

The Real McCloy: Valley Cruise Control Gives Texas Growers Genuine Results



<b>LOCATION:</b>	McCloy Farms near Morse, in north-central Texas
<b>SITUATION:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Family farm owned and operated by Rex McCloy and his son, Craig</li> <li>Cotton, corn and wheat</li> <li>Flat land, dry conditions</li> </ul>
<b>CHALLENGE:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pivots split between corn and cotton</li> <li>Little to no rain for months</li> </ul>
<b>DEPLOYMENT:</b>	Valley ICON® panels with BaseStation3™ and Cruise Control™
<b>EFFECT:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Less time required to manage irrigation</li> <li>Pinpoint accuracy with chemigation and fertigation</li> <li>Improved quality of life</li> </ul>



“It’s not *technically* desert.”

That’s how Chad Armstrong from Top of Texas Irrigation in Dumas, Texas, described the part of the state where he serves Valley® growers like Rex McCloy.

Rex and his son, Craig, maintain 6,000 irrigated acres of wheat, corn and cotton, and have more than 4,000 head of cattle near Morse, Texas. “It’s been close to 200 days since we’ve gotten any moisture,” Rex said. “But we’re in the Texas panhandle. There are ups and downs with moisture; it’s just the way it is.”

Lately, the McCloy’s have grown more cotton than either corn or wheat, “because of economics,” Craig said. “Cotton will take half the water corn will – that’s one of the reasons. Cotton gives us a greater chance of being profitable.”

Still, cotton presents its own challenges to growers. “It’s a finicky crop,” Craig explained. “Cotton is another level of management beyond corn. Too much moisture – and not enough moisture – will cap your yield potential. It’s riskier than corn, but we’re also risking only half the water.”



## Picking the Right Technology

The dry climate means being careful with water application is especially important for the McCloy's, so they rely on The Leader in Precision Irrigation®. "Valley has had a good product over the years," Rex says. "We put Valley on just about everything we have."

The McCloy's have 31 pivots, including 29 Valley pivots and two Reinkes. There are Valley ICON panels on seven of them so far, and plans to add more as needed. "And don't worry," Craig laughed, "one of the Reinkes has Valley spans in it."

"We're pretty die-hard Valley customers," Craig said. "Their tech support is helpful and responsive, and so is the local dealer. They work just as hard as I do to get it fixed."



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## Cruisin' for... Labor Savings

Patented Valley Cruise Control is one essential way the McCloy's are able to pay close attention to their irrigation, and save time while doing it. "The ICON panels have great capabilities, and then to get Cruise Control with it, I was pretty excited," Craig said.

Cruise Control adjusts the machine's speed and allows growers to set a specific time period for a pivot irrigation machine to travel a specified number of degrees. This feature is great for precision management of chemigation and fertigation. "Cruise Control is the coolest thing in years," said Armstrong.

Craig agrees. "It's increased our accuracy for chemigation and fertigation; if I want a sprinkler to finish between church and when I put the kids down for a nap, it will be done," he said. "Most of our pivots are split between corn and cotton, changing speed. If I've got it calibrated right and want it to be done at 7:30, it'll be done."

"We haven't used VRI [Variable Rate Irrigation] because our land is mostly flat with just one type of soil. Cruise Control functions about the same way for us," Craig said. It depends on his calibration, he adds, "but with what I've seen with Cruise Control, that pass will be within 2%." He mentions a five-day pass that stopped within 15 minutes of his mark and another 9-day pass that finished within two hours.

Time isn't the only way Cruise Control helps the McCloy's' operation be more precise. "With fertilizer before Cruise Control, we had to leave up to 600 gallons in the tank. Now we can leave 200 gallons," Craig said.

It all adds up to superior convenience, and while that "doesn't make or break farming," Craig says, "it's a quality of life issue. I spend half the time on fertigation that I did before Cruise Control."