concerns around the ways ag data could be used, shared and even sold, especially when it has the potential to affect the bottom line.

We understand that farmers are skeptical when adopting new technology, especially those platforms that track, manage and optimize your operations. We encourage you to choose a provider that is transparent and puts your mind at ease.

Where we stand

As part of the TELUS Agriculture family, our approach to data transparency and privacy is that farmers own their information and are empowered to choose who can access it. Strict guidelines for data security are in place to protect farm data.

How else can you protect your data when using a farm management solution? The best action to take is to be proactive and stay informed.

* Stratus Ag Research 'Dynamics of Data in Ag', CDN 2021



Here are some considerations to keep in mind:

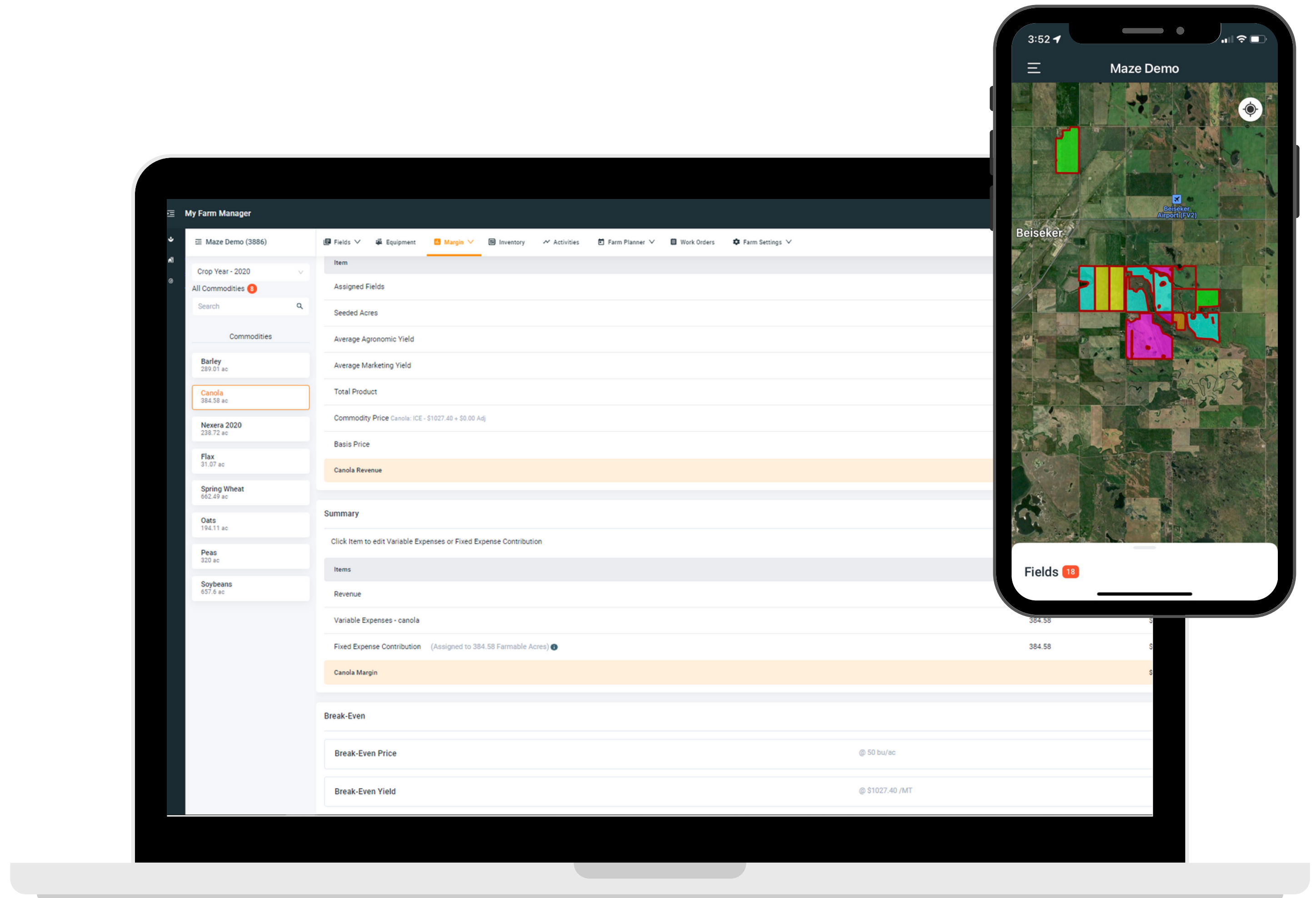
✓ **Don't assume all solutions are equal**

Agtech software comes in a variety of forms so it's best to do your homework. Talk to consultants, friends, neighbours and peers in the industry to understand key strengths and weaknesses. And, above all, ask questions about data ownership. A high-quality, efficient solution will communicate who owns the data and what ownership really means.

✓ **Understand user agreements**

Technology agreements are complex, lengthy and not typically an easy read. They may not clearly state usage and ownership rights for farm-generated data. It is important to know who owns the farm data produced, as well as the ways in which it might be used before any contract is signed.

The main goals when reviewing data security are to understand how the agreement protects both your privacy and data ownership. Look to understand that the contract describes the type(s) of data being collected, how control of farm data is addressed and that the contract states whether the data might be accessed, sold or shared.



Plan for success

As the influx of agtech sweeps across fields today, the old adage that "the best-laid plans often go awry" no longer applies to your farm. Crop plans may be as old as farming but the latest in farm management software takes your farm's success to a new level.

Using farm management software, you can track everything happening on your farm from seed to sale in one organized place, easily accessed from your mobile device or desktop. Crop year plans, input needs and action plans are now easier to share with your team.

Garth Donald, Manager of Agronomy for Decisive Farming by TELUS Agriculture, says crop planning is all about fiscal responsibility within the farm operation and that solid planning is the best way to ensure a positive ROI year-over-year. Having every piece – including seed, crop rotation and nutrients, timelines and budgeting – captured in one easy-to-access place is a game-changer.

"We all love to use pen and paper but how many books are you going to go through to get that information when you can use software where it's all right there," he says. "It's a live entity. This is big when we look year-to-year."

That near real-time aspect allows you to enter information as things are happening, keeping it up-to-date and on track. You always have an accurate picture of your farm at your fingertips.

There are countless ways a farm management solution elevates your farm's success:

Defined activities with attached timelines and cost estimates

"This includes keeping yourself organized," says Donald. "Having that to-do list in [the digital format] is huge. Beyond the overall planning of 'where am I going day-to-day' I also know what I'm doing this year and how it affects next year's crop plan." Knowing each field's plans early mean you can know everything you need to buy. Bring on the early purchase programs and volume discounts.

Keep everyone up to date and on the same page

As farms grow larger with more people involved, communication is everything. "With this software, important information such as grain storage are no longer just on a piece of paper or whiteboard," says Donald. "Knowing which bin to pull certain loads or commodities from, for example different premiums

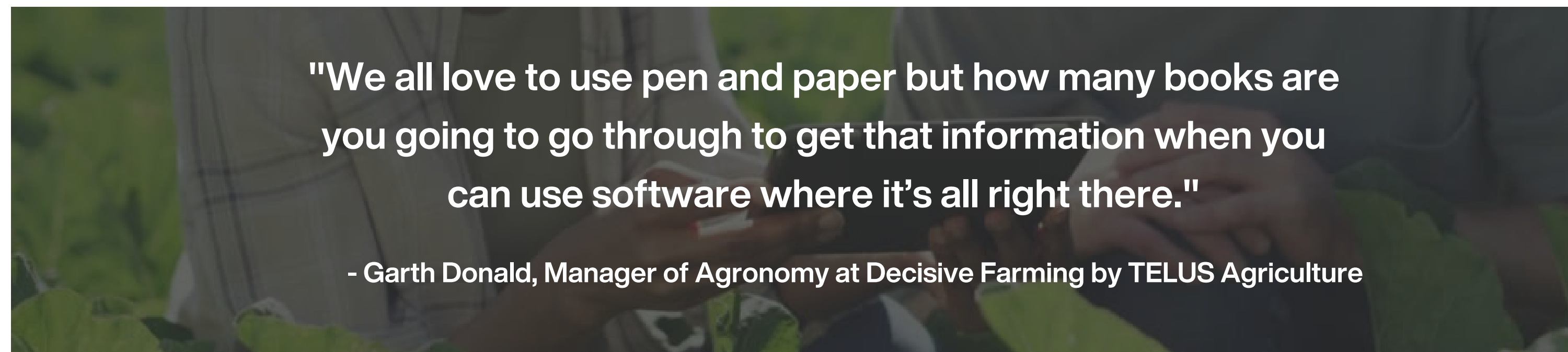
having this kind of information is crucial when we come into the larger operations."

See the virtual implications, financially and agronomically, of different scenarios

A simple click from page to page allows you to see exactly what's happening in each field and compare it to previous years' details. You can consider the possibilities in trying a different crop, see if increased inputs are actually improving your profits and project future revenue. "And you can make good decisions on-the-fly," says Donald.

Prepare for the future

As the agriculture industry increasingly demands traceability from field to table, there is no better time to bring technology to your farm. "It's easier to start now and have these records than have to go back five or 10 years, because traceability is coming to the farm," says Donald. "You're familiar with your system and you're already a big step ahead."



"We all love to use pen and paper but how many books are you going to go through to get that information when you can use software where it's all right there."

- Garth Donald, Manager of Agronomy at Decisive Farming by TELUS Agriculture

Look forward



Why you should think about future crop years now

Why start thinking about future crop years now? Keeping digital records through a farm management solution enables you to quickly access an accurate understanding of historical successes and challenges presented on a field-by-field basis. This can put you in a better position to elevate your operation by strategically seeding high-value and high-yield potential crops on your most productive fields.

If you're still using a pen and notepad to record farm information, it can be more difficult to replicate what's worked in previous years – and avoid what didn't.

"I would have loved to have someone prior to me keep 20 years of records, the way I am now, so that I would have some data to use to be more strategic." Abby Majerus, Majerus Ranch.

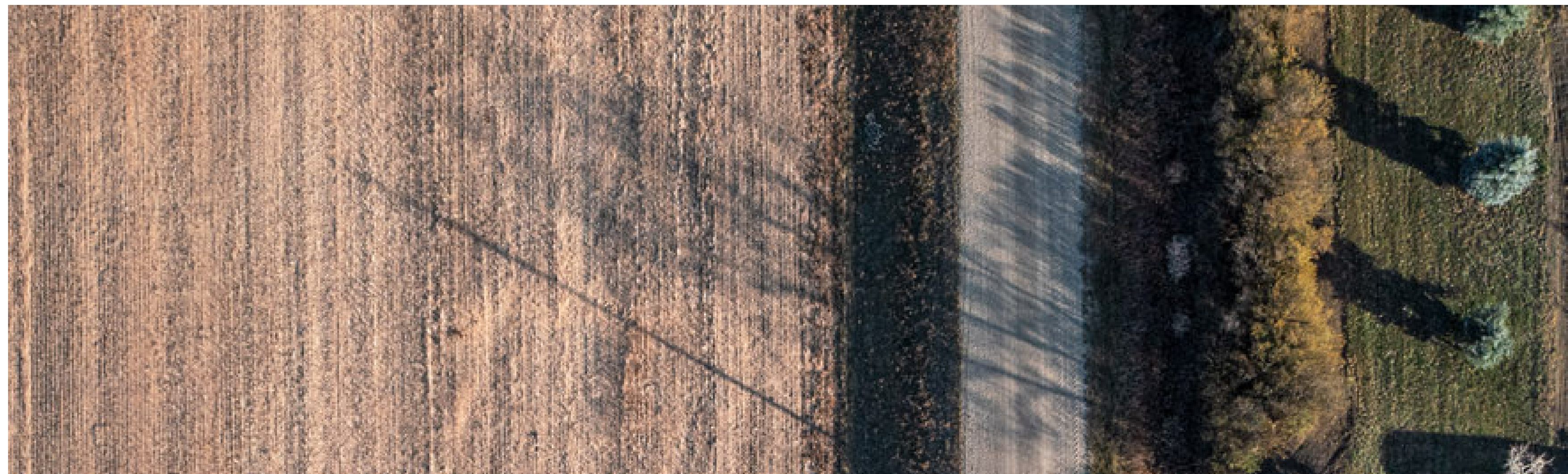
If you start recording your farm information in a software solution today, in a few years, you will have several years of crop insights to compare on a field-by-field basis – that means you can adjust your plan to accommodate each field's needs. A good farm management solution allows you to calculate projections, overlay records and produce reports while simultaneously storing the information safely and securely.

What will I learn from my farm information?

By storing historical information, farm management solutions give you an accurate record of all on-farm activities including previously grown crops, field-specific fertilizer blends, seed-drill settings, weather information, and more. Having the ability to compare multiple years of data is one of the best ways for you to identify trends that can be applied to next year's crop plan, which can help increase your chances of achieving the best possible yields while monitoring input costs and budgets.

"I would have loved to have someone prior to me keep 20 years of records the way I am now so that I would have some data to use to be more strategic."

Abby Majerus
Majerus Ranch, Montana
[Read more about Abby here](#)



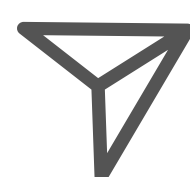


Here are a few examples of how your farm information can be used in years to come:



Soil information

Know your soil profile and understand its past so you can optimize its future based on previous crop plans and results — this will help with crop planning down the road.



Information sharing

Pull accurate reports that can be shared with your agronomist, banker and other partners that benefit from your detailed information



Marketing

Easily compare profit margins across your crops and fields to make better plans for your farm and understand how costs and revenues impact your bottom line so you can make on-the-go decisions.



Inputs

Keep track of what was seeded and sprayed on your fields to avoid any crop rotation or herbicide carry-over issues.



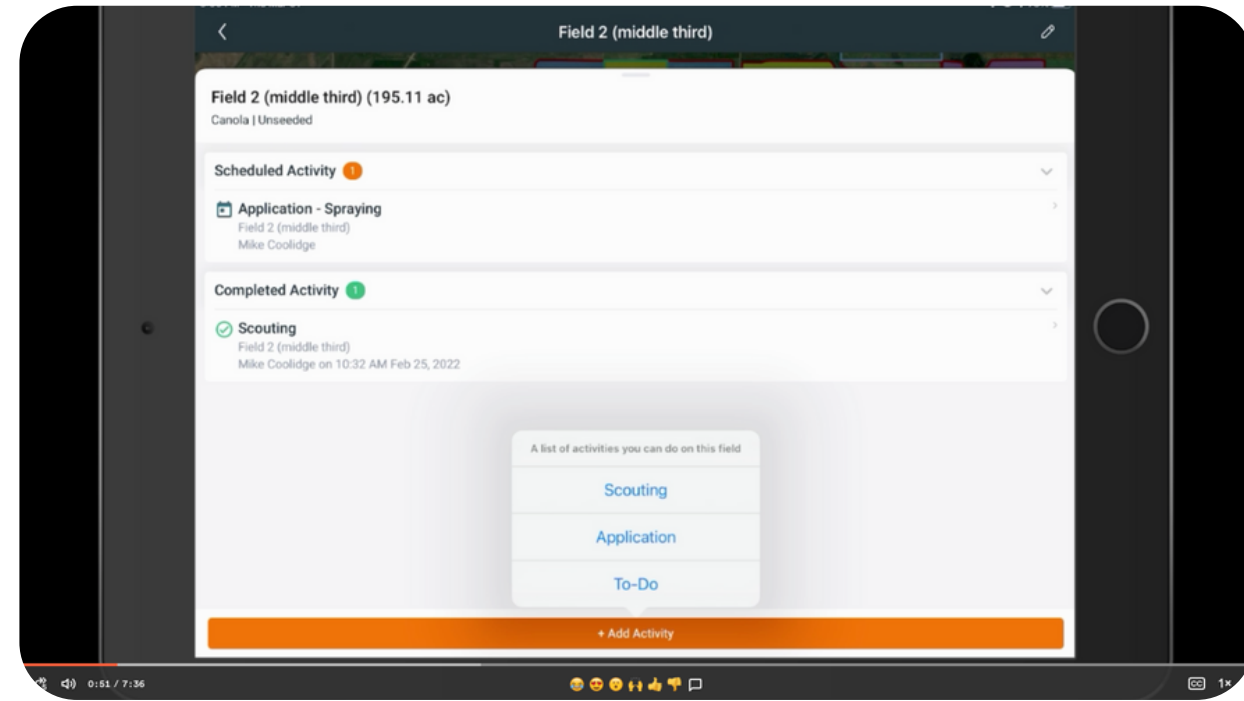
Monitor growth

Compare growth patterns on a field-by-field basis to understand which crops work best in a particular field or region.

What should you look for in a farm management solution?

A good farm management solution puts you at the centre, making it easy to use and accessible to all members of the farm team. It provides the flexibility to input various types of information and insights and should be portable (accessible through your mobile phone, desktop or tablet) so you can carry a complete history of your fields on-the-go for quick reference.

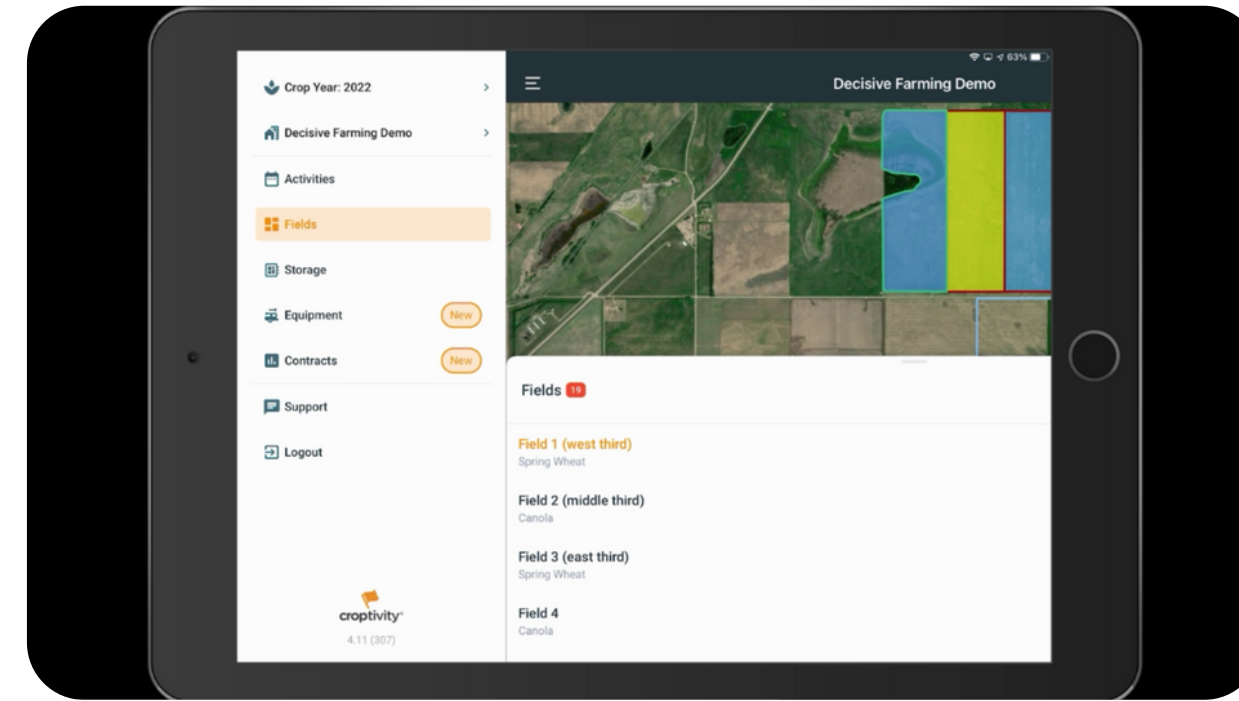
Resources



Adding a scouting activity

Record your observations and/or schedule the observations you need to be completed.

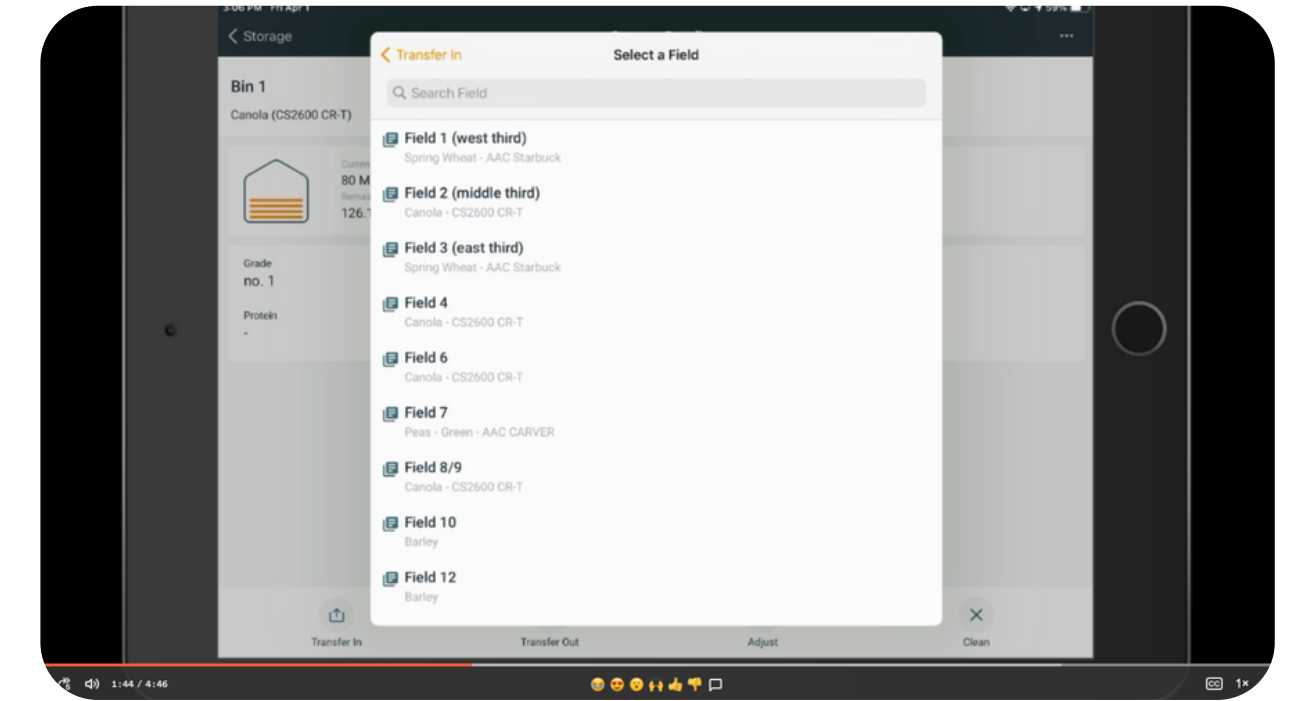
Watch video



Complete a scheduled activity

Quickly mark an activity complete and add any info that you need to.

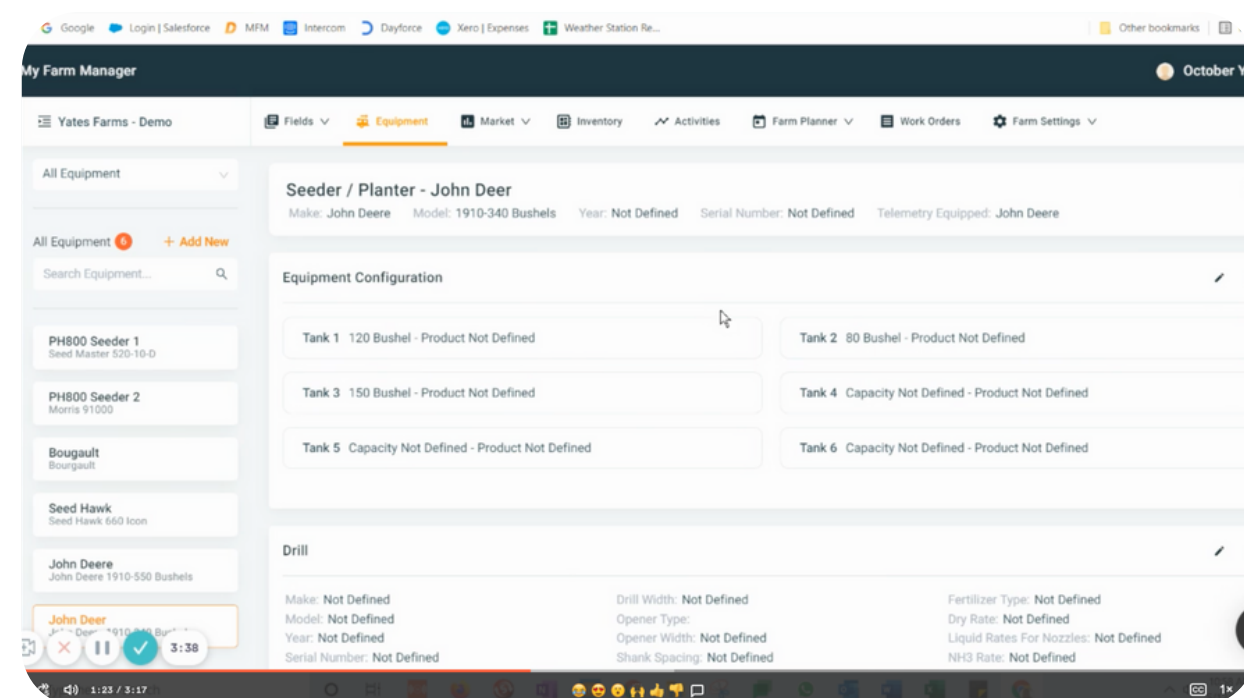
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Recording storage transfers

Snap a quick picture of your contracts and delivery tickets so you can keep your information in one place.

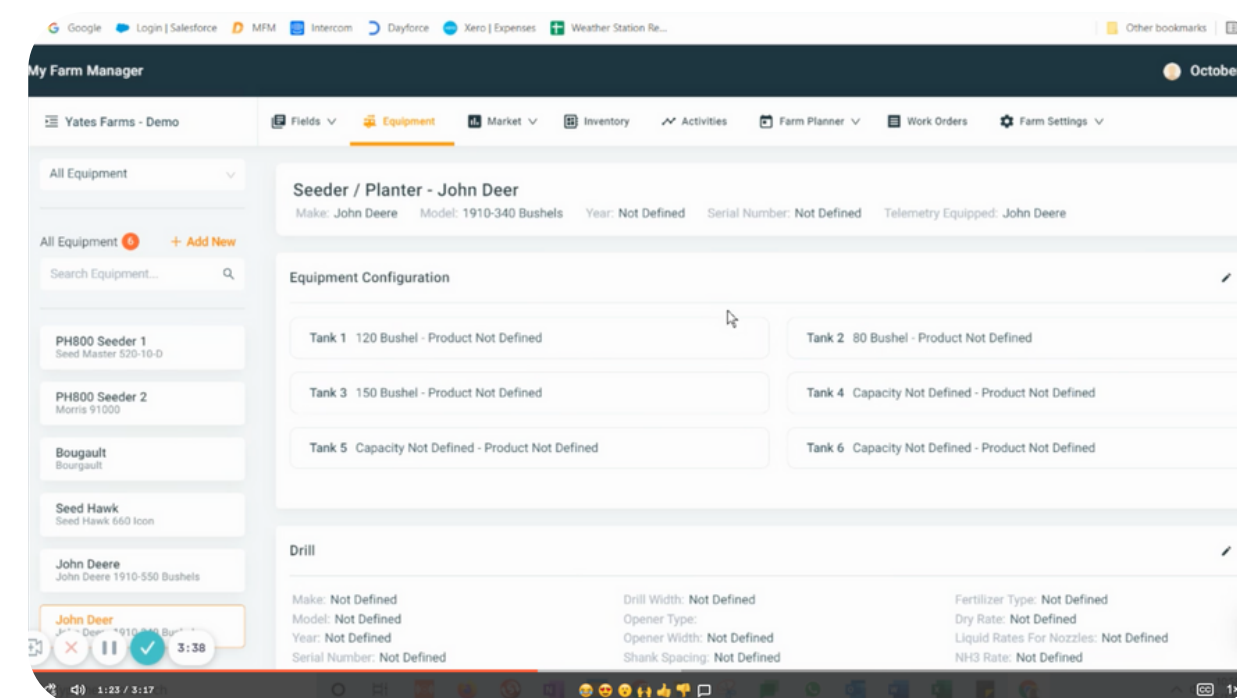
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Adding equipment

Keep track of your equipment, assets and maintenance records.

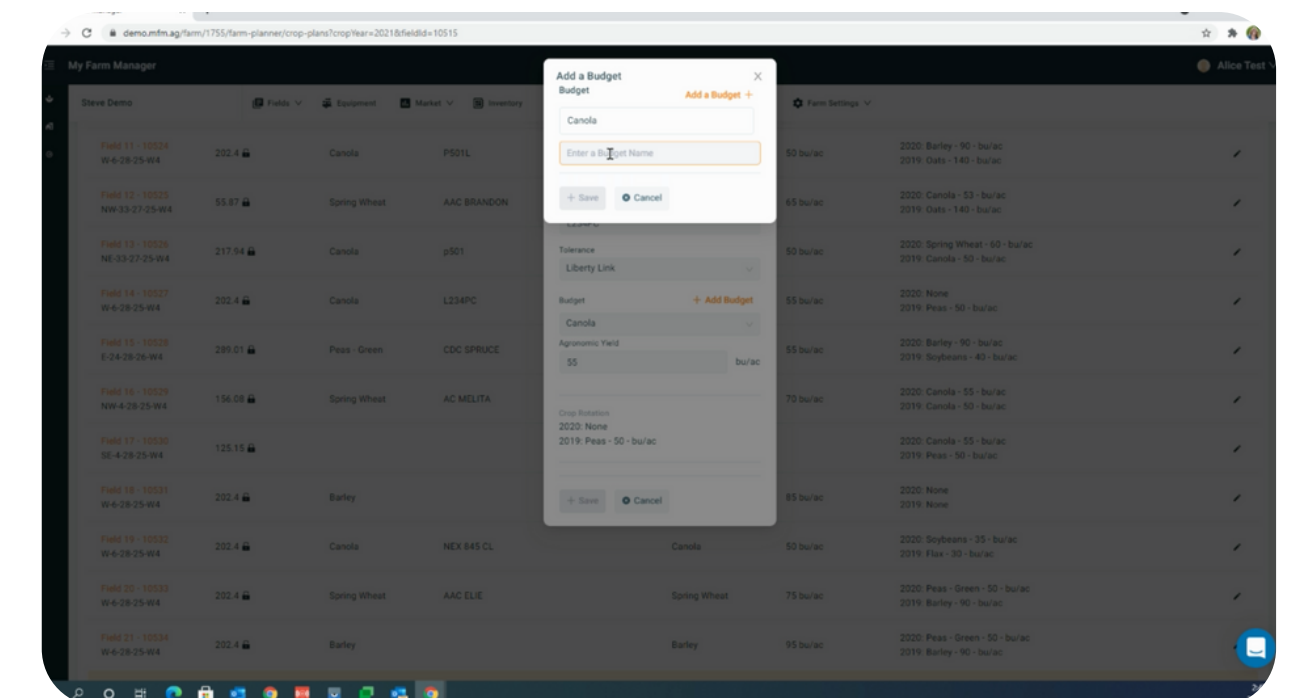
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Adding a crop plan

Add crop plans for crop rotations and colour code your fields for easy organization.

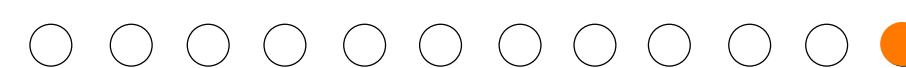
Watch video



Adding a budget

How to create a new budget for your individual fields or crop types.

Watch video





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decisivefarming.com
info@decisivefarming.com



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