

Valley Insights[®]

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LOCATION:

Klaustermeyer Farms, Inc.
Eastern Washington, in the
Columbia Basin

PROFILE:

Between 2,600 and 3,000 acres of owned
and rented land – own approx. 25%

Level ground due to bringing irrigation in
as part of the Columbia Basin Project

About 7 in. of annual rainfall

Crops are mainly carrots and onions,
along with some leafy greens

Rotate crops with other farmers who grow
potatoes, beans, alfalfa and small grains

EQUIPMENT:

- All Valley[®] pivots on owned land and use various brands on rented land
- AgSense[®] telemetry for all pivots – move to different pivots each year
- Water from a pond from the Columbia Basin Project
- Valley Insights[®]

VISUAL DETECTION:

- Under-watering beneath a corner machine
- Plugged sprinklers

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Valley Insights[®] Pays For Itself with One Big Discovery

Jim Klaustermeyer and his father began their farming operation together about 30 years ago. They grow vegetables including carrots and onions, and they have aligned themselves with other growers to rotate crops on each other's land. They own only 25% of the land they use, and rent the balance on a long-term basis.

“We find ourselves rotating around with different alliances,” says Klaustermeyer. “They would come in and do their deal for maybe a year, maybe a potato field, and then I’d come in and trade them some ground so I could grow carrots on their field, and they could grow potatoes on mine. That’s how we’ve been filling that rotation. Sometimes we put a multi-year crop like alfalfa in the mix as well.

With limited annual rainfall, all crops in eastern Washington rely on irrigation. Since the Klaustermeyers rent so much of their land, there are unknowns every year. They need to monitor their pivots very closely, so it made sense for them to participate in the limited release launch of Valley Insights[®] last year, and to continue using it this growing season.

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 growers about what’s happening so they can take proper action, saving time and resources, and increasing profitability.



“THE COST BENEFIT IS EASY TO JUSTIFY. IT’S A FEW DOLLARS PER ACRE TO MONITOR YOUR SYSTEM. IT TAKES VERY FEW CORRECTIONS TO PAY FOR ITSELF.”

Jim Klaustermeyer

ACTION TAKEN:

- Adjusted to over-water to relieve water deficit
- Replaced or cleared plugged sprinklers

RESULTS:

- Improved yield and crop health
- Saved time
- Valley Insights[®] paid for itself



The “Aha” Moment

Klaustermeyer monitored most of their acres with Valley Insights this year, finding many issues such as plugged nozzles or slight over-watering near the center pivot tower. While he says he may not have ever noticed those issues, the real “aha” moment came when he received an insight alerting him to a situation under a corner machine.

“We had a deficit in irrigation at a time when crops needed lots of water,” he explains. “Valley Insights revealed a definite pattern: as the system opened up, it was not getting enough water out. The pattern when the corner was tucked in seemed to be decent, but as you came into the corner and the machine opened up, it was substantially under-watering. We were able to adjust the system to over-water a bit as it was opening up, and that helped to relieve some of that deficit.”

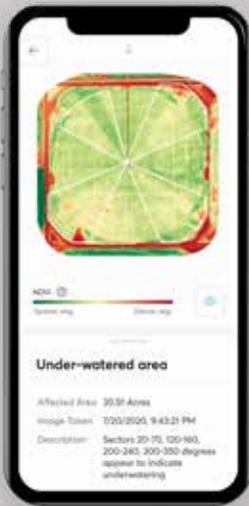
In fact, Klaustermeyer says that one incident, which covered around 25 acres out of a 150-acre circle, justified the price of Valley Insights for the year – and maybe even next year.

“The cost benefit is easy to justify,” he says. “It’s a few dollars per acre to monitor your system. It takes very few corrections to pay for itself. Even if everything went fine, the peace of mind that it’s going fine is also worth something. That may be harder to quantify, but it’s very valuable.”

Valley Insights and AgSense[®]: A Good Partnership

Klaustermeyer uses AgSense[®] for remote management of all his pivots, and it fits well with his nomadic form of farming. They move it to the pivots they use each year, no matter what brands are on the land they farm.

“Without telemetry, it seemed like a lot of times you’d drive by, you’d inspect the circle and it looked good, and as soon as it would be in your rear view mirror it would break down,” he says. “It was a big step in how we farmed day to day. Now Valley Insights and AgSense are a good partnership. I know it’s a lot of technology to bring together, but I think it’s a nice package.”



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