



Agro-Tech Inc., USA

Curtis Lee

Director of Research

“GenStat is well suited to our agricultural applications; much more so than any other system we looked at.”



Agro-Tech is a contract research and development company based in North Dakota. The company conducts privately funded research within the agricultural and biotech industries.

The Problem

As a consultant, Curt Lee operates in perhaps the most demanding of climates. The work he encounters is challenging, varied, and his reputation depends on the accuracy, reliability and speed of analyses presented to Agro-Tech clients.

In addressing Agro-Tech’s statistical software needs, Curt had to find a system that:

1. Delivered the power, the level of flexibility and the statistical pedigree necessary to handle the requirements of even the toughest of consultancy projects.
2. Offered a user-friendly interface, minimizing the start-up time for new or inexperienced users to gain confidence with the system.
3. Offered an affordable cost base, both in terms of initial set-up costs, and future upgrades.

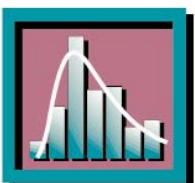
The Solution

After visiting the VSN web site, Curt downloaded the fully functional, 30 day trial version of GenStat. GenStat has been used successfully by agricultural scientists for over 30 years; a solid reputation confirmed by some of Curt’s colleagues in the agricultural industry. On completion of the trial period, Agro-Tech purchased a full license, feeling sure that they had found the software solution for them.

Power and Flexibility

The trials undertaken by Agro-Tech can range from simple randomized block designs, to more complex split-plot and other multi-layered designs. A typical example here is a split-plot design to evaluate the effect of starter fertilizers on field corn grown under conventional till and no-till systems.

The ease with which GenStat could handle multi-layered experiments like this impressed Curt. He found the transition from simpler designs straightforward, and the formatting of the analysis



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of variance output; a section of the ANOVA table for each strata of the design, "very useful" in presenting experimental results in a clear way.

Curt discovered that GenStat's comprehensive diagnostic tools enable you "to easily visualize your data with the graphics", checking the assumptions of the models fitted - essential features for accountability.

The ANOVA facilities in GenStat allow Curt to analyze any generally balanced design that a customer may require. GenStat's REsidual Maximum Likelihood (REML) facilities however, provide him with the additional power to analyze unbalanced designs, mixed and spatial models.



"The Introduction manual is excellent."

User-Friendly Interface

Even though GenStat is "a powerful program", Curt was impressed at how user-friendly the pull-down menu interface is. He estimates that "most people would be up and running with GenStat within a couple of hours." In an environment where time is money; this is a key benefit.

Obtaining results from GenStat is painless. Curt says "one of the nice things I like about GenStat is that when our customers come on tours, I can quickly give them a printed summary of their analysis - they feel that this adds a lot of value to our service."

"I can quickly upload data from a trial and produce graphics. GenStat is a powerful program."

Cost Benefits

GenStat is a complete statistics system; there are no additional modules to purchase. This means that if Curt needs to analyze a split-split-plot experiment one day and fit a generalized linear model the next day - no problem, he always has the tools to hand in GenStat.

Agro-Tech subscribe to the annual support and maintenance policy for GenStat. This ensure that they:

- receive automatic software upgrades
- have access to technical support from the GenStat development team
- have greater flexibility in working practice with additional copies for use on a home PC or laptop.

Curt feels that these features, together with the competitive pricing structure, renders GenStat a cost effective statistical solution; not only for the larger corporation, but also for small businesses.

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