



Farmer-driven data cooperative, GiSC, and leading agricultural data insights company, Main Street Data, team up with IBM to help growers maximize return on investment in yield

LUBBOCK, Texas, Feb. 26, 2018 -- [GiSC \(Grower Information Services Cooperative\)](#), the agricultural industry's only grower-run data cooperative, and Main Street Data, an agricultural data analytics company, are joining forces with IBM to introduce a suite of data-driven solutions to help growers improve their yields, operations, and overall productivity.

These solutions will combine the use of IBM's world-leading competency in technology and platforms, including Internet of Things (IoT), weather-driven insights, and data science; more than seven years of corn, soybean and wheat yield information from Main Street Data; and farmer-provided crop, yield, and operational data from GiSC. This collaboration will enable farmers to make better, more informed decisions to help balance yield production and profits.

"We believe that data analytic technology solutions are the key to unlocking the next step-function improvement in agricultural productivity, but the adoption rate of these data solutions is slower than it needs to be, because growers simply do not know what works and what delivers real return on investment," said Ron T. LeMay, CEO of Main Street Data. "Our objective is to serve as the farmers' advocate, an independent source of decision-making tools based on data and data science common to other leading industries. We now have data in the quantity and quality required to address the major problems and leverage the opportunities facing growers, and are able to provide tools that can positively impact their operations now and in the future."

"Through this collaboration, farmers will now have access to a trusted environment in which to share their data and glean insights that have never before been available," said Mark Gildersleeve, Head of Watson IoT Platform and Business Solutions for The Weather Company, an IBM Business. "These insights will help them to better understand comparative performance and maximize return on investment in yield."

"Independent validation is a critical missing piece in agriculture, and Main Street Data will fill that gap," added Ken Cassman, Main Street Data Chief Agronomy Officer and Emeritus Professor of Agronomy, University of Nebraska. "I have promoted benchmarking as an essential tool for crop producers for many years. Main Street Data provides both the high-quality data and high spatial resolution necessary to benchmark with precision, as well as the data science and analytics tools to use it. I am excited to be joining the Main Street Data team and look forward to teaming with IBM and GiSC."

The first phase of solutions from the partnership is planned for as early as May:

- **GiSC Membership** -- Membership in this farmer-governed data cooperative will, for the first time, provide farmers the comfort level to share anonymous, aggregated data to be utilized immediately for their collective benefit. GiSC will provide a secure storage platform for members' farm data, and utilize this platform to collect and manage multiple aspects of agronomy and yield data. Phase One will enable members to submit and store crop data for all the major crops such as corn, soybeans, wheat, cotton, sorghum, rice, etc. Future phases will allow for specialty crops, fruits, vegetables, etc.
- **The Validator** -- This benchmarking tool will assist farmers in identifying whether farming practices are producing the expected outcomes. It further ranks farmers' operations at the subfield level on a scale of 5th to 95th percentile by comparing the yields at the micro field level with other farmers growing under comparable conditions. The Validator is the only independent benchmarking tool to help farmers determine if their plans are creating a positive return on investment.
- **Market Vision** -- This serves as an in-season productivity assessment and decision tool, as well as a grain trading tool, to help farmers maximize the price of grain. Market Vision is a highly quantitative, data analytics-based tool as sophisticated as those utilized by the largest grain traders. It is designed to level the playing field for the benefit of growers.
- **GiSC's National Crop Registry** -- Included in the GiSC membership, the crop registry is a tool designed to assist growers in the survey of neighboring farmland and address some of the problems associated with chemical drift, most recently associated with chemical applications, specifically Dicamba. Details of this product will be made available by April 1 to growers, chemical applicators, and crop input providers. IBM and its world-class weather products from The Weather Company will be utilized to assist farmers with anticipated wind speeds and possible temperature inversions.

"At the end of the day, we do what we do to serve our member farmers," said Billy Tiller, CEO of GiSC. "I have aspired for years to put together a data co-op that could focus on data analytics and solutions without the conflict inherent in selling physical products. With Main Street Data, I knew I had found a partner that shared my goals and values – a passionate interest in providing growers the tools required for success now and in the future.

"Additionally, gaining access to key data and insights from IBM represents the ideal vision of what GiSC has been about from the beginning: finding the best technology partners and bringing those partners to growers through the co-op model. I am convinced this combination will become a driving force behind the advances in agriculture required to permit growers to succeed in their pursuit to 'feed and clothe the world.'"

About Main Street Data

Main Street Data is an agriculture data analytics company that has the largest and highest quality data set of corn, soybean and wheat yield, as well as related naturally-occurring variables at the granular resolution of 150 square feet. Through data science and machine learning, the company creates tools to help farmers optimize production and maximize the price received for their crops.

About GiSC

Grower Information Services Cooperative, GiSC, is the only grower-owned agricultural data cooperative in the United States. GiSC was founded on the notion that growers need an easy way to securely store and access their information, and share that information with those who serve and support them. Made up of growers across all geographies, commodities and demographics, GiSC is governed by a board of directors composed of the growers' peers. GiSC works to protect members' data rights while assisting them in maximizing the value of their data. GiSC is a Collaboration Platform. Through the cooperative, growers are given the ability to aggregate their data, and align themselves to collaborate with strategic technology partners to further improve their farming operations. For more information on GiSC, visit www.gisc.coop.