Technology Corner

We are all learning to adjust to a new normal in the wake of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Although food production farmers were deemed essential and have continued to operate, this doesn't mean you shouldn't be considering making changes to your business. This pandemic is teaching all of us new ways to communicate, operate, and engage with each other. We will be taking this time to explore new technologies that may be able to help your farm operate more smoothly and seamlessly in light of these changing times. This week we will be exploring:

A New Way to Keep Time
Could a Time Clock App be right for the farm?

Any farm with even one employee utilizes some version of a time clock. These can be as technologically savvy as retinol scanners that link up to your accounting system or as simple as a yellow breeding card scribbled on once a week. Whether you are high tech or low tech- employees recording time is a possible location for people to congregate, touch surfaces, use the same pens and SHARE GERMS. So how can we eliminate this possible hub for germs? One way is to explore is by implementing a time clock app for cell phones or devices. This could actually help solve two dilemmas: the first of eliminating COVID risk as well as helping ensure employees across the farm clock in and out appropriately for lunches and breaks in accordance with NYS Labor Laws. Here are three different time clock applications for consideration in your farm businesses:

The first is Clockify- www.clockify.com this is a FREE application that allows you to track hours using a time, log time in a timesheet, and categorize time (which is very helpful for records for management). You can create reports or export the information to excel to keep four your records and complete payroll quickly each week with accurate hours. You can use this program on your desktop computer and then have employees download the application on your phone with their own login to track their time. This way your employees can clock in where ever they may be on the farm to get more accurate hours and eliminate the need to go to a communal location. This app is limited in that you still need to calculate what hours are overtime and it does not directly sync with quickbooks or a financial software.

The second is ClockShark- www.clockshark.com this is a fee (charged per employee basic is $3/person/month) application that allows you to track hours and attendance, includes basic GPS tracking (this is to ensure that employees are only clocking in when they are at or near the worksite or field), and allows for job or task categorization. There are additional features in this app including scheduling and managerial roles. You can create reports or export the information to excel OR you can integrate with your Quickbooks or financial service software to keep four your records and complete payroll. You can use this program on your desktop computer and then have employees download the application on your phone with their own login to track their time. This way your employees can clock in where ever they may be on the farm to get more accurate hours and eliminate the need to go to a communal location. You can also have a centralized unit that is a kiosk for clocking in using facial recognition.

The third is OntheClock- www.ontheclcok.com this is a fee (charged per employee basic is $2.50/person/month with 1-2 employees free) application that allows you to track hours and attendance, includes basic GPS tracking (this is to ensure that employees are only clocking in when they are at or near the worksite or field), and allows for sending payroll to other systems. There are

additional features in this app including various roles and makes sure that you must approve any employee users. You can create reports or export the information to excel OR you can integrate with your Quickbooks or financial service software to keep four your records and complete payroll. You can use this program on your desktop computer and then have employees download the application on your phone with their own login to track their time. This way your employees can clock in where ever they may be on the farm to get more accurate hours and eliminate the need to go to a communal location. You can also have a centralized unit that is a kiosk for clocking in using biometrics. This application and service can also track paid time off, scheduling, and payroll integrations.

Check back next month for more ideas about how to use technology on the farm!