

A Better Way (to manage your Fields and Crops)

Managing fields and crops is more complex at the same time the cost of error is increasing. Farms are working with more fields, more acres, more varieties, more treatments and more environmental regulations each year. At some point, the farm's existing information system (paper, pencil, memory, maybe even spread sheets) breaks. Even when there is a person who has a good grasp of what needs to be done - the system becomes stressed as soon as that person needs to begin relying on others for help. When farms are looking for a solution to tighten their management over their fields and crops; software can be a part of the solution.

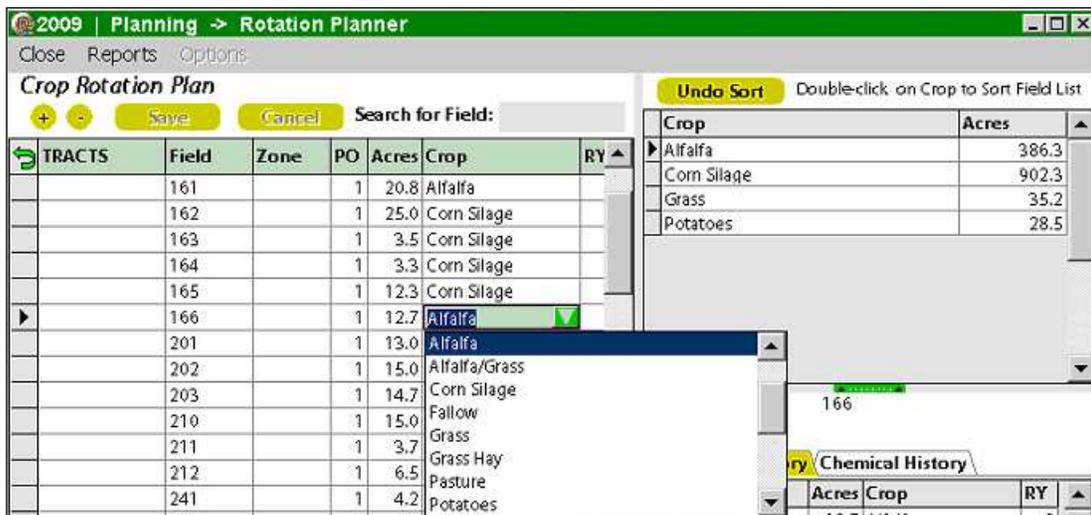
Fields and Crops Manager is a new program that will help Northeast farmers manage their fields and crops at the level of detail they prefer. Some growers may just want a good way to track their spray usage. Other growers may be more interested in planning their rotations and tracking their manure usage. What ever the area(s) of interest, this program can help. It will become available in early 2010.

“There have been several different software programs for crop management floating around for several years but none have really taken hold with Northeast growers. Either entering the information was too cumbersome, or the program demanded more detail to operate than the users were ready to provide”, according to Jack van Almelo who has been heading up a team of developers refining Fields and Crops Manager and getting it ready for general release. “We have drawn from our cow management software experience as well as guidance from a group of users, to make activity entry quicker and easier, and the program flexible for the user.

Why use Fields and Crops Manager Software?

1. Organize your fields' records.
2. Track what you plant in each field each year to make harvest lists, and to make better rotation decisions.
3. Optimize yields and track changes in your fields' fertility.
4. Track where you are putting the farm's manure (and tally the nutrients from the manure) and, if your CNMP is integrated with the program, make lists to guide your spreader(s).
5. Make orderly spray and treatment lists.
6. List fields that need to be sampled and tested this year.
7. Historical lookup of all field management information you choose to track.
8. Easy and accurate rotation planning.
9. Track costs.
10. Track yields.
11. Create your FSA reports easily. (The program will keep track of FSA identification and print lists you can use for FSA reporting).

Easy Crop Rotation Planning



TRACTS	Field	Zone	PO	Acres	Crop	RY
	161		1	20.8	Alfalfa	
	162		1	25.0	Corn Silage	
	163		1	3.5	Corn Silage	
	164		1	3.3	Corn Silage	
	165		1	12.3	Corn Silage	
	166		1	12.7	Alfalfa	
	201		1	13.0	Alfalfa	
	202		1	15.0	Alfalfa/Grass	
	203		1	14.7	Corn Silage	
	210		1	15.0	Fallow	
	211		1	3.7	Grass	
	212		1	6.5	Grass Hay	
	241		1	4.2	Potatoes	

Crop	Acres
Alfalfa	386.3
Corn Silage	902.3
Grass	35.2
Potatoes	28.5

Acres	Crop	RY
12.7	Alfalfa	

The rotation planner lets you work through each field, look at its rotation and chemical history, and then tally the total acres of each crop as you adjust each field's crop plan. When the user records a planting - the actual crop is established for the field.

Track as much, or as little information as makes sense for you.

Some farms only want to work with the basics, such as keeping track of the ground they are farming, planning their rotations and recording what they actually plant. Others may want detailed records of each treatment and action they take on a field. While one farm is tracking their chemical history another farm might only want to track the crop and manure applications. Whatever the interest, the field history page can show the current growing year history, or everything that has ever been recorded for a given field. Additional filters help you zoom in on particular operations and/or products across all fields.

Field	Location	GY	Date	Oper Type	Product	Rate	Units	Acres	PI #	Status Description
162		2009	04/27/09	CP	AAtrex 4L	0	Pts/Acre			
162		2009	04/27/09	CP	Lumax	0	Qts/Acre			
162		2009	04/27/09	Fert	Nytran	8.5	Gals/Acre	25.0		
162		2009	04/27/09	Plant	Corn Silage	0	Plants/Acr	25.0		32T85
162		2009	04/03/09	Manure	Liquid-Main Farm	3	Loads/Field			Diller Tank
162		2009	04/02/09	Manure	Liquid-Main Farm	5	Loads/Field			Diller Tank
162		2009	03/13/09	Manure	Liquid-Main Farm	2	Loads/Field			Diller Tank
162		2009	03/03/09	Manure	Liquid-Main Farm	2	Loads/Field			Diller Tank
162		2009	02/11/09	Manure	Liquid-Main Farm	2	Loads/Field			Diller Tank
162		2009	02/10/09	Manure	Liquid-Main Farm	3	Loads/Field			Diller Tank
162		2009	02/09/09	Manure	Liquid-Main Farm	2	Loads/Field			Diller Tank

Use your Soil Labs without having to wade through your filing cabinet.

You can keep your soil test results in your PC which means you can begin asking questions like what fields have a low PH (and when did I last lime them) or which fields have a high phosphorus test? Not only can you ask questions about your fields based on their last soil test but you can look at the historical changes in tests as you build up a history.

Lab Column (pH)	Sample Date	Field/Sect	Crop	Fertilizer (Lime)	Rate	Application Date
6.31	1/13/06	165/A	Corn Silage	Dolomitic Lime	4000.0 lbs/Acre	04/08/08
6.31	1/13/06	165/B	Corn Silage	Dolomitic Lime	4000.0 lbs/Acre	04/08/08
6.45	1/07/07	201/	Alfalfa	Dolomitic Lime	4000.0 lbs/Acre	04/02/09
6.49	1/07/07	211/A	Corn Silage			
6.49	1/07/07	211/B	Corn Silage			
6.11	1/13/06	241/A	Alfalfa	Dolomitic Lime	2000.0 lbs/Acre	04/14/08
6.11	1/13/06	241/B	Alfalfa	Dolomitic Lime	2000.0 lbs/Acre	04/14/08
6.25	1/07/07	247/A	Corn Silage			
6.25	1/07/07	247/B	Corn Silage			

Field ID - A Big Deal

It is getting more complicated to farm. At some point information management becomes a bottleneck and growers want to use their PC's and software to make better decisions with more comprehensive history. But in order to use software efficiently they need a thrifty field identification (ID) system - and the best for entering information quickly and moving through the software efficiently, are numbers. Few farms use numbers for identifying their fields and are as excited about changing their field ID as they are pulling out a finger nail. So they get stuck and the bottleneck remains.

While the Fields and Crops Manager program can work with any sort of field ID "Think hard about your field ID before starting any program" according to Jack van Almelo, the software development team leader. "If you have been through systemizing your cow records with software you know that a simple numeric system is the easiest to work with. We think the same is true for fields."

Create Targeted lists of Crops for Treatment or for Harvest

Corn Silage		Harvest Worksheet (Corn, Silage)				Crop Year: 2009		
Field/Location	Location Description	Plant Date	Variety	Planted Acres	Harvest Date	Loads	Notes	
162	Route 29 Kite kite by Greenway	04/27/09	32T85	25.0				
602	Route 29 Kite kite by Greenway	04/27/09	33T55	5.3				
BG12	In motor canal	04/27/09	32T85	1.9				
165	Sie man's	04/28/09	33T55	12.3				
SH11	Sie man's big sheep field	04/28/09	32T85	32.2				
SH2	Sie man's goat pasture	04/28/09	32T85	11.6				
601	Route 29 Kite kite	04/29/09	33T55	23.5				

Make lists of crops by variety and planted date which can help guide your harvest as well as pick out key varieties for special treatment - for example glyphosphate ready varieties.

A new report is available in Fields and Crops - the Manure Spreading Work Order

If the farm's Annual CAFO plan is created by a planner that runs the planner's companion software "Fields and Crops Advisor" this report will tell the user how much manure they can apply and those amounts are updated as the farm records their manure applications. To create a manure spreading work order the user selects the product (manure) that they are going to apply, the spreader they are going to use, the fields they want to spread, and then sets a default rate for spreading. Once in the "grid", the user can key in different rates to apply before printing.

The final report allows for the applicator to record the loads they applied to each field.

Manure Work Order						Work Order Date: 11/28/2009	
Spreader: Diller Tank		Liquid-Main Farm					
Load Size: 6.3 KGals		Winter Broadcast					
Field/Section(s)	Acres	Max KGals/Acre	Application Rate KGals/Acre	Loads/Acre	Total Loads	Loads	
401 / Corn Silage	* 6.1	12.00	6.00	0.95	5.81		
402 / Corn Silage	* 13.7	14.00	6.00	0.95	13.05		
403 / Corn Silage	* 15.0	12.00	6.00	0.95	14.29		
404 / Corn Silage	* 11.8	17.00	6.00	0.95	11.24		
451 /A Corn Silage	* 21.2	10.00	6.00	0.95	20.19		

Internet Based

Fields and Crops Manager is an internet based program which means a farm will need internet access faster than traditional dial-up. It also means that the farm's data is kept offsite and backed up automatically and that users do not have to bother with putting software updates in their own PC, as they will always be running the latest version.

Fields and Crops Manager is sold and supported by Farmland Environmental. For more information call 1-800-540-8716 or email: jack.vanalmelo@farmlandenvironmental.com or dani.thon@farmlandenvironmental.com.