



Ceres Imaging: Flying High With Science



Ceres Imaging has one goal in mind: To increase grower profitability by helping them improve their irrigation strategy.

“We create

irrigation management solutions, and we do this by providing high resolution aerial imagery to help our growers tackle issues quickly,” said John Bourne, vice president of marketing.

Ceres Imaging provides irrigation management solutions a couple different ways. The most common is dealing with acute irrigation issue management. These are the everyday clogs and leaks that can really make the difference between a good season and a great season. The team works to identify them before they have a chance to impact yield. They do this through aerial imagery, which can spot and alert growers to an issue weeks before it’s visually noticeable.

They also have more sophisticated solutions which can include uniformity management, water stress quantification, yield impact and forecasting, and applied water optimization, to name a few.

Ceres Imaging was founded in 2013 by graduate student Ashwin Madgavkar. They are headquartered in Oakland with locations in Washington and Nebraska and teams all over the Western United States and Australia.

Ceres Imaging is a farmer first company, as many of their employees are farmers themselves or grew up on a farm. They have a passion for bringing science to the farm and making it actionable. Of their 100 employees, 14 hold PhDs in everything from data

science to GIS (Geographic Information Systems) to crop modeling.

When a farmer joins Ceres, they discuss what set of solutions they want managed. Depending on their goals, they can get imagery flights 4-12 times per season and several grower specialist meetings where they analyze the data and make decisions off it.

“We use specialized tools to get ahead of the issues before they are visually noticeable in the crop,” said Bourne.

With a market share of over 30 percent of all vineyard and tree nut acreage and 20 percent of all tomato acreage in California, Ceres has become a partner with many farmers throughout the state.

Ceres Imaging is also a Fresno County Farm Bureau Friends of the Family Farm Premium Member.

“We joined Farm Bureau because of the ag community they support,” said Bourne. “So many of our employees are growers themselves, and if you want to be part of a community, you have to support the community.”

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At the end of the day, Ceres Imaging wants to improve the profitability of their clients.

“We don’t promise to transform an operation overnight, but we believe over time by getting ahead of issues and making informed decisions, it will result in significant improvement and profitability,” said Bourne.