VALLEY

CASE IN POINT

LOCATION:	Knoerzer family farm South Central Nebraska
SITUATION:	— 4,800 acres of corn and soybeans — Cow/calf operation

CHALLENGE:	— Manage 35 center pivots,
	  four corners, one bender and
	  a stock well
	— Keep cattle watered
	— Track water and electricity

DEPLOYMENT:	— Control and manage center
	  pivots remotely with AgSense®
	— Install Valley ICON® smart panel
	  on corner system for more control
	— Monitor stock well with AgSense

EFFECT:	— Time and money savings — Simpler remote management — Ability to make more precise adjustments

Grower Uses Technology That Makes Economic Sense

Bryant Knoerzer has always been open to trying new methods and technology that might make his farm more efficient and successful. He works with an agronomist, uses up-to-date irrigation methods, did grid sampling for 20 years, and tried soil moisture probes early in the game. He holds onto the practices that make economic sense, like irrigation and remote control and management of his irrigation machines.

Knoerzer runs a cow/calf operation and grows corn and soybeans on 4,800 acres, most of which is irrigated. He owns 17 Valley® irrigation machines on his own land. He also rents land that is irrigated with another 13 machines – seven Valley pivots and six Reinkes.

He has been using remote telemetry on his machines since it first became available.

Knoerzer explains, "I started with Valley Tracker technology at least seven years ago, because I have one field that's farther away that had an irrigation machine that kept shutting down. It was frustrating, so I started using remote telemetry."

"Then when Valley started offering AgSense telemetry, I switched to that," Knoerzer says. "I've been adding more pivots to that network every year, and now I have all of my pivots, a stock well and even a Valley Precision Corner® on my AgSense network."

Controlling the Corner

Knoerzer had an older TouchPro control panel on his Valley Precision Corner, but he wanted to have the same control over it that he had on his other machines. He decided to install a Valley ICONX smart panel on the corner machine.

The Valley ICONX takes control of the existing panel to bring the irrigation machine into the AgSense network. Knoerzer's corner is powered by a diesel unit, so he still has to start it at the panel on the full-color, five-inch touchscreen display. After that, he can monitor it from his iPad® or smartphone.

"I really have the best of both worlds, because I can use the Valley ICONX at the panel with either the push button or touchscreen," says Knoerzer. "Then I can monitor it just like all of my other irrigation machines. ICONX has all of the goodies of modern technology, but it's still simple enough for anyone to use."

He adds, "The old panel was confusing for some of the people who worked with it. The Valley ICONX maintains the simple characteristics that I liked on my TouchPro panel, but it lets me make more precise adjustments, especially on the end guns."

Keeping Cattle Watered

Knoerzer also controls the water from a stock well with AgSense. He has pastureland about 10 miles away from his home office where 250 cows graze. The pond that had served as a water source for those cattle dried up after a recent drought, so Knoerzer started to pump water from a well to ensure that his cattle have a reliable source of drinking water.

Using AgSense to monitor the well helped Knoerzer avoid a bad outcome from a recent power outage.

"The electric company was out doing some work a while back and accidentally killed the power to the well, so the cows had no clean drinking water for 24 hours," says Knoerzer. "I saw the situation on my smartphone, called the power company, and they got the power back up and running. They had no idea there was a problem."

"That's the whole reason to have AgSense there," he adds. "It was a fluke, but I wouldn't have known otherwise, and the cattle would have suffered. Knowing about the situation helped us solve the problem right away."

valleyirrigation.com