

AG PRODUCTION

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as well. Schrotberger said corn will average a half to three-quarters of an inch of moisture while soybeans will use .4 to .5 inches during peak times.

"The way our soil is, it can only hold so much moisture," he said.

Schrotberger said his job is to help the farmer be as profitable as possible. He works directly with growers in determining what seed, soil and moisture needs are needing addressed and how.

"I help them from seed to harvest," he said.

The process is like several science disciplines coming together in the field. Plants are sampled and tested. Water is monitored and carefully applied, cover crops as needed and the most productive seeds for the price.

"For me to be around, the farmer needs to be profitable," Schrotberger said.

He has been in business for 20 years. He started as a truck driver. He grew up around the grain elevator in Gurley, watching the wheat trucked to the facility and processed.

DRONES

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Schrotberger said drones can be used for mapping and for spot spraying. He said he gets most of his information from satellite imagery. He receives weekly reports on field conditions. The MIT Technology Review says drone technology will give the agriculture industry a high-tech makeover. Instead of driving a field to inspect crop conditions, use a radio-controlled unmanned aircraft to view the plant from inches above the bloom to a few hundred feet.

Drone use requires contacting the local airport if flying above 400 feet and within five miles of an airport. The Federal Aviation Administration requires drones weighing more than half a pound to be registered, and the operator to be at least 13 years of age to register it.

COURTESY PHOTO / SIDNEY SUN-TELEGRAPH
Jerami Blundell flies a drone aircraft near Sidney. Drone aircraft are being used to map fields, survey crop conditions and even spray.



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