
Testimonial



Ted Sheely: AZCAL, California

When Ted Sheely first began using his BEELINE Navigator™ he was astonished at how much more efficient his farming operation could be – and equally horrified at how inefficient it had been in the past.

Sheely, who was BEELINE Technologies™ first U.S. customer in early 2000, recently bought an additional unit for AZCAL Management company. There are now three BEELINE™ systems on Ted's ranch, covering the 6600 acres of the Lemoore-based cotton, tomato, garlic, chickpeas and wheat operation.

Ted initially projected that economic savings from using BEELINE™ would cover the purchase price in around 18 months. But he has demonstrated that payback can be achieved in less than a year.

"Costs are being shaved because all the increases in efficiency have led to decreases in operation and in-put costs," Ted said.

"One example which demonstrates these savings is the time it takes to rip 160 acres. In the past it would have taken 36 hours but with a BEELINE™ now installed on the same tractor and ripping the same fields I can get the job done in 26 hours."

This time reduction of 30 per cent translates to a dollar value of \$10 an acre – a cost benefit derived from just ripping. Those savings alone have paid for the system so Ted can look forward to reaping the further economic benefits that will come with putting the BEELINE™ on his listing, planting and cultivating tractors.

Ted said the time reduction was not due to increasing the speed of the tractor.

"We picked up the time by not having to lay the lands or spend turning time traveling the ends and we were able to decrease overlap to an inch.

"The same applied to discing - we didn't have to go any faster but we reduced the time it took to do the job by 20 per cent," he said.

Listing provides another example of efficiency gains and cost reductions. Ted averaged a 30% increase in listing ground speed by traveling 1-2 miles per hour faster. This was possible thanks to the GPS auto-steering which allowed the drivers to sustain a high ground speed and maintain guess row accuracy."

"The drivers are now able to spend their time managing the implement tools and not the steering of the tractor," Ted said.

"I asked my driver if he could drive like this without the BEELINE™ and he said for only a couple of hours. With the BEELINE™ we can get the accuracy, efficiency and speed increases 24 hours a day."

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A 30% gain in speed is the equivalent of a 30% reduction in fuel, labor costs, wear and tear and hours on the tractor, passes in the field and compaction. Importantly, it means taking 30% less time to get the job done which can mean enormous savings in critical times.

Ted achieved further increases in efficiency by listing 9 rows with an 8-row lister bar on his last two fields of the year, adding 12½ percent to the efficiency equation.

"From now on everything I list will be the maximum of the bar to fully utilize the tractor and make my operation as efficient as possible," he said.

With these percentages and the dollars they represent it is easy to see how Ted achieved payback for the BEELINE in less than a year.

"Even if I farmed 1000 acres I could still justify the investment of a BEELINE™. It might take longer than a year, but there is still payback," he said.

Ted says that having a BEELINE™ not only saves money, but also it raises farming standards.

"Now that I have this technology and have perfectly straight rows and accurate guess rows I don't settle for anything less. Every acre I've farmed for 2001 was listed and prepared with a BEELINE™ Navigator and will have at least one or several BEELINE™ passes on it throughout the year.

"I was an early adapter as I had heard about it from a friend in Australia who had a high opinion of BEELINE™. I was looking for a tractor guidance system and I was very confident that BEELINE™ was the way to go so I jumped in early - and I haven't looked back since."

Ted's view of the future of technologies such as BEELINE™ is optimistic. He is a leading player in the USDA/NASA Ag 20/20 program, studying the integration of remote-sensing-based tools in precision agricultural management systems to decrease crop inputs, increase production efficiency and improve job quality.

"BEELINE™ is very exciting technology because of all things that it can do – and because of the things that we don't yet know it can do," Ted said.

"I keep finding new things – the sky's the limit when it comes to BEELINE™ applications."