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PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
FOURTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
PRECISION AGRICULTURE

19–22 July 1998
St. Paul, Minnesota

Editors
P.C. Robert, R.H. Rust, and W.E. Larson

Conducted by the
PRECISION AGRICULTURE CENTER
Department of Soil, Water, and Climate
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota

Published by
American Society of Agronomy
Crop Science Society of America
Soil Science Society of America
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Related Society Publications .............................................................. ii
Preface .................................................................................................. xxiii
Acknowledgments ................................................................................ xxv
Organizing Committee ....................................................................... xxv
Editorial Committee .......................................................................... xxv
Conference Sponsors .......................................................................... xxv
Conference Contributors .................................................................... xxvii

Natural Resource Variability

Papers

Understanding Variability in Four Fields in the United Kingdom
  Simon Blackmore, R.J. Godwin, J.C. Taylor, N.D. Cosser, G.A. Wood, R.
  Earl, and S. Knight ................................................................. 3

Spatial and Temporal Distribution of Surface Water Content in a Large
  Agricultural Field
  Robert J. Lascano, R. Louis Baumhardt, Stanley K. Hicks, and Juan A.
  Landivar .................................................................................. 19

Quantifying the Effect of Water Availability on Corn Yield under a Center-Pivot
  Irrigation System
  Ty W. Morton, G.W. Buchleiter, and D.F. Heermann ....................... 31

Temporal and Spatial Variation in Soil Nitrate Acquisition by Maize as Influenced
  by Nitrate Depth Distribution
  Daniel T. Walters, and Jason E. Goesch ..................................... 43

In-Season Spatial Variability of Potato Petiole Nitrogen
  Bradley A. King, J.C. Stark, and J.P. Taberna, Jr ......................... 55

Plant Response to Complex Interactions: Soil Test for P and V Interactions with
  Soybean
  Alan Olness, T. Nelsen, J. Rinke, and W.B. Voorhees .................... 67

Estimating Spatial Variability of Soil Salinity using Geostatistical Methods
  Larisa Pozdnyakova, and Renduo Zhang ..................................... 79

Path Analysis of Some Heavy Metal Adsorption by Soil
  Yasar Kasap, Seyyid Irmak, and Hikmet Gunal ............................ 91
Spatial and Temporal Variability in Corn Growth, Development, Insect Pressure, and Yield

Site Specific Relationships between Flag Leaf Nitrogen, SPAD Meter Values and Grain Protein in Irrigated Wheat
Robert O. Miller, Stewart Pettygrove, R. Ford Denison, Lee F. Jackson, Mike Cahn, Richard Plant, and T. Kearney .....................113

Weed Seedling Population Responses to a Method of Site-specific Weed Management
Martin M. Williams II, Roland Gerhards, Stefan Reichart, David A. Mortensen, and Alex R. Martin ........................................123

Dynamics in the Spatial Continuity of Insect Density
Shelby J. Fleischer, Paul Blom, Daniel Emmen, and Art Hower .......133

Precision Agriculture - Development of a Hierarchy of Variables Influencing Crop Yields
E.C.A. Runge, and Frank M. Hons .................................................143

Spatial Statistical Analysis of On-Site Crop Yield and Soil Observations for Site-Specific Management
Ole Wendroth, Peter Jürschik, Antje Giebel, and Donald R. Nielsen ...159

Mapping and Interpretation of Sugar Beet Yield Differences
Bert Broos, B. Missotten, S. Reybrouck, and J. De Baerdemaeker .....171

Learning from Yield Monitor Data: A Bayesian Approach
Jeffrey W. Hopkins, Gary D. Schnitkey, Luther G. Tweeten, and Mario J. Miranda ..............................................................183

Terrain Attributes and Soil Nitrogen: Spatial Effects on Corn Yield Responses to Nitrogen Fertilization for a Northern, Glaciated Landscape
Sebastian M. Braum, P. Hinds, G.L. Malzer, J. Bell, D. Mulla, and P.C. Robert ........................................................................195

Soil Surface Curvature and the Spatial and Temporal Variability of Corn Grain Yields on a Hillslope
Dennis J. Timlin, Y.A. Pachepsky, V.A. Snyder, and R.B. Bryant ......203

Variability Scales of Surface Soil Sorptivity
Roger E. Smith, and Gerald W. Buchleiter ..................................215
Using Yield Maps to Regionalize Fields into Potential Management Units
  John V. Stafford, R.M. Lark, and H.C. Bolam .......................... 225

Soil Map Unit Composition and Scale of Mapping Related to Interpretations for
  Precision Soil and Crop Management in Iowa
  Thomas E. Fenton, and M. A. Lauterbach ............................ 239

Systematic Evaluation of Precision Farming Soil Sampling Requirements
  Ellsbury, and John Lee .................................................. 253

Comparison of Interpolation Methods for Mapping Soil P and K Contents
  A.N. Kravchenko, and D.G. Bullock .................................... 267

Aerial Photography and Satellite Imagery to Detect Deep Soil Nitrogen Levels in
  Potato and Sugarbeet
  David W. Franzen, Lance Reitmeier, Joseph F. Giles, and Allan C.
  Cattanach ................................................................. 281

Near-Ground and Aerial Radiometry Imaging for Assessing Spatial Variability in
  Crop Condition
  John V. Stafford, and Helen C. Bolam ................................ 291

Emerging Concepts for Solving the Enigma of Precision Farming Research
  Donald R. Nielsen, Ole Wendroth, and Francis J. Pierce ............ 303

Testing Quality of Soil Survey Geographic (SSURGO) Database for Precision
  Farming
  Robert Stermitz, D.S. Long, and G.A. Nielsen ....................... 319

Grid Soil Sampling to Determine Manageable Physical and Chemical Properties
  Affecting Soybean Production
  Michael S. Cox, and M.C. Wardlaw .................................. 327

Evaluating Farmer Developed Management Zone Maps for Precision Farming
  Kim L. Fleming, Dwayne G. Westfall, Dan W. Wiens, Larry E. Rothe, Jan
  E. Cipra, and Dale F. Heermann ...................................... 335

Temporal Changes in Fractal Dimensions of Soil Cracks with Desiccation
  K. Noborio, C.S. Tan, and R.G. Kachanoski .......................... 345

Some Characteristics of Old River Terraces Soils in the Kizilirmak Plain of
  Turkey
  Seyyid Irmak, Recep Gundogan, and Hikmet Gunal .................... 355
Morphology of Three Terra Rossa Soils in the East Mediterranean Region of Turkey
Seyyid Irmak, Recep Gundogan, Yasar Kasap, and Salih Aydemir ..........365

Salinity Problems of Some Quaternary Soils in the Central Anatolia Region of Turkey
Seyyid Irmak, Recep Gundogan, and Hikmet Gunal ......................373

Determination of Subsurface Flow Characteristics for the Installation of Groundwater Samplers

Specific Variability of Phosphorus Status and Sorption Characteristic in Clay Solis of the St-Lawrence Lowlands (Quebec)

Spatial Distribution of Soil Nitrogen Supplying Power: A Tool for Precision Farming
Fernando Selles, S.A. Brandt, C.A. Campbell, B.G. McConkey, and D. Messer .................................................................407

Corn Yield Response to ΔY Predicted Variable Nitrogen Fertilization: An Ontario Field Study
R.J. Cathcart, Ivan P. O’Halloran, and A.P. von Bertoldi ..................417

A Method for Evaluating Inherent Soil Quality for Crops across Major Land Resource Areas
H. Raymond Sinclair, Jr, W.J. Waltman, S.W. Waltman, R.M. Aiken, and R.L. Anderson .................................................................429

Irrigated Corn Yield as Related to Spatial Variability of Selected Soil Properties
A.M. Coelho, J.W. Doran, and J.S. Schepers ................................441

Crop Yield Variability as Influenced by Water in Rain-Fed Agriculture
S. Logsdon, J. Pruger, D. Meek, T. Colvin, M. Milner, and D. James ....453

Predicting Yield Variability for Corn Grown in a Silty-Clay Soil in Northern Italy
R. Marchetti, P. Spallacci, E. Ceotto, and R. Papini .........................467

Yield Response to Nitrogen within Landscape Classes
Sheilah C. Nolan, Thomas W. Goddard, Douglas C. Penney, and F. Murray Green .................................................................479
Spatial Variability of Cotton Fiber Yield and Quality in Relation to Soil Variability
   R.M. Johnson, J.M. Bradow, P.J. Bauer, and E.J. Sadler .....................487

Mapping Weed Populations: The Cost of Counting and Identifying Seedlings and Seeds
   L.J. Wiles, and E.E. Schweizer ................................................................499

Spatial Sampling for Crop Pests in Two Center Pivot Irrigated Fields
   D. Wyse-Pester, Philip Westra, and L.J. Wiles ....................................511

Spatial Variability in Corn Rootworm Distribution in Relation to Spatially Variable Soil Factors and Crop Condition

Rainfall Variability and Spatial Pattern for the Southeast
   D.D. Bosch, and F.M. Davis ..................................................................535

Using Precision Agriculture to Enhance Landscape Structure in a Corn Belt Agricultural Watershed
   Robert C. Corry, and Joan Iverson Nassauer ......................................547

Impact of Topography and Management on Diseases of Canola and Wheat
   H.R. Kutcher, S.S. Malhi, A.M. Johnston, and G. Hnatowich ................559

Influence of Dissolved Organic Carbon and Initial Moisture on Zinc Sorption by Two Arid Soils
   A.M. Falatah and A.S. Sheta ...............................................................563

Variability of Corn/Soybean Yield and Soil/Landscape Properties across a Southwestern Minnesota Landscape
   B.R. Khakural, P.C. Robert, D.R. Huggins .........................................573

Abstracts

Geostatistical Applications in Mapping of Crop Yield and Soil Properties
   Sidney R. Vieira, and Dave J. Mulla ..................................................581

Use of Thermal Infrared Images to Detect Very Early Disease Spots
   Jean Duchesne, and Z. Lamkadmi ....................................................583

Comparison of GPS Methods for Deriving Terrain Attributes
   Tim Fiez, and Ron Bolton ......................................................................585
Spatial Variability of Soil Properties and Productivity within Field at the Central-Chernozem Region of Russia
Alvira G. Vasseneva, and I.I. Vassenev .................................................. 587

Soil-Cover Quality Assessment System for Field Scale
Ivan I. Vassenev ...................................................................................... 589

Phosphorous Extractability and Mobility in Soils as Affected by Polymer Amendment
A.M. Falatah ........................................................................................... 591

Managing Variability

Papers

Precision Agriculture: A Unique Tool to Unify Production and Environmental Requirement in Agriculture
J. Bouma .............................................................................................. 595

On-Farm Testing Using the Adjacent Strip Comparison Method
Thomas A. Doerge, and Douglas L. Gardner .......................................... 603

On-Farm Experimentation to Determine Site-Specific Responses to Variable Inputs
S.E. Cook, M.L. Adams, and R.J. Corner ............................................... 611

Precision Farming in Asia: Progress and Prospects
Ancha Srinivasan ................................................................................... 623

Selection and Application of Cultivars to Different Sites within a Field
R.W. Heiniger and E.J. Dunphy .............................................................. 641

Spatial Potato Seed Piece Placement Monitoring System
J. Richard Hess, John M. Svoboda, Reed L. Hoskinson, David W. Hempstead, and Wayne B. Jones ......................................................... 653

Precision Agriculture in England: Current Practice and Research-Based Advice to Farmers
P.M.R. Dampney, and M. Moore .............................................................. 661

Comparison of Uniform and Variable Rate Fertilization Strategies Using Grid Soil Sampling, Variable Rate Technology, and Yield Monitoring
C. Yang, G.L. Anderson, J.H. King, Jr., and E.K. Chandler ..................... 675
Variable-Rate Phosphorus Fertilization: On-Farm Research Methods and Evaluation for Corn and Soybean
   A.P. Mallarino, D.J. Wittry, D. Dousa and P.N. Hinz .................687

Environmental and Production Effects from Variable Rate Nitrogen Fertilizer to Winter Wheat in England
   P.M.R. Dampney, G. Goodlass, M.A. Froment, and J.V. Stafford ....697

Variable Nitrogen Application: Effects on Crop Yield and Quality
   P.A. Algerbo, and L. Thylen .....................................................709

Using Field and Crop Characteristics for Site Specific Nitrogen Management on Winter Wheat Crop
   H. Leclerc, F. Laurent, Denis Boisgontier, J. M. Le Bars, and P. Zwaenepoel ............................................................719

Site-Specific Nitrogen Management of Irrigated Corn
   Richard B. Ferguson, Gary W. Hergert, James S. Schepers, and Carol A. Crawford .........................................................733

Phosphorus Fertilizer Management Strategies for Variable Rate Fertilizer Application in Center Pivot Irrigated Potato Rotations
   Joan R. Davenport, Mary J. Hattendorf, Shufeng Han, Robert G. Evans, and Sally M. Schneider ..........................745

Application of Precision Agriculture to Sugar Cane
   Graeme Cox, Harry Harris, and David Cox ...............................753

Precision Management of Soil Organic Carbon in Tea Lands of Sri Lanka
   A. Anandacoomaraswamy, and S. Ananthacumaraswamy ..........767

Patch Spraying and Rational Weed Mapping in Cereals
   S. Christensen, T. Heisel, and J. V. Beniloch ................................773

Grain Protein Mapping for Precision Management of Dryland Wheat
   Dan S. Long, Richard E. Engel, and Gregg R. Carlson ................787

Yield Response of Wheat and Canola to a Topographically Based Variable Rate Fertilization Program in Saskatchewan
   D. J. Pennock, F. L. Walley, M. P. Solohub, and G. Hnatowich ........797

The Accuracy of Farm Machinery for Precision Agriculture: A Case for Fertilizer Application
   Daan Goense .............................................................................807
Regression Analysis of Yield Monitor Data and Its Use in Fine Tuning Crop Decisions

Mark C. Kessler, and J. Lowenberg-DeBoer ........................................ 821

Integrating Precision Farming Tools to Achieve Sustainability

Lawrence D. Gaultney, D. Raymond Forney, and Monte Weller .......... 829

Strategies for Variable Rate Nitrogen Fertilization in Hummocky Terrain

A. P. Moulin, H. J. Beckie, and D. J. Pennock .................. 839

Precision Management of Fertilizer Phosphorus and Potassium for Potato in Quebec, Canada

Athyna N. Cambouris, Michel C. Nolin, and Regis R. Simard .......... 847

Implementation of Precision Fertilizing Concepts on Practical Farms in Western Germany

R. E. Lütticken .......................................................... 859

Weed Management with Site-Specific Herbigation

C. V. Eberlein, B. A. King, and M. J. Guttieri ......................... 869

Spatial Variation in Atrazine Field Dissipation and Laboratory Mineralization and Their Relationship to Weed Control

Z. Liu, S. A. Clay, and D. E. Clay ........................................ 879

Operational Precision Agriculture on a Large Scale Farm in Eastern Germany

Jutta Rogasik, Dirk Schoeder, Ewald Schnug, Gernot Schak, Herbert Simchen, and Ludwig Schrenk ........................................ 885

Use of Precision Farming Practices in Grape Production

Robert L. Wample, Lynn Mills, and Joan R. Davenport .............. 897

Evaluating Commercial Cranberry Bogs for Variability: Developing Information for Precision Management

Joan R. Davenport, Peter V. Oudemans, Marilyn G. Hughes, and Abbott Lee ................................................................. 907

A Study of Traditional Methods on Soil Tillage in China

Wang Xing-Guang .......................................................... 915

Tidal Swamp Reclamation by Fork Irrigation Model at Central Kalimantan, Indonesia

A. Rosmarkam, and A. Syukur ........................................ 919

An Integrated Nutrient Management System for Sustainable Rice Production

Precision Peat Production
S. M. Ward, and N. M. Holden ..............................................................937

Unevenness of Fertilizer Distribution and Determination of the Application Rate
Joseph Kaplan, and Jonathan Chaplin ....................................................943

Using GPS to Scout Cotton for Variable Rate Pix (Mepiquat Chloride) Application
M. E. Thurman and R. W. Heiniger .........................................................953

Abstract

Evaluation of Site-Specific Corn and Soybean Management System in the Midwest
Harold F. Reetz, Jr., T.S. Murrell, D.G. Bullock, and Q.B. Rund .......... 963

The Values of Precision for Weed Management in Broadacre Cropping Systems
Peter Cox, and Dick Medd .................................................................965

Side-by-Side Comparisons of Uniform and Site-Specific Nutrient Applications
Ronnie W. Heiniger, and Carl Crosier ....................................................967

Use of Animal Wastes to Compensate for Spatial Variability
Timothy J. Masek, D. D. Francis, and J. S. Schepers .........................969

Planter and Seedbed Induced Variability
Christopher J. Fagan, and James S. Schepers ..................................971

Soil Fertility Distribution in Livestock Production Systems with Pastures Directly Grazed
Martin Diaz Zorita, G. A. Duarte, and G. A. Grosso .........................973

Agricultural Ground Truthing GPS-GIS System
Mark A. McGovern, T. Hirose, B. K. Hopp, and T. E. Huffman ..........975

Engineering Technology

Papers

Soil Conductivity Sensing on Claypan Soils: Comparison of Electromagnetic Induction and Direct Methods
K. A. Sudduth, N. R. Kitchen, and S.T. Drummond .............................979

Development of A CAN Bus Based Air Seeder Monitor
Frank Lang .............................................................................................991
Spatial Variability of Water Application from Center Pivot Irrigation and Precipitation

Soil Doctor Multi-Parameter, Real-time Soil Sensor and Concurrent Input Control System
J. W. Colburn, Jr. .................................................................................. 1011

Centimeter-Precision Guidance of Agricultural Implements in the open Field by Means of Real Time Kinematic DGPS
R. P. van Zuydam .............................................................................. 1023

Comparison GPS Guidance with Foam Marker Guidance
R. Buick, and E. White ........................................................................ 1035

The Omnistar Virtual Base Station System
Lee Ott ................................................................................................... 1047

System for Precise Dosage and Documentation of P, K, and Mg application
R. E. Lütticken .................................................................................... 1059

Surveying Biomass in Plant Populations
Detlef Ehlert ......................................................................................... 1067

Increasing Productivity of Equipment for Variable Rate Technology
Andrey V. Skotnikov, and D.E. McGrath ............................................ 1077

Precision Agriculture Requires Precise Tuning
Thomas S. Colvin, and Erick W. Kerkman ........................................... 1083

Applying Soil Electrical Conductivity Technology to Precision Agriculture
Eric D. Lund, P. E. Colin, D. Christy, and Paul E. Drummond ............. 1089

Recent Advances in Yield Monitoring of Conveyor Harvested Crops
Ronald H. Campbell ............................................................................ 1101

Evaluation of Sugarbeet Yield Sensing System Operating Concurrently on a Harvester

Development of A Tomato Yield Monitor
M. G. Pelletier, and S. K. Upadhyaya .................................................... 1119
Mapping Peanut Yield Variability with An Experimental Load Cell Yield Monitoring System

Vector Method for Determining Harvest Area Using Combine Position Data
Scott T. Drummond, Clyde W. Fraisse, and Kenneth A. Sudduth ......1141

Evaluation of Weighing and Flow-Based Cotton Yield Mapping Techniques
Stephen W. Searcy ........................................................................1151

Measurement of Grain Yields in Japanese Paddy Field
Michihisa Iida, Toshikazu Kaho, Choung Keun Lee, Mikio Umeda, and Masahiko Suguri ..................................................1165

Yield Deconvolution - A Wetted Grain Pulse to Estimate The Grain Flow Transfer Function?
M. J. Pringle, B. M. Whelan, M. L. Adams, S. E. Cook, and G. Riethmuller .................................................................1177

Prediction Uncertainty and Implications for Digital Map Resolution
B. M. Whelan, and A. B. McBratney .............................................1185


Use of Aerospace Structural Sensor Technology for Soil Physical Characterization
John M. Svoboda, J. Richard Hess, Reed L. Hoskinson, and J. Wayne Sawyer ...................................................................1207

Field Comparison of Two Soil Electrical Conductivity Measurement Systems

Integrated Weighing Platform for Manure Spreader Regulation
F. Thirion, P. Zwaenepoel, and F. Chabot ......................................1219

Evaluation of Commercial Cotton Yield Monitors in Georgia Field Conditions
Calvin D. Perry, Jeffrey S. Durrence, Daniel L. Thomas, George Vellidis, Chris J. Sobolik, and Alan Dzubak .....................................1227

Soybean Moisture Content Measurement Based on Impact Force Parameters
Brian L. Steward, and John W. Hummel ........................................1241
The ISO 11783 Standard and Its Use in Precision Agriculture Equipment
C. Strauss, C. E. Cugnasca, A. M. Saraiva, and S. M. Paz ............... 1253

Abstract

Cotton Yield Sensor Produces Yield Map
Mike Gvili .................................................................................. 1263

Crop Modeling

Papers

A Methodology to Define Management Units in Support of an Integrated, Model-Based Approach to Precision Agriculture
B. J. Van Alphen and J. J. Stoorvogel ........................................ 1267

Model-Based Technique to Determine Variable Rate Nitrogen for Corn
J. O. Paz, W. D. Batchelor, T. S. Colvin, S. D. Logsdon, T. C. Kaspar,
D. L. Karlen, B. A. Babcock, and G. R. Pauts ............................ 1279

Performance of ICEMM: A Cotton Simulation Model In A Precision Farming Study
M. Y. L. Boone and J. A. Landivar .................................................. 1291

Evaluation of Corp Models to Simulate Site-Specific Crop Development and Yield
C. W. Fraisse, K. A. Sudduth, N. R. Kitchen ................................ 1297

Simulation of within Field Variability of Corn Yield with Ceres Maize Model
J. E. Corá, F. J. Pierce, B. Basso, and J. T. Ritchie ...................... 1309

Machine Learning Methods in Site-Specific Management Research: An Australian Case Study
M. L. Adams, S. E. Cook, P. A. Caccetta, and M. J. Pringle ............ 1321

A Landform Segmentation Model for Precision Farming
R. A. MacMillan, W. W. Pettapiece, L. D. Watson, T. W. Goddard ... 1335

Identifying Agroecozones in Central Great Plains
R. L. Anderson, R. M. Aiken, H. R. Sinclair, S. W. Waltman, and
W. J. Waltman ........................................................................... 1347

An Object Model for Information Systems for Precision Agriculture
A. M. Saraiva, A. M. A. Massola, and C. E. Cugnasca .................. 1355
NLEAP Simulation of Soil Type Effects on Residual Nitrate-Nitrogen and Potential Use for Precision Agriculture
Jorge A. Delgado .................................................................1367

Predicting the Effect of Nitrogen Deficiency on Crop Growth Duration and Yield
Upendra Singh, Sylvester Oikeh, Victor Chude, and Paul Wilkens ......1379

Potential Effects of Nitrogen-Fertilization Scenarios in Small Watersheds in Southern Ontario
G. Roloff, K. B. MacDonald, and A. R. Couturier .........................1395

Abstract

Weed Detection in Field Corn Using High Resolution Multispectral Digital Imagery and Field Scouting

Remote Sensing

Papers

Applying Remote Sensing Technology to Precision Farming
C. J. Johannsen, P. G. Carter, P. R. Willis, E. Owubah, B. Erickson,
K. Ross, and N. Targulian ....................................................1413

Radar Imagery for Precision Crop and Soil Management
M. Susan Moran, Daniel C. Hymer, Jiaguo Qi, and Yann Kerr ..........1423

Remote Sensing Research in Wisconsin Soybean and Corn Production Fields

Mapping In-Season Soil Nitrogen Variability Assessed through Remote Sensing
Kenan Diker and Walter C. Bausch ........................................1445

Developing Calibration Technique to Map Crop Variation and Yield Potential Using Remote Sensing
G. A. Wood, G. Thomas, and J. C. Taylor .................................1457

Assessing Yield Parameters by Remote Sensing Techniques
P. R. Willis, P. G. Carter, and C. J. Johannsen ..........................1465
Corn and Soybean Yield Indicators Using Remotely Sensed Vegetation Index
Minghua Zhang, Michael O'Neill, Paul Hendley, Dirk Drost and Susan Ustin .......................................................... 1475

Tomato Yield – Color Infrared Photograph Relationships

Evaluating Commercial Cranberry Beds for Variability and Yield Using Remote Sensing Techniques
Marilyn G. Hughes, Peter V. Oudemans, Joan R. Davenport, Keri Ayres, Teuvo M. Airola, and Abbott Lee ............................................. 1493

Remote Sensing as an Aid for the Spatial Management of Nutrients
K. Panten, S. Haneklaus, D. Schroeder, E. Schnug, and M. Vanoverstraeten .......................................................... 1501

Application of Remote Sensing to Irrigation Management in California Cotton
Richard E. Plant and Daniel S. Munk ............................................. 1511

Spectral Reflectance Pattern Recognition for Segmenting Corn Plants and Weeds
John W. Hummel and Jing Yu .......................................................... 1523

Sensor for Weed Detection Based on Spectral Measurements
F. Feyaerts, P. Pollet, L. Van Gool, and P. Wambacq ..................... 1537

Use of Digital Imagery to Evaluate Disease Incidence and Yield Loss Caused by Sclerotinia Stem Rot of Soybeans
M. Dudka, S. Langton, R. Shuler, J. Kurle, and C. R. Grau ............. 1549

Directed Sampling Using Topography as a Logical Basis
David W. Franzen, Ardell D. Halvorson, Joseph Krupinsky, Vern L. Hofman, and Larry J. Cihacek .................................................. 1559

A Digital Camera System for Weed Detection
T. Heisel and S. Christensen .......................................................... 1569

Weed Detection Based on Structural Information Using an Imaging Spectograph
P. Pollet, F. Feyaerts, P. Wambacq, and L. Van Gool ..................... 1579

Spectral Properties of Sugarbeets Related to Sugar content and Quality
D.S. Humburg and K.W. Stange ...................................................... 1593

Spatial High Resolution Crop Measurements with Airborne Hyperspectral Remote Sensing
J.C. Deguise, M. McGovern, H. McNairn, and K. Staenz .................. 1603
Abstract

Application of Remote Sensing to Irrigation Management in California Cotton: Factors Influencing Vegetative Growth
   Daniel S. Munk and Richard E. Plant ..................................................1609

Interest of Superspectral Remote Sensing Data and Agronomic Reflectance Models for Crop Management
   Bernard Coquil .................................................................1611

Remote Sensing as a Guide to Directed Sampling for Improved Site-Specific Management
   Devon D. Liston and J.S. Schepers ..........................................1613

Evaluation of General Weed Management (GWM) Model: A Computerized Bioeconomic Weed Decision Aid for Row Crops
   Brian L. Broulik, C. L. Reese, S. A. Clay, D. E. Clay, and M. M. Ellsbury...............................................................1615

Image Analysis of 35-mm Aerial Photography for Estimating Various Plant Parameters
   Walter Bausch and Kenan Diker .............................................1617

Profitability

Papers

Evaluating the Economics of Precision Agriculture
   Carol Snyder, John Havlin, Gerard Kluitenberg, and Ted Schroeder ...1621

Spatial Break-Even Variability for Variable Rate Technology Adoption
   B.C. English, R.K. Roberts, and S.B. Mahajanashetti .................1633

Economics of Variable Rate Planting for Corn
   J. Lowenberg-DeBoer ........................................................1643

Economics of Variable Rate Lime in Indiana
   Rodolfo Bongiovanni and James Lowenberg-DeBoer ..................1653

Economic Returns and Environmental Impacts of Variable Rate Nitrogen Fertilizer and Water Applications
   K.B. Watkins, Y.C. Lu, and W.Y. Huang ..................................1667

From Data to Information: Adding Value to Site-Specific Data
   Scott M. Swinton and Kezelee Q. Jones ................................1681
Abstract

Additional Analysis Tools Based on Yield Data
Hal Watkins .................................................................1693

Impact of Spatial Resolution on the Potential Profitability of Site-Specific N and P Management of Corn

Environment

Papers

Targeting Precision Agrichemical Applications to Increase Productivity
S.A. Clay, G.J. Lems, D.E. Clay, M.M. Ellsbury, and F. Forcella ..........1699

C.D. Tsadilas and V. Samaras .................................................1709

Site-Specific Herbicide Management for Preserving Water Quality

Influence of Sewage Sludge Application on Soil Quality: II. Heavy Metals
V. Samaras and C. D. Tsadilas ..................................................1733

Heavy Metals Content of Commercial Inorganic Fertilizers Marketed in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
A.S. Modaihsh and M.S. Al-Sewailem ............................................1745

Technology Transfer

Papers

The Growth and Development of Precision Agriculture Service Providers
William W. Casady and Raymond E. Massey ............................1757

Yield Mapping of On-Farm Cooperative Fields in the Southeast Coastal Plain
John Sadler, Joe Millen, Patrick Fussell, Josh Spencer, and Wilson Spencer ..........................................................1767
Precision Farming: From Technology to Decisions: A Case Study
Kim L. Fleming, Dwayne G. Westfall, Dale F. Heermann, D. Bruce Bosley, Frank B. Peairs, and Philip Westra ........................................... 1777

Decision Making Strategies for Fertilizer Use in Precision Agriculture
S. Haneklaus, D. Schroeder and Ewald Schnug .................. 1785

Using the Decision Support System for Agriculture (DSS4AG) for Wheat Fertilization
Reed L. Hoskinson and J. Richard Hess ............................. 1797

Analysis and Design and Implementation of an Information System for Spatially Variable Field Management
J. Van Bergeijk, D. Goense, and L. Speelman ........................ 1807

Adoption of Precision Agriculture Technologies by U.S. Corn Producers
Stan G. Daberkow and William D. McBride .......................... 1821

Information System for Farms Using Precision Agriculture Techniques: Compatibility with EDI Standards
Steffe Jerome and Grenier Gilbert ........................................ 1833

Technology-Mediated Learning Environment in Precision Agriculture
U. Sunday Tim ................................................................. 1843

Weather Induced Variability in Site-Specific Management Profitability: A Case Study
Ricardo P. Braga, J.W. Jones, and B. Basso ........................... 1853

Agroindustrial Sector Global Evaluation System
George Sugai, Francisco Assis Nascimento, Paulo Roberto Meneses, Jogi Takechi, and Yoshihiko Sugai ....................................... 1865

Management-Oriented Model Guided Within-season Nitrogen Management
MengBo Li and Russell S. Yost .......................................... 1871

Abstract

Precision Agriculture at the University of Minnesota-Crookston: Combining “Hands-On” With “High Tech”
Aziz Rahman ................................................................. 1893

Site-Specific Agriculture Workshops Assist Farmers to Understand and Manage Soil-Landscape Variability
Ronald L. McNeil, Brenda J. Sawyer, and T.W. Goddard ........... 1895
Validation and Implementation of a Coordinated Precision Agricultural Curriculum

Terry Brase .......................................................................................1897

APPENDIX I - Summary of Working Group Discussions on Educational Curriculum .................................................................1899

APPENDIX II - Participant List ..........................................................1905

APPENDIX III - Exhibitor List ............................................................1937
PREFACE

The 4th International Conference on Precision Agriculture was attended by over 800 registered delegates representing 43 states and 27 countries. One main goal of the conference has always been to involve representatives from university, government, industry, ag-business, and farmers. In 1998, participants included about 32% academics, 29% manufacturers and retailers, 21% service companies (consulting, software, and remote sensing), 10% government agencies, 4% growers, and 6% other. A special effort was made in 1998 for the A to Z track principally organized for practitioners by the Precision Agriculture Center and the Potash Phosphate Institute. According to evaluations, it seems that the program was very successful and should be repeated at the 2000 conference.

More than 200 oral and poster papers were presented at sessions on natural resource variability, managing variability, profitability, engineering technology, environment, technology transfer, and two new sessions on crop modeling and remote sensing. A number of volunteered papers were offered in these two areas.

Participants were convened in workgroups to discuss and make recommendations on education curriculum for technical, college undergraduate and graduate, and professional levels. This is a precision agriculture key issue. Based on new information technologies, precision agriculture requires a number of new skills. Results of the workgroup work are summarized in the appendix.

On behalf of the conference organizing team and all participants, we express our gratitude to sponsoring and contributing organizations for their support and to ASA/CSSA/SSSA for publishing this book. We also wish to express our appreciation to all speakers and poster presenters for their presentations and manuscripts, and to all participants who made the conference a success. We look forward for the 5th International Conference scheduled for July 15-19, 2000 in Minneapolis.

P. C. Robert,

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Special thanks are expressed to Yohana Barata (*) for editing and organizing the manuscripts in a camera-ready format.

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