

Valley Insights®

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LOCATION:

Eagle View Farms
Magic Valley in East Central Idaho,
30 miles west of Twin Falls

PROFILE:

Primarily dairy operation with 8,000 head of cattle
6,500 acres of farmland
Corn silage, hay, and triticale for the dairy, and approx. 400 acres of potatoes in rotation

EQUIPMENT:

- Approximately 80 pivots - Valley® and three other brands
- Valley 365®/AgSense®, BaseStation3™ remote telemetry and one other system
- Valley Insights®

VISUAL DETECTION:

- Plugged sprinklers
- Sprinklers left on
- Missed areas of irrigation
- Leaking boot gaskets

ACTION TAKEN:

- Unplugged sprinklers
- Replaced boots
- Improved maintenance times

RESULTS:

- Saved drive time
- Clearer, more comprehensive visual coverage of every field
- Healthier crops
- Eliminated watering skips

Valley Insights™ Helps Avoid Crop Loss Through Early Detection

Eagle View Farms is a family-owned dairy growing corn silage, hay and triticale for the dairy, and rotating around 400 acres of potatoes.

Gary Schmidt manages approximately 80 pivots on the farm. He handles the watering schedules, does all the maintenance and repairs, and tracks water issues in the fields. He's very hands-on, but driving to each pivot to check for problems takes a lot of time. That's why Schmidt has used several types of imagery detection services to help him, leaving him with mixed results. This year, at the recommendation of his Valley Dealer, Jeremy Martin from Sprinkler Shop, he tried Valley Insights™.

"I was a little skeptical at first because there's so many different programs out there, and we've subscribed to probably three or four in the last five years that are hit or miss," says Schmidt. "After a while we go on to the next one because that's supposed to be a good deal. But with Valley Insights, the method and way they take their imagery, it's by far the best we've seen yet."

Valley Insights uses imagery to determine crop health concerns related to irrigation and other factors. It does this by feeding the imagery into algorithms with artificial intelligence technology to detect anomalies, and then notifies the grower about what's happening so they can take proper action, saving time and increasing profitability.

Martin says he knew Eagle View Farms would benefit from Valley Insights because it provides detailed information quickly.

"Gary likes Valley Insights because he can see what's happening in the field the day after we collect imagery," Martin explains. "He's not a week behind like he would be with strictly thermal images. He knows right away if a field has issues, and he can deal with it right away. He's a tech guy, and he fixes all his own equipment, so the value of the detections are important to him."

"The biggest thing I like about Valley Insights is the high resolution on the pictures they send," says Schmidt. "We use it to pick up our problems, like plugged sprinklers, skips, watering issues and that kind of stuff."



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Good Information in Changing Conditions

The weather changes quickly in Magic Valley, so managing water is crucial at Eagle View Farms. Temperatures can fluctuate drastically – as much as 45 degrees in two days. They opt not to irrigate when it's cool, but with 80 pivots to turn on when it heats up, any issue can become a big problem.

Schmidt explains, "Watering time is probably the most critical time for us, partly because it gets hot here really fast. If you're not on top of your watering, the ground dries out really quick. All of a sudden you're a day or two behind. That makes a big difference when you come to the end of the year and you go to harvest your crop, whether or not you got water on it at the right time."

That's why finding problems quickly is so important, and Schmidt says Valley Insights provides fast information. The captured imagery and AI field analysis provide notifications that direct him to the exact spots where the crops need attention, so he can address the issue quickly.

Saving Time and Crops

If there are machine and water management issues detected, there's no doubt you'd want the experts in irrigation by your side. Valley Irrigation, the founder of the pivot irrigation industry, with the leading AI and machine learning (ML) company, Prospera Technologies, take the datapoints collected and synthesize them into proactive notifications that give the grower pinpoint accuracy to the specific area in the field where the issue is occurring. The grower can begin to take the action needed to sustain crop health with next-level support as needed from their Valley Dealer. This level of accuracy increases efficiency, advances crop health and minimizes inputs.

By spotting potential issues right away, Eagle View Farms avoided the potential of lost crops due to improper watering. For example, Valley Insights alerted Schmidt to problems in a field that they suspected had issues the previous year.

"When we got the notification and picture, we saw that it was quite bad, so we went and investigated a little bit deeper," he explains. "It turned out we had some boot gaskets that were leaking, so we got those fixed." Tracking so many pivots can be a challenge, and without timely notifications, problems may go unchecked for days or even weeks.

"We're using Valley Insights as a tool to pick up our problems, so it's a great tool for us," says Schmidt. "If I didn't have it, we would be running around a lot more, looking for plugged birds (sprinklers) all the time. I like it because that imagery covers a lot more ground than I could in one day."

