



In the Field

APRIL 2012

CHANGE IS THE DOORWAY TO OPPORTUNITY

By JAY K. DOUGLAS, ACTING REGIONAL VICE-PRESIDENT

If you had to pick a theme for this issue of the ProAg newsletter, change would be the natural choice. As a company, we're moving to a new crop insurance processing software system to enhance our ability to serve our agents and policyholders. Our service is what sets us apart, and we want it to be the best it can possibly be.

For the past several months, change has been at the top of our agenda here in the Lexington Region as well. In September, a number of our staff members left us to seek their fortunes elsewhere. An event of that nature is almost always viewed as a loss. But a strong organization with a clear mission will also see the same situation as an opportunity. And we have.

Moving forward with purpose

This transition has given us the chance to bring in a new crop of very talented people. Fresh ideas, different experiences, and new ways of doing things can bring new life to an organization, and that's been the case for the Lexington Region. The end result has been a staff of skilled newcomers seeded with key veterans.

We filled our last open field staff position late last month. However, the changes in this region go beyond our staff. Later this month, we'll be relocating our offices to a new, larger location here in Lexington.

I know our agents have been following our transition closely, and the feedback we've received has been positive. I said it in my letter on the back page and I'll add it here as well—thank you for working with us through this period of change. I'm confident we're a stronger unit as a result of the process. And thanks, too,

to all those individuals throughout ProAg who helped us process and complete claims during our transition. It's another reminder of the value of working with a strong, national organization.

We're excited about the quality team we've assembled, and we're all looking forward to serving you and your policyholders in the months ahead.

Here's what the Lexington Region looks like today.

MARKETING

Linda Miller – regional marketing manager
Wyatt Schroder – field representative for IN, KY, and OH
Shane Rose – field representative for AR, LA, MS, and TN
Joey Brickhouse – field representative for NC, SC, and VA
Robin Speakman – field representative for northern OH

ADMINISTRATION

Ashley Young – regional licensing coordinator

UNDERWRITERS

Andrea Meehan – underwriter supervisor
Sheryl Sutton – lead underwriter
Coty Gregory – MPCCI underwriter
Brooke McGrath – MPCCI underwriter
Jeanette Gatewood – MPCCI underwriter
Lore Ware – MPCCI underwriter
Ryan Evans – crop hail underwriter/MPCCI support

CLAIMS PROCESSING

Rebecca Stopher – claims processing supervisor
Brittany Core – claims processor
Andrew Serres – claims processor

COMPLIANCE

J.R. Estes – regional compliance supervisor
Jordan Snyder – compliance reviewer
Ben Ackerman – compliance for IN, NC, OH, and PA
Leona Antilley – compliance for AR, KY, LA, MS, and TN

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THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE OF AGRICULTURAL RISK MANAGEMENT®

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LEXINGTON REGION

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CLAIMS ADJUSTING

Dave Renfroe – territorial claims manager

Angie Steinbarger – regional claims manager for IN, OH, and PA

Karen Landman – claims supervisor for eastern OH and PA

Gary Saylor – claims supervisor for western OH

Bob East – claims supervisor for northern IN

Matthew Tobias – claims supervisor for southern IN

Kenneth Massey – claims supervisor for KY and TN

Freddy Beach – claims supervisor for NC, SC, and VA

Jeff Sexton – claims supervisor for MS

Kyle Harper – claims supervisor for LA

Dustin Tubbs – claims supervisor for AR 

INTRODUCING PROAGWORKS™

CROP INSURANCE PROCESSING SOFTWARE BUILT FOR YOU

By RICHARD STINSON, OPERATIONS PROJECT MANAGER

PROAGWORKS™

Our business demands a lot from all of us. High business volumes, tight deadlines, and the complexities of ever-changing insurance options push us, at times, to our limits. Our policyholders count on us for data integrity, processing efficiency, and prompt, accurate settlements. Your policy processing system plays an integral part in your ability to deliver on those expectations.

You deserve a system you can count on to support the great work you do. Now you have one—ProAgWorks™ software.

Built on a field-tested platform and developed to precisely meet the needs of agents, company personnel, and policyholders, ProAgWorks is intuitive, responsive, and powerful. It will enable you to do what you do best more productively.

Let me highlight just a few of the benefits of ProAgWorks that I believe you'll appreciate.

- **INTERNET-BASED**

ProAgWorks software is an Internet-based program. That means that no applications need to be installed on your hardware. Better yet, it means you can access the system from anywhere, just by using your browser.

- **STREAMLINED LOGIN**

Your login will now follow you through the system, eliminating the need for multiple logins. User security is also enhanced.

- **UP-FRONT EDIT FLAGS**

Simple errors, such as too many digits in a phone number, are automatically flagged on the entry screen for easy correction. We are introducing a new Mark Complete process, initiated during policy processing, at which time the system checks entries for accuracy. RMA error resolution issues are reduced and less time is spent correcting simple data-entry errors.

- **DASHBOARD**

The dashboard view available to agents and employees identifies suspensions to be worked, streamlines workflow, and provides an area for notifications and announcements corresponding to the login role.

- **TRANSACTIONAL LOGGING**

The transaction log provides a list of prior transactions by user, helping to eliminate discrepancies on reports. It is a tool that identifies change made to the policy.

- **PRINTING FLEXIBILITY**

Agents and employees have the option to batch print forms or print policy documents. Flexible printing makes the system easy to use, eliminates the need to be in multiple systems, and provides the option to print what you desire—blank, pre-headed, or a pre-filled form.

Improved efficiency means more opportunity

The best feature of the ProAgWorks software is the overall efficiency it will bring to our entire workforce. By reducing manual workarounds, employees will be able to spend more time doing what they do best. That means we'll be able to handle more business. Not only that, but policies and claims will be processed with fewer FCIC errors and reduced mail and paper costs.

This article is just the first of many opportunities you will have to learn more about ProAgWorks software. We know that this has been a busy time for agents due to the volume of work associated with spring sales closing. Your ProAg marketing representative will be contacting you soon to present a short video update on the new system. Stay tuned for that and more as we roll out ProAgWorks. 



MANAGING CHANGE, SMOOTHING TRANSITIONS

By KENDALL JONES, CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

The move to the new ProAgWorks™ crop insurance processing software will naturally come with its own learning curve. That's the nature of software systems. But anyone who has been through a similar transition also knows there are also other unintended, but unavoidable, consequences. We build our processes around the capabilities of the software. As we switch to a new system, those processes change for everyone.

Our goal is to minimize the normal disruption and stress caused by the transition, and to that end, we've been putting a great deal of effort into change management. The importance of this to you is not the process, but the end result—a smoother path to productive implementation of ProAgWorks.

A good thing

The first thing I want to emphasize is that the process changes—that we foresee—should be positive for everyone, from the field to the back office. These changes won't eliminate work, but they will ultimately make our workflow more streamlined, our tasks more intuitive, and our efforts more productive.

There are a number of significant differences between ProAgWorks and our current system, and one of the first and foremost has to do with the way we will be introducing it. Because ProAgWorks is built on a stable and proven platform—and created from top to bottom to meet the specific needs of our agents, claims processors, and underwriters—we know how

the system works. Everything fits together from the start. That enabled us to create coherent communication, marketing, and implementation plans in advance of the launch.

From a management perspective, we've learned from past experience. We have the knowledge and tools now to develop clear action plans and communicate those plans to all levels of our organization—including our partners. We anticipate that this change will allow us to be both more disciplined and more responsive as an organization.

Timetable for change

The change management process will be implemented, based on need, over the course of a year or more starting this spring. We'll begin by evaluating the procedural changes that will be needed, determine the best way to communicate those changes, and prepare the documentation. The rollout of ProAgWorks will follow the crop cycle, and system training will be a component of the regular training program.

Through this process, we'll use change management to help build understanding of not only the ProAgWorks program, but its impact. It supplements system training and will increase the effectiveness of the system changes.

If you haven't read Richard's article on the preceding page yet, I would encourage you to do that. You'll get a better idea how ProAgWorks will benefit you. 🍀

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CHANGE, CHALLENGE, AND OPPORTUNITY

*FROM THE DESK OF JAY K. DOUGLAS
ACTING REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENT, LEXINGTON, KY*

The Lexington Region has experienced significant changes, challenges, and opportunities since the recent departure in September of several ProAg staff members formerly attached to the region's service team.

I am pleased to report to you today that "all is well" due to the character, determination, and support of our entire ProAg Team, both in Lexington and across the company. We have successfully re-staffed the regional office and field level positions throughout the region.

In addition, we will be relocating our regional office to a new location in April, so please watch your mail and email for additional information regarding our move.

Details relative to our current staff and related positions are provided on the front cover of this newsletter for your convenience.

I want to extend a special "thank you" to all of our valued agents for your patience and continued support of ProAg and its Lexington Region throughout the transition! We sincerely appreciate your business and the opportunity to serve your agency and customers. 

KEY DATES – LEXINGTON REGION

FEB. 28: SALES CLOSE, PRODUCTION REPORT SIGN DATE IS APRIL 13, KEY DATE IS MAY 13

MARCH 15: SALES CLOSE, PRODUCTION REPORT SIGN DATE IS APRIL 29, KEY DATE IS MAY 29

APRIL 6: ALL OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED IN OBSERVANCE OF GOOD FRIDAY

POLICY INFORMATION

AUG. 15: NEW BILLING DATE

ACREAGE REPORT DATE

JULY 15: SIGN DATE

JULY 30: KEYING DATE

LEXINGTON REGION WILL BE MOVING INTO THEIR NEW OFFICE MID-APRIL.

