

Pivot Irrigation is Key to Strong Sugar Beet Germination



Zimmatic pivots help sugar beets germinate properly, while also saving labor costs and conserving water.

Proper pivot irrigation management is critical to profitably growing sugar beets. Just ask Bridgeport, Nebraska, sugar beet grower Kevin Hall, who grows approximately 1,214 ha (3,000 acres) of sugar beets with pivots.

Hall is also chairman of The Western Sugar Cooperative, which processes 54,632 ha (135,000 acres)

of sugar beets in Colorado, Montana, Nebraska and Wyoming into pure granulated sugar that is sold throughout the United States (see “Fast Facts” on reverse).

“Pivot irrigation is absolutely critical during germination and emergence of the sugar beets,” Hall says. “Our Zimmatic pivots work great in

helping the sugar beets to germinate properly and break up any crust that may be preventing emergence. You can’t do that with furrow irrigation.”

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– Kevin Hall



Bill Pierce, owner of Midwest Farm Service, Hall's local Zimmatic dealer, says sugar beet growers in western Nebraska and eastern Wyoming have come to rely on pivot irrigation to successfully manage their sugar beet crops.

“One big advantage of center pivot irrigation over furrow irrigation is the ability to germinate the sugar beet crop in a dry spring,” Pierce says.

Hall also uses his Zimmatic pivots to apply fertilizer and some fungicides to his sugar beets.

Because his land is spread over several miles in several counties in western Nebraska, Hall makes maximum use of his FieldNET web-based irrigation management and control system.

“We have some pivots that are under electric load management and FieldNET™ works great when we have to stop and re-start the pivots. It saves a lot on labor costs,” Hall says. “We are in a water control area and the Zimmatic pivots help us conserve water.”



Zimmatic pivots help Kevin Hall save water on his Nebraska sugar beet farm.

With the recent introduction of Genuity® Roundup Ready® sugar beets and new traits in sugar beet seeds, yields have increased substantially, according to Hall.

Hall says sugar beet prices have been good to firm in recent years, making sugar beet production profitable.

In addition to sugar beets, Hall raises corn, wheat, alfalfa and dry beans.

FAST FACTS

THE WESTERN SUGAR COOPERATIVE

- Represents 54,632 ha (135,000 base acres) of sugar beets in Colorado, Montana, Nebraska and Wyoming.
- Corporate office is in Denver, Colorado, with storage and processing in four states.
- 400 full-time employees.
- \$300 million to \$400 million economic impact on the region.

For more information, visit: <http://www.westernsugar.com>



- The sugar beet crop is planted in the early spring and reaches its peak sugar content in the fall.
- Also known as sucrose, sugar is an important source of carbohydrates for humans.



SOURCE: Kevin Hall and Lindsay Corp.

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