



Calloway Software Firm Helps Farmers Reap Higher Profits

Just five years old, AgConnections Inc. is harvesting a great deal of business among farmers across the United States. Co-founded by Pete Clark and Rick Murdock, the agricultural software company is based in Murray, in far Western Kentucky.

The reason for the company's success has been Clark and Murdoch's ability to find a niche for their company's products. "We're the only company of our type in the U.S. There are other ag software companies with similar software, but there are none that implement in the field, train and consult on agronomic and technological aspects of software. We earn our customers one at a time."

"What we do is specific to agriculture," Clark said. "So many people try to do things combining technology and agriculture, but they lose sight of the bottom line. We're not just dealing with technology. We show a farmer the return on his investment. Agriculture is a business. If you spend a dollar, you need to get more than a dollar back. We show the farmer how he can get a return on his investment."

"We just went after a different market in a different way," Clark continues. "We've built our business around software that analyzes the cost for the grower and gives him the ability to see how he can get a return on his investment as the result of different applications."

In layman's terms, AgConnections software helps farmers trace their expenses and see their effects on crop production using production records tied to Geographical Information System (GIS) software packages. It helps the farmer reduce expenses and increase profits at the same time.

The software that AgConnections leases to its clients works with a wide variety of crops. "We get a lot of farmers who grow citrus," Clark said, "and in other climates, we work with potato and grass seed farmers. We've worked with farmers in California, Oregon, Washington and Idaho, all the way back east to Florida," Clark said. "Our software and customer support help the farmer do production record analysis as related to production cost. Our software can be localized for individual climates, soils and crops. It really helps to cut our client's costs."

The software firm has 12 employees including Clark and Murdock, who is the firm's Secretary-Treasurer and Chairman. Both men have family ties to Western Kentucky. "I'm completely native," Clark said. "I was born and raised here. Rick's family is from here but he was born in Wisconsin."

Clark says he is satisfied with the workforce employed by his company. "So far, we've found enough talented people here," Clark said, "We get programmers from Murray State University. We're also getting enough client base that we'll probably hire someone located in the Oregon-Washington area."

About KY120:

In the fast-paced world of technology-driven business, it should be recognized that best practices can be studied and emulated. As part of the [connectkentucky](#) initiative, the Center for Information Technology Enterprise (CITE, Inc.) is profiling businesses and initiatives in each of Kentucky's 120 counties to identify lessons learned on the path toward successful and sustainable innovation.

[connectkentucky](#) is a public-private partnership between the Office for the New Economy, private industry, state universities and CITE. [connectkentucky](#) is enhancing Kentucky's competitiveness by creating a better understanding of existing technological infrastructure, access and usage, and then by implementing the resulting action plan to build upon advantageous resources within Kentucky. Visit our Web site at www.connectkentucky.org or call 270.781.4320.

Name: AgConnections, Inc.

Internet:

www.agconnections.com

Products/Services: Farm and crop management software

Location: Murray / Calloway County

Leadership: Pete Clark, President; Rick Murdoch, Chairman

Employees: 12

Founded: 1998

Reach: National

Innovative Insight: *Having the technology isn't enough...you have to show a farmer the return on investment.*

Advice for Growing

Companies: *Show your customers in no uncertain terms that they'll be better off using your product.*

Way Internet Has Made You More Competitive: *It's how we connect to our clients every day!*

Most Important Investment in Next Five Years: *Adding staff in Northwestern U.S.*

Ways to Continue to Attract Best Workers: *Allow people a chance to stay near their homes, but pay them what they would make in a larger market.*