

CASE STUDY

INCYT

Enabling Farming through Remote Monitoring

Bird Family



Oats, wheat, barley, canola, lentils **Crops**
Cropping for grain and hay **Type**



Scott Bird
Boort, VIC

"It doesn't matter where I am, at home or on holiday, and it doesn't matter that I'm in a wheelchair; with INCYT I can see all the important information from across our whole farming operation on my phone."



CHALLENGE

The Bird family grows a variety of crops for both grain as well as hay. With sons Scott and Adam taking over the farm from parents Keith and Glenda Bird, while also living with Friedreich's Ataxia, a progressive neurodegenerative disorder, the need arose to implement remote monitoring across their farming operation.

SOLUTION

When the local Nutrien branch in Charlton, VIC, ran an information day on agtech, Scott decided to attend and got to meet LX Group / INCYT Founder and Managing Director Simon Blyth. After learning about the monitoring equipment options that INCYT offers, Scott created an on-farm monitoring program comprising INCYT's soil moisture probes, weather station, rain gauges, inversion tower, tank level sensor and tank pH sensor.

OUTCOME

With INCYT equipment now installed across their operation, Scott is able to see exactly what's happening in the different parts of their farm - from weather to soil moisture, tank levels and much more, and let it help him make better informed decisions throughout the cropping season.

FARMING WITH A CHALLENGE

The Bird family has farmed in the Mallee region of Victoria for a number of generations, and Scott Bird grew up on a farm just outside of Boort, VIC together with his 5 siblings. Fast-forward to 2025 and Scott is taking over the reins of the family farming operation from parents Keith and Glenda, and together with his twin brother Adam he grows a mixture of oats, wheat, barley, canola and lentils. Some of these crops are grown for grain, while others are grown for hay and sold in large square bales to local dairy farms or other livestock operations.

Becoming farmers isn't as easy and self-explanatory for Scott and Adam as it might be for other farm kids however, due to a rare progressive neurodegenerative disorder that both Scott and Adam, as well as two of their siblings, live with: Friedreich's Ataxia (FA). FA causes progressive damage to the nervous system, and Scott and Adam are now both wheelchair-bound. This has not stopped Scott and Adam from living their life however; both are married and have kids, and are taking over the farm this year with their parents moving to town and into retirement.

When a challenge is presented on the farm, the Bird family just finds a way to overcome this challenge and make things happen, Scott explains: "Adam and I need a gopher to get from our cars to the tractors, and to get into the tractors we have a hoist. Between these and other aids, and a couple of fulltime staff, we're able to make everything work and run the farm on a daily basis. We are however always looking for new products and solutions that can help us overcome our challenges and enable us to continue farming as independently as possible, whilst also working on maximising our results just like any other farming operation does."





MAXIMISING RESULTS

In the Mallee, like in many parts of Australia, moisture is the limiting factor for dryland farmers, and making the right decisions based on the moisture available in the soil is key says Scott: “When we’re applying fertiliser while planting a crop or during the growing season, it’s important to know exactly how much moisture our crop has available, as this translates into a specific quantity of fertiliser that we should be applying. If we don’t apply enough, we’re not using the available moisture to its full potential; if we apply too much, we’re just wasting our money.”

“When I met Simon (Blyth – Managing Director of LX Group and INCYT) during an agtech information day at Nutrien in Charlton, this was the first INCYT product that got my interest. I had known about soil moisture probes for a long time but always thought they would be a difficult product to work with. When I realised you only have to install them once (instead of re-installing every season), and saw how easy they are to use through the INCYT platform with easy-to-interpret data available on my phone, I figured they were worth using on our farm.”

Because Scott now has live moisture-data available at all times, he is better able to predict the yield potential of his crops and make informed fertiliser decisions. Fertilising decisions however aren’t the only benefit for Scott: “Because I now get a better idea of the yield I can expect from my crops, it’s made it a lot easier for me to sell grain in forward contracts with less potential of exposing ourselves to risk and having to wash-out contracts when the expected yield does not materialise. Of course there’s always risks, there always are in farming, but with INCYT’s soil moisture probes we are able to mitigate this risk as much as possible.”



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CRITICAL DATA RIGHT WHERE YOU NEED IT

Soil moisture data wasn't the only information that Scott is interested in, and so a range of other sensors were deployed at the same time as the soil moisture probes were installed: a rain gauge, weather station, inversion tower, tank level sensor and a tank pH sensor. Each of these sensors now plays a critical role in managing their farm, Scott explains: "Spraying our fields, especially weeds in fallow fields during Summer, is critical to us preserving as much soil moisture as possible. INCYT's Maverick spray advisory is critical for us to work out when we can be out there spraying and to give us a good idea of what our chances of spraying are for the week ahead. At the moment the spray windows have been all over the shop - sometimes it's between midnight and 2AM and then the next day it might be between 7 AM and 9AM; so having this information available ahead of time and knowing when you can be out there spraying your crop (without risking spray drift), is critical to getting our spray program done on time."

Maverick spray advisory on the Birds' operation is powered by data from their own INCYT weather station as well as inversion tower - which gives them hyper-local weather data, translated to very accurate spray advice in Maverick. Weather isn't the only critical component to spray applications however, says Scott: "Our water tank for spraying gets filled with scheme water, but sometimes the tap literally runs dry if they turn the fuel tank tap for the remote water lines off at the water pumping plant in town. Instead of getting caught out when I'm about to go spraying, with INCYT's water tank level sensor I can now see that a problem is forming ahead of time and get it rectified before it affects us. We also got a pH sensor installed in this same water tank as we were using a lot of ammonium sulphate to ameliorate the water before mixing the chemicals, and so being able to keep an eye on the pH level of the water allows to be more accurate with amelioration as well."

Scott concludes with: "With INCYT we can collect and view data from our farm that we wouldn't be able to get anywhere else. It doesn't matter where I am, at home or on holiday, and it doesn't matter that I'm in a wheelchair; with INCYT I can see all the important information from across our whole farming operation on my phone. Because of INCYT's information we're able to make the best possible decisions in a range of different situations throughout the year."

WHAT INCYT OFFERS YOU

- Remotely monitor and control your assets
- A centralised dashboard with all your data
- Industry-leading trackers, sensors & network equipment
- Operational excellence through innovation

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