Workshop Title: Farm Record Keeping 2.0

Speaker(s) & their titles: David Wides, AgSquared

Executive Summary

In this seminar David Wides, a farmer, discusses the importance of good record keeping and how AgSquared can assist with this. He outlines the various features of AgSquared and their integrated nature. It is suggested to refer to the accompanying slide show due to this presentations highly visual nature.

Detailed Notes

Introduction

David Wides has been a farmer for 15 years and also works as an AgSquared support person. He began working for them because he loves farm planning and loved their program so much they offered him a job.

How do we define good record keeping?

One benefit to keeping good records is they can assist with your farm's ability to successfully apply for organic certification. David defines good record keeping as being targeted and organized.

Targeting

In order to focus your goals you must first specify them. For example: goals related to profit, labour, crops and planting times. There are examples of targeted goals in the slides.

Redundancy Problem

Many paper record keeping techniques such as journals and spreadsheets, etc don't correlate and are not useful together and therefore it is not easy to find connections between information.

Benefits of AgSquared

Some of the areas that AgSquared features are:

-Plans: where things will be planted and when
-Operations: day-to-day management; calendars
-Farm records: journals; timesheets; and invoices.

The problem with many other similar tools is they are not designed for farms and they are not integrated.

Analysis is another important aspect of AgSquared as all the information tracked throughout the season becomes records as it is completed. As well AgSquared is working on an app to make record keeping easier and mobile by enabling farmers to take photos and add to their AgSquared from the field.

How AgSquared Works (slides 11-13)

Some of AgSquared features include:

- Tools to enter tasks and sort them by various categories

- Activities that are pre-set to enter into the calendar
- Creating schedules for staff with what tools, where and when a task will be carried out with the option to print out with tearable to do lists
- Activities that are marked as complete become records that can be used for analysis in the future
- Total harvest can be compared to expected harvest
- Tracking materials and costs (e.g. how many trays are used for a particular crop or year)

AgSquared Case Studies

David highlights how AgSquared is used by different farmers: for example, one farmer uses it to track varieties and yields year to year. It can also help beginning farmers organize their operations such as making maps of their property. (See slides for details on these case studies).

Next up from AgSquared: Mobile App

Software that will be used in the field such as a timer to track labour for certain tasks.