



Building relationships with agricultural industry service providers

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The long-term outlook of climate change often makes it difficult for land managers to have an immediate impact on existing agricultural systems. As a result, REACCH has been focusing on building the capacity of regional producers and agricultural professionals to interpret climate information and assess the associated risks and opportunities. Although these efforts extend to a large network of professionals interested in sustaining Pacific Northwest (PNW) cereal systems, we recognize that agricultural industry service providers are some of the region's producers' most trusted resources.

IMPACT

Agricultural industry service providers and their associated advisors have been cited as some of the most trusted resources for regional producers. Through collaboration, REACCH intends to develop a larger network of professionals who are equipped to support sustainable farm management far into the future.

Because of these partners' close relationships with cereal producers, we value their input and support.

Agricultural industry partners were key participants in Precision Agriculture Demonstration Day in Moscow, ID, in 2014. Commercially available field equipment enhanced with precision technologies was displayed by CHS Primeland (Figure 1) and Jones Truck and Implement, Inc. (Figure 2). Brad Ward, a pilot with Advanced Aviation Solutions, LLC, flew an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) and displayed the photos it captured at lunch. Representatives from Decagon Devices, Inc., demonstrated new soil probes that will soon be incorporated into research and commercial equipment, and Trimble Navigation Ltd. and AgVu Hyperspectral Imaging Services had software available for participants to interact with. Involvement by regional agribusinesses allowed field day attendees to better comprehend the connection between research and implementation of emerging technologies.



Figure 1. CHS Primeland displays a dry fertilizer applicator equipped with precision technologies at a June field day in Moscow, ID. Photo by Leigh Bernacchi.



Figure 2. Jones Truck and Implement, Inc., crop consultants pose for a photo in front of an Apache sprayer at Precision Agriculture Demonstration Day. Photo by Leigh Bernacchi.

Participation of these partners at the field day has already led to further collaboration. CHS Primeland sent 20 members of its field staff to a workshop at the University of Idaho (UI) to learn more about advancing their connection to producers with university extension resources. Brad Ward and other UAV enthusiasts participated in UI's Geographic Information System (GIS) Day to educate students and the general public about laws associated with using UAVs in agriculture.

Regional associations have long recognized the value of building relationships between universities and regional businesses. REACCH has been partnering with the Far West Agribusiness Association (FWAA) and Pacific Northwest Direct Seed Association (PNDSA) in their winter conferences and other events. Each conference brings in approximately 600 participants because both organizations are well established and respected by producers and agribusiness professionals.

Finally, the REACCH Stakeholder Advisory Committee's (SAC) 27 members consist of representatives from seven different regional agribusinesses and associations, in addition to farmers,

grain commissioners, and private and state agency representatives. This group exists to offer support and advice regarding actions that affect stakeholders. Agricultural industry SAC members have served on search committees for REACCH's extension faculty and review committees for its Extension Curriculum Grant Program. They are represented at REACCH's annual meetings and participate in panels and discussions that influence the direction of the project.

Multiple experiences have facilitated agreement among all parties of the great benefit of continued collaboration among academics and industry partners. Further collaboration at field days, workshops, and conferences, as well as involvement of agricultural industry partners in scientific and outreach opportunities, will form a new model for regional agriculture programs. Building strong relationships with multiple stakeholder partners can mutually enrich our efforts to prepare farmers to manage land into the future.