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## KEEPING CONTROL OF YOUR AG DATA

Joe Luck, Precision Ag Specialist at UNL, several years ago was instrumental in the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to join an initiative aimed at helping farmers better control, manage and maximize the value of the data they collect every day in their fields. Yield monitor data is often referred to as “Big Data”. These files are too large for home computers and laptops, what is needed is cloud storage.

The Agricultural Data Coalition (ADC) is the result of years of planning and coordination by UNL, AGCO, the American Farm Bureau Federation, Auburn University, CNH Industrial, Crop IMS, Ohio State University, Mississippi State University, Raven Industries and Topcon Positioning Group.

The coalition built a national online repository where farmers can securely store and control the information collected by their tractors, harvesters, aerial drones and other devices. Over time, that data can be scrubbed, synced and transmitted in an efficient and uniform way to third parties including researchers, crop insurance agents, government officials, farm managers, input providers and farm advisers. The key is the farmer is in charge who can see the data.

Joe Luck said the development approach taken by the ADC will serve as an industry model for adding value to small and large farm operations with respect to agricultural data privacy, access and utilization.

The ADC is a non-profit ag coalition. This is not about profit for others, it's about streamlining data management, establishing clear lines of control and helping growers utilize their data in ways that ultimately benefit them. Farmers interested in learning more about data collection and organizations interested in joining the coalition's efforts should visit the ADC website. Go to: <http://agdatacoalition.org/>

Many people pay for cloud storage. For instance, I pay Apple 99 cents per month for extra cloud storage for all my digital pictures and files. Most farmers involved in precision agriculture pay for “Big Data” storage. You ask farmers what they are paying for services on use of that data and you get a mixed bag of responses, if the value of the services exceed the cost for the cloud storage.

According to a Blog by Todd Janzen, an attorney in Indiana, climate change initiatives and carbon farming may show additional value of ag data in the future. This may tip the cost benefit ratio. Efforts to address climate change are starting to show up again as opportunities for farmers to sequester carbon, but to do this, farmers need good ag data for proof or certification. There are a couple private entities today that are asking farmers to follow carbon friendly protocols, (i.e. no-till farming, crop rotation, reduction in synthetic fertilizer use, enhanced grazing management strategies, etc.) however, they are asking long-term commitments from the farmer or rancher. This is the exact opposite what we are used to where farmers can test drive new ag data platforms without any long-term implications. A similar situation would be a solar farm lease or a wind rights lease.



Before signing the dotted line, my recommendation is you need to fully understand the short- and long-term implications. We have a lot of no-till farming in Gage, Jefferson and Saline County so this area is attractive for potential future carbon payments with climate change initiatives (soil organic matter is 58% carbon). Is it a low ball offer whereby the seller of carbon credits or offsets is keeping the larger share and the farmer receives the smaller share? What is carbon worth today? What will it be worth in the future? Just remember this when you hear an offer that is too good to be true.

Filter the Kool-Aid Before You Drink It! The entire blog discussing emerging carbon markets and “Big Data” can be found at: <https://www.aglaw.us/janzenaglaw/2019/7/10/climate-markets>

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