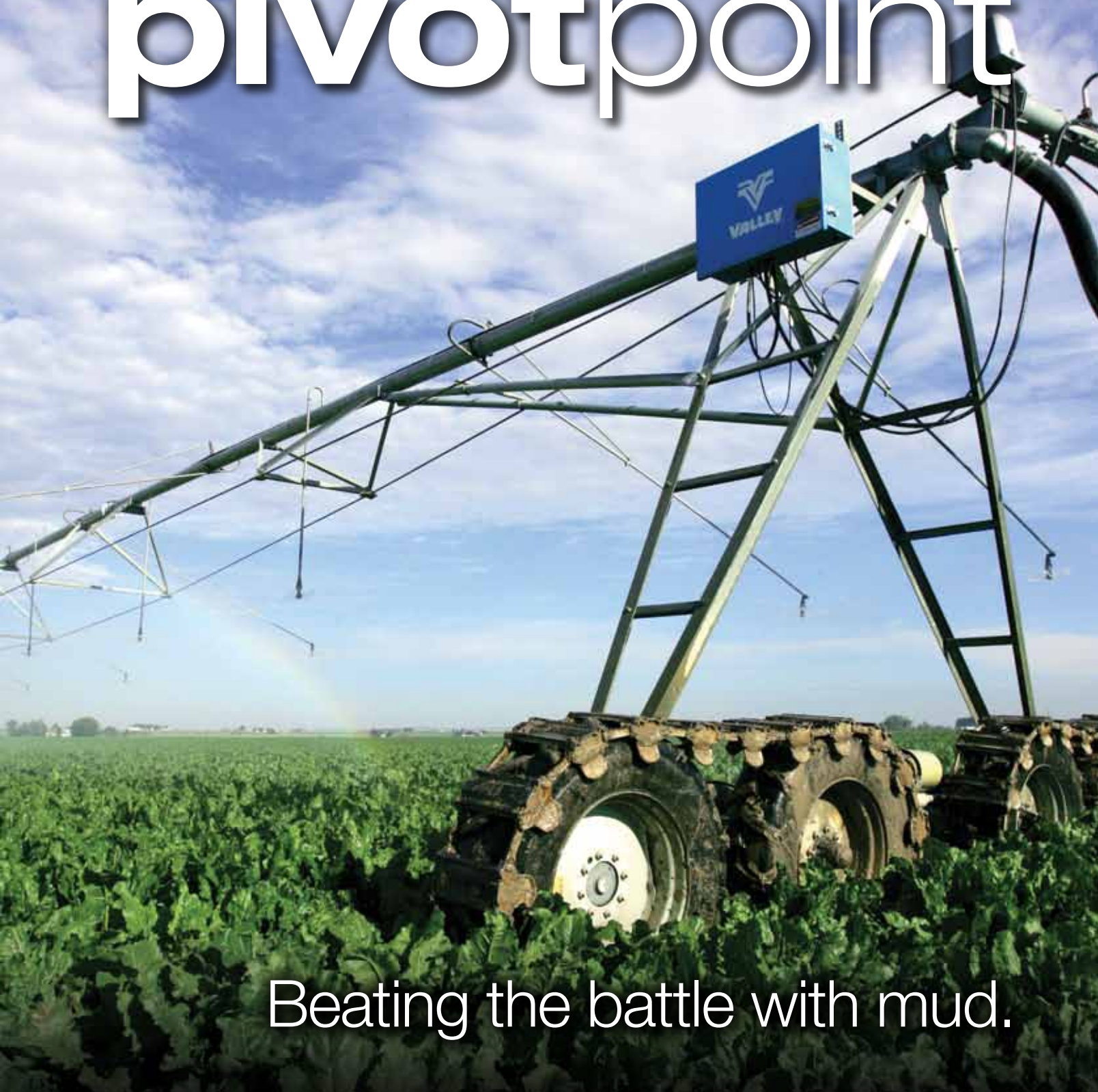


VALLEY 

SPRING 2012

pivotpoint



Beating the battle with mud.

Keep **track** of the details

Valley Gearbox: **An All-American**

Valley: **Head-to-Head**



Grow Your Investment

As we enter into the full swing of this growing season, it's worth it to take a moment and look back on what 2011 brought and what that means for 2012. Perhaps the greatest factor in agriculture in 2011 was commodity prices. If that put a smile on your face, I'm sure you're not alone. It was one of the best years for growers of nearly every crop in North America!

A general level of higher commodity prices seems to have established itself and while that is great news, it's also reason to focus even harder on obtaining the best yields possible. It's simply good business to want to get as much out of your crops as possible. Doing the right things during the growing season can help you take your operation from good to great – from stable and growing to profitable and flourishing.

Of course, as always water remains an essential factor in producing high yields at harvest. And as every grower knows, you can't always rely on Mother Nature. That's why mechanized irrigation can be one of your best investments in ensuring great yields...and even better, greater profitability.

Valley Irrigation is ready! It's an exciting time to be in the irrigation business. Demand on Valley pivots is ever increasing, commodity prices are solid and we continue to see the investments that we make in engineering and design in the field help growers capture the income they work so hard for. We thank each and every Valley customer who came to us in 2011. We're here in 2012 right by your side. We're designing for you, we're improving for you and we're rooting for you.

Here's to a spectacular 2012 growing season and harvest!

LEN ADAMS
President, Global Irrigation

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Whatever FLOATS Your BOAT (or Pivot)

Mud. It's a reality for most growers at some point during the growing season, and can be a tricky issue for those with certain irrigation needs, soil types or in certain climates. Thanks to the highly effective floatation options offered by Valley, growers no longer have to get stuck in the muck.

Donnie DeLine, a grower in Charleston, Missouri, could be considered an expert in muddy growing conditions. About 2,500 acres of his 25,000 acre operation are dedicated to rice cultivation, which requires high levels of irrigation.



4-Wheel Articulating Track Drive

A Valley customer for more than 25 years, Donnie wanted to diversify his operation several years ago and include rice. That's when he worked with his local dealer, Mid-Valley Irrigation of Missouri, to find a way to beat the battle with mud and make certain valuable watering time was not lost due to a stuck drive unit. Getting stuck in the mud meant his pivots could not move through the entire revolution as required to keep on schedule for the crop water requirements.

"My dealer recommended a 4-Wheel Track Drive and 16.9 x 24 tires, and that's what we bought," DeLine recalled.

"Those track drives have really worked out well. I'm pretty sure we could cross the Mississippi river with one of these things if we wanted to!"

According to Wade Sikkink, North America Product Sales Manager for Valmont Irrigation, the addition of floatation results in less rutting and, as DeLine experienced, fewer times the equipment gets stuck and therefore, less downtime resulting in the crop receiving water on schedule – when it needs it. Additional wheels provide additional traction. "The three wheel drive option is a first step for growers wanting to increase traction. This option is used all over the country, in a wide variety of applications. It's the most cost effective option and for many customers, it is a great choice."



Two more levels of floatation are also available from Valley for those growers with even greater challenges. The 4-Wheel Track Drive provides two additional wheels to the machine, one in front and one in back, with a metal track wrapped around them. "This is an excellent choice for a grower who wants minimum ground pressure and who applies a high amount of water, like a turf farm. Also, in operations where they water constantly like a dairy, where they dispose of a lot of water, these machines are excellent because they rut far, far less," explained Sikkink.

The second option is the 4-Wheel Articulating Drive, in which the base beam moves and includes the Valley exclusive non-directional tires. Valley is the only manufacturer that offers a 4-Wheel Articulating Track Drive, something that puts them ahead of other brands. This option can be used with or without tracks.

"This is great for growers that have to drive over terraces and similar terrain," Sikkink advised. "This really increases floatation."

DeLine has used his 4-Wheel Track Drive for two seasons; 2012 will be his third. He has seen great success with this addition. "It has really taken care of the issues. I would say that at least 95 percent of our problems are gone using the tracks and the tires," he stated. "These tracks have really made the irrigation more reliable and we don't have to pull drive units out of the mud. We can put out the water that the crops need without having to worry about getting stuck."

"In some of our soil types, or in low spots in the field, we used to see it starting to pond. The tires would slip and we'd be in trouble. Now, even where we need to water an inch or more, even where the ground varies, we don't have to worry. Those tracks really help." DeLine continued.

For those who want the advantages DeLine has experienced on an existing machine, retrofits are possible according to Sikkink. A change out of the base beam and purchase of additional components needed for the floatation drive are usually all that are required, as the existing drive train components can generally be used.

For those interested in a new machine but not sure if they will want to add floatation options, another option works well. They can purchase the new machine with the three-wheel base only. They can later simply purchase the wheel and drive components. This saves the labor costs of a full retrofit later.

"It has worked so well for us," DeLine concluded, "we might diversify even more and introduce this into our cotton crops next year."



3-Wheel Drive



Articulating 4-Wheel Drive



Track Drive

For more information on what floatation options may be best for your operation, contact your local Valley dealer.

Need To Be Everyw

With BaseStation and Tracker, Now You Can!

The most challenging aspect in any agricultural operation to manage is the one that doesn't respond well to most attempts: Mother Nature. It's why Valmont Irrigation offers growers tools of choice for efficiently managing water usage. Valley has invested in two varying product lines (BaseStation and Tracker) for one reason – one size doesn't fit all. It's all about flexibility, having control without your pivot(s) controlling you.

Take a quick glance on how you can gain control and manage your pivot(s) wherever you are!

FULL CONTROL

If your looking to fully control your machines remotely, BaseStation is for you:

BaseStation

- Full equipment Monitoring and Control features
- Custom designed telemetry to meet individual customer needs using the latest technology– VHF/UHF data radios
- A central computer is constantly monitoring your irrigation equipment from your home office
- Alarm notifications – to cell phone, iPad®, Netbook and additional tablets, email or text
- Soil moisture integration
- Unmatched performance with the durability and reliability expected from Valley
- No 3rd party server or recurring fees
- You own everything, no monthly fees and no interruptions

ESSENTIAL CONTROL

Looking to gain basic control and monitoring capabilities, Tracker has what you need:

Tracker

- Limited Monitoring and Control features
- Cellular technology utilizes GSM and CDMA modems to send and receive data
- Internet based remote monitoring and control using any computer with an internet browser
- Alarm notifications – to cell phone, iPad®, Netbook and additional tablets, email or text
- VRI Prescription upload capability
- Reduced initial investment with recurring monthly service fee for each Tracker device
- Performance based on quality of network services and your internet provider

iPad is a registered trademark of Apple inc.

The New Base of Command: BaseStation



The base of command decades ago was the pickup for many growers. To monitor pivots, make adjustments and control the details, growers or employees at the operation had to cover the distances between pivots by truck to complete these essential tasks. For larger operations, or operations with widely placed pivots, this could add up to some serious mileage, gas and labor costs.

Valley BaseStation offers a new, mobile and fully-equipped base of command for growers. It allows centralized irrigation management from the office computer that combines the ability to monitor soil moisture status with remote monitoring and control of center pivot and linear irrigation equipment. BaseStation provides management capabilities beyond any other management system in the industry.

That means not only freedom and convenience, but also a major savings in fuel and potentially labor costs. BaseStation also provides growers with reporting options that help increase efficiencies. The software functions with new and existing Valley equipment and can be used to manage one to multiple irrigation machines.

Growers who use BaseStation have the ability to turn pivots on or off remotely. They can also control end guns, switch the direction of the pivots, change the pivot speed and water depth and check status, monitor and control pumps, valves and other devices. BaseStation can facilitate any of the functions performed at the pivot point. BaseStation also gives growers the ability to generate detailed farm management reports. Reliable, private radio telemetry offers real time data, eliminating the need for daily or multiple trips to the pivots. If a problem arises, alarm messages are issued and sent to the cell phone, by text message or by email.

Jeff Chesmore of North Central Irrigation in central Wisconsin reports that customers at his dealership see BaseStation as an important addition to their operations. "BaseStation gives you real-time control and monitoring. It allows for much more control. My customers always tell me it is like being at the machine, but remotely," he shared. "There are just so many different options, including remote soil moisture monitoring. And you can expand BaseStation to do more things as you need to, or as you grow. It can work well with a large number of machines."

here At Once?



They Love More than Packers in Wisconsin

Randy Hughes, who farms more than 5,000 acres of peas, lima beans and corn in southern Wisconsin, finally added BaseStation to his three corner machines and six pivots for the 2011 season. After almost 30 years as a Valley customer, he made the decision to invest in the remote management ability it offered.

The verdict? "It really has become a necessary tool. Having this type of technology improves everything," Hughes reported.

"It's so worth the investment. You wonder how you're going to pay for these investments when you're just investigating them, but what you learn is what convinces you. In a year, or two, it's done. That is how much this product helps you improve your efficiency. Some of the things you can do with it are not things you can really do by hand anymore. It doesn't just save you time, it allows you to do more, to do things that weren't even feasible before."

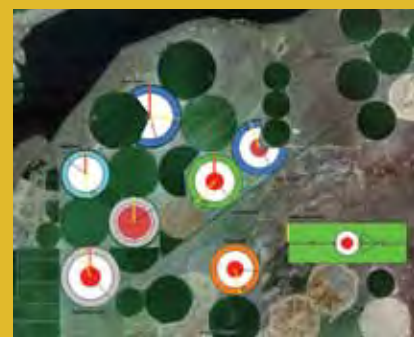
Hughes' operation includes pivots that are located at large distances from one another. "The BaseStation really saves us a lot of road time. We have a couple of pivots that interfere with one another, so you need to keep monitoring them all the time. It's a huge relief to us to know that one is done before the other begins, for safety reasons," he shared. "There are other safety factors as well. Sometimes the rains come down very hard here. We can't

always get out to the pivots physically if it's a big lightning storm, but now we don't have to worry about that."

In addition to these convenience and safety improvements, Hughes also sees cost savings from his BaseStation.

"The time and fuel savings are making a big impact. We've eliminated a lot of wasted time. And we have also had savings on water and energy," he stated.

Record keeping and farm management reports are also something Hughes believes is a big benefit from using BaseStation. "This is so helpful and it makes management much easier. I do believe in time, we can even improve our record keeping by interfacing with BaseStation. I think we'll discover even more ongoing benefits from this investment."



Keeping Track of the Details

The Valley Tracker line of remote communications tools doesn't just offer convenience. It offers growers the ability to manage their remote pivots and linears more efficiently. While growers are busy doing other tasks on the farm they can manage their irrigation machines and pumps as well. It just takes an Internet connection – from the web, a smartphone or cell phone. It also works on iPhones® and iPads®. Calling or logging in online means growers can quickly access pivot information and confidently make the necessary water management decisions for their farming operation.

Different variations of the Tracker product provide different benefits. “The TrackerLT is the lowest investment cost,” explained John Rasmus, Product Manager at Valley Irrigation. “TrackerLT and Tracker2 give growers the ability to remotely monitor any brand of pivot.”

The TrackerLT allows growers to both monitor and stop their equipment from any location where they have internet access. It also has GPS functionality, end gun control and stop-in-slot capability. If water requirements are varied in different areas of the field or multiple crops are being farmed in the same field, the grower can change the application depth remotely to prevent over watering. It is also easy and convenient to shut the machine off if it rains – saving valuable energy costs.

The Tracker2 is available for those growers who have Valley mechanical panels or other brand control panels. It allows the user to both stop and start the machine remotely. The grower can also change direction of travel and monitor the percent timer status remotely. The grower also has the ability to determine if the water is on or off when equipped with a pressure switch.

The TrackerSP is designed for the Valley Select2 and Pro2 computerized panels. It has the most robust set of control features, including stop and start and changing the direction of travel. Growers using TrackerSP can also control the percent timer, turn water on and off, check application depth and utilize the stop-in-slot function remotely.

The TrackerSP also offers on or off remote monitoring in addition to direction, drive and percent timer status, position, water pressure, system voltage, end gun status and application depth.

iPhone and iPad are registered trademarks of Apple inc.



Tracker Success Deep in the Heart of Texas

Bobby Byrd, a grower whose 1,700 acres of cotton, grain sorghum and wheat are under pivots in the Texas Panhandle, now enjoys the benefits the TrackerSP provides. “The first Valley pivot I had was in 2000. For several years, I’ve really wanted a Tracker,” he explained.

Last year, Byrd put four TrackerSP units into action. The results were so good his forecast is to install two more units by the end of 2012. “It gives me peace of mind,” he shared. “I like to joke that it’s better than cloning. It helps me manage time better, because I can’t always be there. But I know everything is going okay without having to go out and look at it all the time. That also saves me a lot on fuel costs given the ever-escalating price at the pump.”

Bobby said because his operation is spread out, having the TrackerSP helps reduce the stress of managing irrigation. “It used to be that we had problems like electricity blinking and things would shut off. I’d go out to check the pivots much later and realize they hadn’t been working. That’s a lot of lost irrigating time. Now, we’re really happy with what we can do with the TrackerSP,” he stated.

One factor in Bobby’s decision to incorporate more Trackers into the operation was financial assistance from the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). “We were able to receive a grant from the USDA to help with our investment. In our area, better monitoring of pivots and water usage are qualified improvements. The bottom line is that growers should look for programs to help. Trackers really do help promote conservation and efficiency,” he concluded.

Rasmus from Valley added one additional benefit TrackerLT and TrackerSP can provide to growers. “These versions allow a grower to upload variable rate prescriptions. Rather than manually loading this on each panel in person, growers can do it with the Tracker to save time,” he said. If variable rate irrigation is not being used, the grower can still utilize the speed control feature of the TrackerLT to change application rates in up to nine sectors throughout the field and apply a different rate in each sector further enhancing the water savings and efficiency.

>>> For more information on Valley remote management options, contact your local Valley dealer.

VALLEY GEARBOX:

An All-American



Manufacturing in the U.S. has been a big item in the news these days. From news anchors to politicians, everyone seems to be discussing why making things right here at home is important. There's a pride in saying "Made in America" that goes beyond geography. An All-American really refers to something produced using the most ingenuity, pride of workmanship, focus on quality and dependability.

The Valley gearbox is an All-American.

"I love that the Valley gearboxes are made right here in Nebraska," shared Brian Johnson, president of Brian J Farms in Holdrege, Nebraska. "I was the first one in my family to buy a Valley pivot almost 20 years ago. And now all our family members run Valley pivots. The gearboxes are a big part of why that's the case. When we had another company's gearbox, it seemed like we had gearboxes going out all the time. With the Valley gearboxes, we rarely have them fail. During the growing season, we're not down when we need to be irrigating. In the long run, we don't have costly repair bills to deal with, either."

At the very core of Valley pivots is a focus on both of these factors: performance and value.

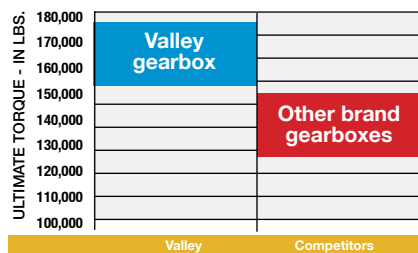
Wade Sikkink, North American Product Sales Manager at Valley Irrigation, is proud that the Valley gearboxes are made in the U.S., but even more so that this means real benefits for Valley customers.

"Valley is the only center pivot manufacturer in the world that manufactures their gearbox in the U.S. All Valley gearboxes are manufactured in Valley, Nebraska using U.S. sourced castings, bearings and gearing," Wade explained. "Because of this, we oversee every step of the way. We don't run the risk of depending

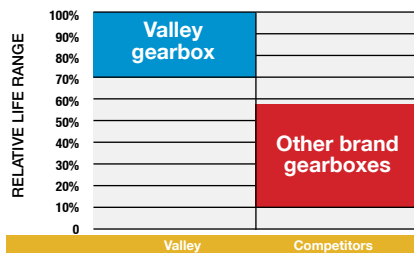
on third party quality control regimes, or lack thereof. The result of all of this is a lower total cost of ownership through the lifecycle of the product. Our customers don't have to replace their gearboxes early in the lifespan of the machine and may be able to use them three or four times longer."

In fact, the testing of other brands completed at the Valley manufacturing plant in Valley, Nebraska has shown conclusively that Valley gearboxes are stronger, more durable and deliver a better overall value than competing gearboxes made elsewhere.

Gearbox Ultimate Output Torque Test



Accelerated Gearbox Life Comparison



Stuart Seely, owner of Golden West Irrigation in Idaho Falls, Idaho, believes superior engineering, commitment to continuous improvement and a strong warranty program are also big differences between Valley gearboxes and others on the market.

"If there is anything that can improve the gearbox design, Valley is able to address it quickly. There's a focus on always improving the gearboxes," he shared. "Valley also has a great warranty and offers replacement coverage for eight years. As a dealership, we really appreciate that. And, it gives growers peace of mind that there won't be costly problems during the growing season too."

The Gearbox Ultimate Output Torque and the Accelerated Gearbox Life Comparison Test show clearly that compared to other gearboxes, a Valley gearbox can take more on, get more done and outlast the others. This is another claim to fame of most All-Americans.



Nelson Irrigation Corporation, a U.S.-based manufacturer and Valley Authorized Sprinkler Provider, is a company passionate about developing water application solutions for pivots and linears. Nelson recognizes mechanized irrigation as an important part of the answer to the great challenge of satisfying an increasing demand for more food and fiber while simultaneously protecting the world's precious natural resources.

While this year marks the 25th year of Nelson Rotator® sprinkler technology, the Nelson name has been tied to manufacturing and irrigation products for over 100 years. It all started when L.R. Nelson invented the “Clincher” hose coupler and established a company in 1911. Today, headquartered in Walla Walla, Washington, 3rd and 4th generation family are part of the Nelson team, and help drive the focus of fundamentally improving agricultural irrigation technology with innovative products and solutions. From pivot point to end gun, Nelson products – including control valves, pressure regulators, sprinklers and end guns - are used on Valley pivots worldwide.



No one sprinkler package is right for all applications. So, in recent years Nelson has made an impressive number of advancements in engineered sprinkler solutions to provide you the very best results. Nelson water application solutions take into account specific soil types, crop rotations and farming practices. Nelson coined the term GEOCROPICAL® to describe a highly customized sprinkler offering.



It refers to optimizing sprinkler package configurations to meet the specific needs inherent to the geography and the specific crops in question.

For instance, the wide throw coverage of the R3000 Rotator and high uniformity of the Brown Plate make it the ideal sprinkler for irrigating potatoes. This high-value crop demands high performance and the R3000 Rotator delivers. In areas where low pressure dictates buying decisions – the A3000 Accelerator brings to the table the benefits of Rotator Technology at lower pressures. Whatever the crop and the conditions – there is a customizable solution ready and available.



Other Solutions from the 3000 Series Pivot line of products:

Up-Top Sprinkler Packages

- The R3000 Rotator® offers ultimate versatility and performance in the wide operating range of 15 – 50 PSI.
- The NEW NAVY PLATE for the A3000 allows for superior UP TOP PERFORMANCE @ 10 PSI. As a low-pressure, rotating-type sprinkler, the A3000 Accelerator produces a wider wetted pattern than sprayheads resulting in better overlap and longer soak time to reduce runoff.

Irrigation Efficiency Above or In Tall Growing Crops Like Corn and Sugar Cane

- The Orange Plate for the R3000 Rotator provides the widest throw on drops. The multi-trajectory streams of this highly-

engineered plate penetrate the canopy and provide maximum coverage with high uniformity.

- The A3000 Accelerator is a field-proven performer in areas where in-canopy water application is preferred. The A3000 features a sleek, durable design and rotating streams to penetrate through the foliage.

High Uniformity for High-Value Crops like Potatoes and Sugar Beets

- The R3000 ROTATOR with the BROWN PLATE is “Best in Class”. Utilizing 10 multi-trajectory streams this plate achieves the highest uniformity numbers out there.
- The new off-axis O3000 Orbitor – with standard-angle and low-angle plate options – provides a desirable droplet for this low-growing, high-value crop type on specific soil types.

Smart Tools for Sensitive Soils and Germination

- Dual & Triple Nozzle Clips are on-board solutions for matching a crop’s water needs throughout the growing season.
- The gentle, rain-like drops of the S3000 Spinner work well on sensitive soils and in times of germination.
- The R3000 Rotator – with high uniformity and wide throw – is best at matching soil infiltration rates, reducing runoff and erosion.
- The New O3000 Orbitor has zero-strut interference giving optimal performance without misting or drool down.

Whether you choose the R3000 Rotator or take advantage of the low pressure performance of the A3000 and O3000, you can be sure you’re operating with a field-proven, highly engineered sprinkler package. The evolution continues as Nelson Irrigation looks for new ways to save water, save energy and do a better job of irrigating.

The Outlook for Agriculture in 2012



Simple, fast and flexible pivot financing with **AgDirect**®

AgDirect® is an ag equipment financing program offered at Valley dealerships. Offered by Farm Credit Services of America and the partners of AgDirect, LLP, AgDirect has been serving the ever-changing irrigation equipment financing needs for more than a decade. Today, it's among the fastest-growing equipment financing programs of its kind.

"AgDirect offers highly competitive purchase, lease or refinancing options with quick decisions and flexible terms," explains Greg Roberg, Vice President of AgDirect, in Omaha, Nebraska. "We allow producers to finance the equipment they want right at the dealership without having to make additional calls or trips. And since AgDirect has no manufacturer rebate or financing restrictions, producers can take advantage of the manufacturers' cash payment discounts and still finance through the AgDirect program. They get the best of both worlds."

"Another advantage AgDirect has is its people," adds Roberg. "The majority of our team is made up of folks with rural backgrounds so we understand that producers often need things *yesterday*. So, we always serve our dealers with a sense of urgency. After all, their customers are our customers. We take that very seriously."

AgDirect's financing terms are among the most flexible in the ag equipment financing business – matching the income stream of ag producers. In addition, AgDirect offers remarkably easy applications that can be completed in minutes and a system that returns credit decisions, for most, within minutes.

"We have had an excellent working relationship with Valmont Industries, Inc. for nearly five years now," says Roberg. "As a Valmont Authorized Provider of financing for Valley pivots, producers can be assured AgDirect is reliable and competitive. We take pride in working with Valley dealers and people who are as committed to the business of agriculture as the producers we all serve."

Roberg concluded, "At AgDirect, we understand that producers have choices for irrigation system financing. We work hard every day to earn the trust and business of Valley dealers and their customers."

Last year was a good year for agriculture, and 2012 has started off pretty well too. Crop supplies are still tight following sub-par yields in 2011 and crop and livestock prices remain high. Bad weather in South America has reduced corn and soybean production in key competing countries, improving the outlook for U.S. exports. Spring and summer weather will determine if U.S. crop prices can stay high but for now farm sector economics are very strong.

With the favorable crop prices, farmers are expected to plant more acres in 2012. Budgets show high net returns for corn and corn acreage is expected to surpass the recent 2007 high of 93.5 million acres. Winter wheat acreage is up 1.3 million acres from year-ago levels and spring wheat acreage is also expected to bounce higher this year.

This could turn out to be a pivotal year for the agriculture sector. With higher acreage, crop supplies could increase substantially under favorable weather conditions. But favorable weather conditions are far from a sure thing. Drought conditions are still in place across the Southern U.S. and drought conditions are developing in the Western Corn Belt and Northern Plains states. The forecast for the April-June period expects moisture conditions to improve in the Plains and upper Midwest regions of the country. Scenarios for 2012 range from a return to trend yields with higher stocks and lower prices to another year with relatively poor yields and strong prices.

A decline in net cash farm income in 2012 is likely. Prices for corn, soybeans and some classes of wheat were at record high levels in 2011 and crop production will be up due to the increases in acreage even if yields are poor. But the decline in net cash farm income is expected to be relatively modest. New crop corn futures have averaged between \$5.50 and \$6.00 for months, soybean futures are above \$13 and wheat prices are near \$7. Many farmers have taken advantage and locked in high prices for at least some of their expected 2012 production.

Weather will be a key factor affecting the 2012 outlook, as it almost always is. However, the agriculture sector is on sound financial footing. The favorable economic conditions are expected to continue for most of this year, even if the crops turn out to be big.

Richard Pottorff,
Vice President, Chief Economist,
Doane Agricultural Services



As every grower who has ever bought a piece of equipment knows, value isn't always about price. It's about choosing equipment that can perform year after year without needing repair or replacement. It's about not interrupting the growing cycle because of breakdowns. It's about providing a long life span – durability over the long haul.

In head-to-head challenges with competing irrigation equipment, Valley consistently comes out on top for value and durability. High engineering standards, attention to design details and a focus on testing all contribute to the longevity of a Valley machine.

In fact, for more than half a century, Valmont Irrigation has refined a testing process to simulate field loads proving that durability is more than just a marketing claim. The Standard Accelerated Cycle Test also helps Valley engineers continue to improve each feature of Valley irrigation equipment to enhance durability and further increase the life of the most durable span in the industry.

The Challenge: Couplers



One such feature is the Valley welded sprinkler coupler, which sets the benchmark for durability in the irrigation marketplace. This contributes greatly to the industry-leading longevity Valley irrigation machines are known for. Results from the Standard Accelerated Cycle Test, which simulates field loads, including wear and tear and sprinkler usage, consistently show that other brand machines fall short. One of the reasons Valley machines last so much longer than the other brands is the welded coupler.

The strength of the coupler is vital. The coupler and pipe connection are subject to stress from wind moving the sprinkler drops, the machine travelling over ridges or as the sprinkler drops are pulled through the crop. Valley has anticipated these stresses and has engineered the coupler to better withstand the forces it faces in the field. Valley Irrigation welds standard pipe couplers with

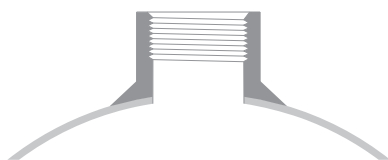
enough steel to form a deep thread onto the pipe. The weld adds material to the pipe, making the connection even stronger. In contrast, other brand machines use a flow-drilled coupler. While the drilled design lowers manufacturing costs it only moves material around, creating a potential weak spot in the pipe. Small cracks can start to form around the drilled coupler connection because of the loads and stresses it faces when in use, leading to failure far too soon.

While all growers benefit from the increased durability of the Valley welded coupler, those who farm certain crops or in certain conditions benefit even more, as their couplers encounter more stress and resistance than the average. Those who grow potatoes or other crops that require deep ridges, or grow crops on rough terrain subject their machines to more stress and will appreciate the strength and durability of the Valley welded coupler.

The Valley Welded Wins

In addition to providing strength to support all sprinkler options, the Valley welded coupler includes features that increase life span and long-term value compared to other brand machines.

Valley Welded Coupler



- Secured, reliable, leak proof connection to the u-pipe
- More steel, providing high quality threads and better support for the sprinkler drops
- Designed with a thicker cross section to transfer the load

Other Brand's Coupler



- Flow drilled couplers have less steel for support of the sprinkler drops
- Ragged edge – emphasizes very little steel material on threads
- Additional friction loss due to coupler projecting down into the pipeline

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE LEGENDARY VALLEY DURABILITY, INCLUDING THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN VALLEY AND OTHER BRAND MACHINES' SPRINKLER COUPLERS AND THEIR IMPORTANCE, CONTACT YOUR LOCAL VALLEY DEALER.



Variable Rate Irrigation:

Here to stay or just a fad?

Variable Rate Irrigation (VRI) is touted as one of the latest improvements in irrigation management. From helping growers to use water more efficiently to preventing runoff, VRI has been promoted as an excellent investment. But is this just a fad?

Jake LaRue, Director of Global Applications and Projects for Valley Irrigation, says this technology is not just a passing fancy, but is here to stay. **“No solution that can help manage resources significantly better is a fad.** Growers point out benefits that

include reducing their yield variability across the field, helping to maximize the value of their limited water supply and even helping to control runoff.”

According to LaRue, depending on how prescriptions are applied and the goal of the grower, using this technology may increase total yields, optimizing the productivity of the management zones in the field. However, LaRue sees VRI helping growers to maximize more than just yields: it helps to maximize profitability, the end game for every grower.

“Putting irrigation where it will do the most good, controlling runoff and deep percolation, maximizing the value of seed, fertilizer and other inputs all help drive up profitability,” he explained.

As for the future of VRI, LaRue advises growers to look at the current use of variable rate fertilization, spraying and seeding. “Variable rate irrigation is the next logical step,” he concluded.

4 tips TO GET YOUR SPRINKLERS READY TO ROLL

Winter, even relatively mild ones like most growers experienced in North America this year, is downtime for sprinklers. But as the 2012 growing season approaches, it's important to get your machine ready and the sprinkler package is a key item to focus on. Here are some tips to doing just that. As commodity prices remain high, it's vital to ensure your equipment and the sprinkler package is in tip-top shape to boost your yields.

1. Use the sprinkler reports supplied with the sprinkler package and check that all sprinkler components are correct and installed in the proper location on the machine.
2. Operate the sprinkler package (running the machine with water) and visually inspect all sprinklers to verify they are operating correctly. Inspect sprinklers for variations in the water pattern. Problems to look for are plugged nozzles or worn wear plates.
3. Watch for leaks from the sprinkler, pressure regulator and drop components when running the machine with water. Replace broken or damaged components.
4. Check that the operating pivot pressure matches the design pressure. For sprinkler packages with pressure regulators, Valley recommends placing a pressure gauge in the drop tube at the end of the machine at the highest elevation in the field to verify the end pressure is sufficient to operate the pressure regulators. All pressure regulators require 5 PSI over the nominal pressure rating that is stamped on the regulator. For example, a 10 PSI pressure regulator requires 15 PSI entering the regulator for proper operation.

Finally, don't forget that at about 10,000 operating hours, growers should consider replacing sprinklers and pressure regulators. This will vary based on water quality issues such as using clean water or dirty water and whether the water includes sand or other debris. At this number of hours, wear in the sprinkler nozzle, sprinkler wear plate and pressure regulator will alter the sprinkler flow rate and water pattern distribution which will reduce the sprinkler package uniformity. New sprinkler components combined with a properly designed complete sprinkler package, ensures uniformity and efficiency are at the highest possible values, making sure that growers maximize yields from the valuable water that they apply during the season. To summarize, the sprinkler package is one of the most critical components on a center pivot or linear machine – don't be afraid to invest in new and updated technology.



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