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Free service designed to give farmers an 'edge'

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Farmers looking for an advantage in the highly competitive world of production agriculture may find an "edge" online.

A new website {www.growers-edge.com} was designed to help farmers maximize their profit potential.

"Our goal is to help you increase your bottom line," Craig Mouchka, president of Growers Edge, told producers recently at the Illinois Farm Bureau commodities conference in Normal.

The service, which is free to farmers, provides up-to-date crop prices within a 200-mile radius of each user's farm and helps farmers establish the best price for their crops by calculating grain bids compared to trucking and storage costs.

Farmers during busy seasons even can have all the price information sent directly to their cell phones.

"It's a very volatile market. Margins are close to where they were at in the past," Mouchka said. "It's important to get to know your marketplace."

The Growers Edge website also helps farmers identify, track, and achieve profit goals for each individual farm and analyze and test risk management and marketing plans prior to implementing them.

Growers Edge provides other crucial information such as weather forecasts, basis price updates, farm news, and market commentary.

"We're not an advisory service. We're not going to tell you when and where to sell," Mouchka said. "We provide information to help you get the best price."

"The best part about Growers Edge is it's free to all farmers," he noted.

Revenue for Growers Edge is generated by advertising on the site.

Growers Edge also features a phone support line farmers can call if they have questions or experience trouble with the website. Mouchka noted all information about each farm operation on the website is confidential and not subject to third-party disclosure.

Growers Edge currently has a user base of more than 10,000 farmers, he added.