

Crop Production



FINGERTIP CONTROLS: Mike Bauerle says he will add Internet controls to more pivots for 2008.

Pivot control a touch away

By ANN TONER

THE controls on some of Mike Bauerle's center pivots are as close as his fingertips — wherever he's at. Installing Lindsay's FieldNET irrigation management package means that the Imperial area farmer can do anything he used to do standing at the control box — from his home computer or cell phone.

If there's a problem with the pivot or he wants updates of the pivot status, the pivot controller communications package will also e-mail and text message him. There's also a voice mail option.

Bauerle installed both the FieldNET and the FieldBOSS, an updated controller package, on two center pivots in 2007. "They're both 'special needs' pivots," he says. "One has chemigation and is a good distance from the house. The other is nearby, but under electric

At a glance

- Mike Bauerle controls two pivots from his computer via the Internet.
- Installing FieldNET saved time and fuel due to fewer field trips.
- He plans to add similar controls to more pivots for the 2008 season.

load management, so it can only run from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m."

Bauerle says the monitoring and control system cost about \$1,000. He had some added expense because he needed to update the control boxes on both pivots.

Payoff time

The system paid for itself the first year in savings in time and fuel in managing the two 'special needs' pivots, Bauerle says. He is adding the package to five or six additional pivots for 2008, with

an eye to equipping all his pivots this way by 2009.

FieldNET shows Bauerle the position of the pivot in the field, whether it is on or off, what direction it is running and how much water is being applied. It can also chart water usage for the season and keep chemigation records.

From the FieldNET home page, Bauerle can access a five-day local weather forecast and minicharts of details to be found on each pivot system's page.

An accessory package can add data from an automated farm weather station that can report rain, wind, humidity and evapotranspiration. A rain gauge shutoff can be programmed in.

Some driving required

FieldNET doesn't mean Bauerle never has to visit the pivots.

"You still have to check it every few days. You have to check the oil dripper," he says. "But I check them morning and night on my laptop. It cut inspection times to those pivots from twice a day to once a day, sometimes once every two days."

When one of the pivots on FieldNET developed problems and shut down in the heat of August, Bauerle was alerted right away and could take prompt steps to get it going again.

"Otherwise, I could have lost some bushels," he says. "The big thing is, you'll know right away if it runs one hour or quits. When you're in the Upper Republican NRD's water allocation program, timing and management are critical."

Matt Skomp, sales representative for Pivot Electric of Imperial, says the management system can be installed on any make of pivot. He has quite a few orders for the management systems in 2008.

Workshops stress using less water

NEBRASKA irrigators already are applying less water to grow a bushel of corn, but that efficiency will have to continue as less water becomes available.

A series of four meetings this month will explain how to get the most out of the water they do apply.

The "Irrigation and Energy Conservation Workshops for Corn Growers" seminars will be Feb. 11, Fairgrounds, Clay Center; Feb. 12, Ag Center, Holdrege; Feb. 13, Fairgrounds, Ogallala; and Feb. 14, Legion Hall, Neligh.

Coming together to sponsor the workshops are the Nebraska Corn Board, Nebraska Corn Growers Association and University of Nebraska Extension.

By attending one of the workshops, you will learn how to:

- apply less water and maximize the value of water
- reduce irrigation pumping costs
- protect the environment
- be aware of new technological advances in water management
- use information relative to your farming operation that will enhance profitability

For more information, call 1-800-539-8030.

Make Sure Your Plans Include These Spectacular Fall Shows!

New in 2008!
Permanent Biennial Show Site
Boone, Iowa

FARM PROGRESS 2008 SHOW
August 26, 27 & 28 2008
Boone, Iowa

The Nation's Largest
Outdoor Farm Show
www.FarmProgressShow.com

- Field demonstrations – harvesting & tillage
- New product introductions
- Ride 'n Drive
- GPS displays & "hands-on" demonstrations
- 75-acre tent exhibit field
- Seed & crop technology plots
- Cattle handling demonstrations
- Marketing seminars – including Arlan Suderman
- Equine events
- Antique tractors and equipment
- Crafts & collectible farm toys
- Plus exhibits by hundreds of the top agribusinesses from across the country and around the world!

HUSKER HARVEST DAYS 2008

September 9, 10, 11, 2008
Grand Island, Nebraska

The World's Largest
Totally Irrigated Working Farm Show
www.HuskerHarvestDays.com

- 80 acres of exhibits by hundreds of the top agribusinesses from across the country and around the world
- Field demonstrations- side-by-side equipment comparisons
- New product introductions
- Ag marketing seminars
- Irrigation systems, components and accessories
- Global Positioning System products and demonstrations
- Ride 'n Drive demonstration areas
- Equine events
- Cattle handling demonstrations, breed displays
- Crafts and artwork
- Antique tractors and equipment
- Rural Life tent with lifestyle programs and seminars

Contact for More Information:

Phone: (630) 462-2230

Email: shows@farmprogress.com