



FCC Knowledge Podcast – Episode: A seat at the table: How diversity of thinking leads to better decision-making

PODCAST TRANSCRIPT

Interviewer: Marty Seymour (MS)

Guest: Trent Hilderman (TH)

MS: From AgExpert, it's the FCC Knowledge Podcast, a show that features real Canadian producers, real stories, and real good conversations about the business of farming. I'm your host, Marty Seymour.

TH: Sustainability is just maintaining the status quo, not making the land better or worse. We want to improve the land, so in order to do that, I think that's where regenerative agriculture comes into it.

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MS: Welcome to another podcast interview with yet another great Canadian farmer. Trent Hilderman joins us on the show today. Trent's one of the three brothers who operates Prairie Son Acres, a third-generation family farm right here in Saskatchewan. Trent's a guy who's passionate about strategic innovation. He's going to talk to us all about how his farm innovates in areas like sustainability, transparency, and public engagement. He's a farmer with a really clear vision, and he's not afraid to work towards making that vision a reality. Trent has a lot of great info to share. You're not going to want to miss this one.

Welcome to the FCC Knowledge Podcast where we talk to real farmers about real things in Canadian agriculture. Today on the show we've got Trent Hilderman. Welcome to the show, Trent.

TH: Hey, Marty, good to be here.

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MS: All right, Trent, everybody gets to make their town famous on this podcast. So, where do you get your mail?

TH: Duval, Saskatchewan, the booming metropolis.

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MS: Okay, I have been through Duval because lots of back roads in Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Alberta I've seen. But we've got listeners coast to coast. How would I find Duval?

TH: Oh, the easiest way to explain it usually is people generally know where the Big Valley Jamboree is at Craven. So, you say you go north of Craven about 30 minutes and that's where Duval is.

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MS: You'd be an hour from Regina then.

TH: Yeah, exactly.

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MS: Now, I think of that as, I call it dry land farming, but that's canola wheat country there, I'm assuming?

TH: Yeah, yeah. We're in the area where it's kind of a blessing and a curse. We're able to grow pretty well a little bit of everything. We can grow durum, we can grow canola, we can grow lentils and peas. We do everything well, not everything great. So, I guess it's a little bit of everything here.

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MS: That might actually segue into my question I ask everybody when they come on our show. What's the price of land where you can grow everything well but not great in Duval, Saskatchewan?

TH: It's changed drastically over the last few years. I'd say it's anywhere from \$800.00 to \$2,000 a cultivated acre.

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MS: Does that mean I expect to see some cows there on \$800.00 land, or is it all grain farming?

TH: There's a lot of cattle integration in this area. We're in pockets of alkali sand. There's a lake that's three miles from the farm. We've got lots of variability within the land, so definitely there's lots of cattle integration here.

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MS: So, maybe tell us about your farm. Describe your farm to us.

TH: I farm with two of my brothers, and Mom and Dad are still involved. They're more of a peer group or mentorship stage now. I'm the agronomist. I did a little bit of school. I went to the U of S for two years to get my diploma in agronomy. I started farming in 2010. And then both my brothers, one worked in Saskatoon as a mechanical technologist in the HVAC sales, and the other one went to the University of Sask. for food science, and then he went out to PEI, and he became a Red Seal chef. And they both wanted to move back to the farm, live the farming lifestyle. So, they came back, and we combined our skills and that's where we're at now. We're a broadacre farm that grow lentils, peas, canola, wheat, barley, flax. Yeah, a fairly diverse crop rotation.

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MS: We often hear stories about how kids grow up, leave the farm, and never really come back. In this case, three brothers come back together to help manage and operate a family farm. It's quite a heart-warming story for me. So, how big is the farm? Well, Trent tells me that they're farming about 11,000 acres, which is definitely larger than the average farm size in Saskatchewan, so I wanted to learn more.

I never really ask anybody this question, but it strikes me, do you have a balance of rented-to-own land, or how have you structured the business as far as those acres that you have access to?

TH: We have a goal of what we want to own to rent. I guess it's always changing a little bit, but we're 60% owned, 40% rent, and we want to push that a little bit further.

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MS: So, you guys have a blend of owned, rented land in your model. Actually, we've been watching land rents the last few years at FCC too, because everyone knows us for our land values and our report that shows land going up year over year. I have to think land rent is racing away too.

TH: Yeah, it is. We're in a weird pocket where it hasn't changed a whole bunch. It has been as there's been some outside investment that came in that it pushed the land rent up. I would say overall we're in a pocket where our land rent has stayed somewhat stable over the last 15 years where \$50.00 an acre would be a pretty going rate. Again, being in an area where you can grow everything but not anything great, anything over \$50.00 isn't really sustainable, if you want to put it that way.

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MS: Like some of our previous guests, Trent and his brothers rent a good portion of their land. I'd imagine some of you out there would think that \$50.00 land rental is a heck of a steal. But for Trent, he's figured out that's the real ceiling of what they can afford to do based on the crops they grow. So, Trent and his brothers have 11,000 acres of mixed owned

and rented land, and a farm with a very diverse crop rotation. With this complexity in mind, I really wanted to learn more about the dynamics of running this larger farm with his brothers. How is it all structured?

TH: It's a really interesting dynamic. I think our diversity is what makes our strength in our farm. We all left the farm, pursued something else, and then came back. Shane brought back a very end-consumer point of view with food in mind, and he's really business, finance oriented. So, he's the finance guy, I guess, and looks after our books and finances to make sure we're on track and has all of our ratios that we need to be aware of. And Colin's is more of a marketing mindset.

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MS: So, you said marketing. Do you mean marketing of grains like I would think of as a commodity, or are you talking about selling the farm as an entity?

TH: No, I'm thinking about marketing the grain. But he's very business oriented. He bought into a business, so he was very aware of how to conduct business and how to go about sales and marketing. He was in the sales business in the HVAC industry, so he understands sales and enjoys the marketing aspect of the farm.

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MS: And then you bring the agronomy strength.

TH: Yeah. I guess the best part about the dynamic is it allows me to focus on agronomy. I don't need to watch the markets every day. I don't need to know what our day-to-day books look like. We meet once a week, we have our meeting, we come together and discuss the hot topics of the week and what needs to be done. And it just allows each one of us to have a little bit more detailed focus and dive into each aspect of the farm. As one farmer, you're torn in three different directions all the time. It is a full-time job when you step back and look at it. It's important to have a marketing plan and do all that, and it's important to have an agronomic plan. You can get stretched pretty thin if you're not leaning on other people, so I think our dynamic is really useful in our overall farm success.

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MS: I really love the way Trent describes the different roles he and his brothers bring to the table. You see this all the time in corporations in the business world. There's diversity of thought at the board table when creating strategic plans. That's the value of having three brothers with three perspectives on any particular topic. Everyone brings a different kind of expertise which creates a stronger operation as a whole. I was curious about how this diversity of thought factors into their decision-making. They meet once a week, make a plan. But how does the governance work and how do they align on the decision-making?

TH: How do we make decisions on the farm? I guess, depending upon the topic we would bring it to discussion. And we always generally have a devil's advocate in the group that would say one way or the other. We have a really good debate. So, I guess an example of a meeting that we would have is if there's a nitrogen product that we want to use, just as an example, I would bring three options to the table and I would say the pros and cons of each option and then we would make a decision based upon that. What's that going to do to our finances, how does that look from a marketing perspective, and is it logistical to do it or not? And we would make a decision as a whole together, but it would have been brought to the table by me. And same goes for marketing option, same goes for capital purchases.

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MS: I like that. That's kind of an interesting one because I often wonder, and I'll call yours a more complex farm model where you have more people at the table than a sole proprietor, so to speak. Do you have a strategic plan or a long-term vision that you guys can all see? And a common one would be, we're at 11,000 acres today, we want to be at 20,000 in 10 years. Or do you have something that keeps you guys pointed in the same direction?

TH: Yeah. Our vision is strategic innovation, I suppose. So, our end goal is to just leave the land and finance in better shape than we got it, and I think that's a lot of farm goals. We know that that's what we want to work towards. Our goal is to just continue to make strategic innovation improvements in our soil health, in our marketing, improve our books, and just overall improve our land value and the shape of our land.

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MS: What Trent explains is really quite refreshing. From someone outside looking in, you might see that their family business might look complicated, three brothers, 11,000 acres. But actually, it's fairly straightforward. He and his brothers have obvious roles and they come together regularly to discuss the business direction. In the end, all they really want to do is leave the farm better than they found it. It really plays well into our next discussion. Where Trent's story gets really interesting to me is that he's very passionate about regenerative agriculture and soil health, which is literally leaving the land better than they got it. Let's let him tell us more.

TH: To start with, sustainability is a large pillar in regenerative ag. And to take a step back first before that, I think the term sustainability has really been diluted in the last five years, so what does it mean, is the struggle nowadays. And I think it's a subjective term that it means something different in different regions of the world. It's just the growing conditions are differently, you have to treat your land differently. I don't think it can be just a broad term, sustainability. And taking a step literally even further, sustainability is just maintaining the status quo, not making the land better or worse. We want to improve the land, so in order to do that, I think that's where regenerative agriculture comes into it.

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MS: Tell me about regenerative then, more specifically. I think you're kind of on the edge of it.

TH: With regenerative ag, I think it's all about carbon. You want as much carbon, as much living roots in your soil as possible. It's about diversity within your program. Cattle integration, crop rotation, it's a holistic view of bringing multiple things together to become regenerative. So, on our farm, we focus on ... crop rotation is probably the biggest or the best way to have regenerative agriculture here. That's what works for us because we're just broadacre farm. So, it creates root diversity. From an agronomic point of view, it changes the chemical and fertilizer rotations on the land, so you're just producing healthier soils, lots of good root diversity there. Cattle integration is a big one. We just started doing that and I know it's the fast track regenerative agriculture. We just haven't really been in it for that long so I can't speak to it. Perennials is a big one. You want to have living roots in the ground for as long as possible. We're pretty limited. We have a 110-day growing season, so we want to have those roots working for us as long as possible to create as much carbon as possible to improve your soil health as quickly as you can. Things don't happen overnight. Things don't happen in two years. Regenerative agriculture is a long-term game. You're not going to see results the first year, or you can't just walk out into the field and be like, oh, this field is regenerative and this field isn't, and you see the result this year. I think that's what a lot of people struggle with is if we don't get results the first year you stop doing it. You need to have the mindset of having a long-term goal of improving land.

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MS: I think what I'm hearing you say is regenerative is a mentality of continuous improvement, and that is different in every farm. And I've always been intrigued with how you do this in the absence of livestock. Now, you are introducing me to some new topics today around just crop rotation and choices around how long roots can live. That's how naïve I am on this topic, so that's kind of fascinating for me. Which takes me to another question I've been battling for a couple years to get my head around is, if we measure through carbon, which I actually like it, it's simplistic thing, I've had various people tell me that I have trouble measuring changes in carbon. And this is all back to sequestration. And so, from a practical standpoint, as the farmer in me, do I just measure this through organic matter?

TH: I went around this topic for a lot this past winter. And there are products out there, there's a drill that you can drill into your soil, and it'll measure bulk density, take into account your organic matter, and all that. I don't agree with it because everything is too variable and inconsistent. Honestly, I always just come back to, it's organic matter. Ultimately, that is your measure of carbon in your soil. I don't think there's any arguing it. And it's very objective. This is what it is. It's more about, if you want to measure success in soil health, it's as much about consistency as it is about tests, specifically with

organic matter. Because in our fields in our area, I can go to two different spots, and I could say this about different products that we want to use, I could prove one way or the other what product worked or not in both the test strip and where the product was. Or where we're doing it regenerative and where we're not. Because our land is so variable that you're going to have so much inconsistencies throughout that there's just too much change for it.

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MS: And I like that because it's a bit standardized, and so back to how we get there, every farm has a different pathway.

After the break, Trent's going to share with us some of his thoughts around regenerative agriculture and how those farm connections work with consumers. We have lots more to come.

TH: And it's important to remember that it's different for every farm in every area. So, that's why you need to know your land and have a goal in mind and work from there.

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MS: The FCC Knowledge Podcast is brought to you by AgExpert, farm management software designed for Canadian agriculture. Learn more at AgExpert.ca.

So, just to get us all back up to speed, so far, we've learned that Trent and his brothers operate an 11,000-acre farm, they each have very specific roles, but they come together regularly to discuss business decisions. Their overall strategy is to leave the farm business better than when they got it. This works really well for Trent's passion for regenerative agriculture, which to him is a mentality of continuous improvement that should be tailored to every farm individually. So, the next thing I wanted to know is, how does Trent himself approach regenerative ag? What's the first step in his process?

TH: I think it's important to start with an end goal in mind. What do you want to do with it? Do you want to just improve your land? Do you want to improve your soil health? Do you want to, I guess, important to try to improve your nutrient use efficiency? Do you want to have better water infiltration? What's the land like? Does it have poor drainage? Do you want to improve your drainage? Do you want to get rid of an alkali patch? So, I think it's important just to start with a goal in mind and then go from there. In our perspective, we need to have good drainage and we want to improve our water use efficiency, so then every inch of rain we get, we can get more bushels an acre. Because we're usually water limited, and especially in these last few years, so we want to make steps in order to improve our water use efficiency. That's a main goal of regenerative ag, soil health. So, by improving water use efficiency, how do you do that? Well, you improve organic matter. You just improve your overall soil health. So, that's why it's a holistic goal. Improving one thing will help another, but you can't just say, okay, I'm

going to improve my phosphorous levels and that's going to change everything. You need to do it as a holistic approach and change everything.

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MS: What you coloured in for me was having your eye on something and managing towards that, but yet, being mindful that it's a holistic farm management tool. And so, maybe for our listeners, it's just decluttering it to your idea of water usage. I love the simplicity of it. I think there's magic in that formula.

TH: Yeah. And it's important to remember that it's different for every farm in every area. So, that's why you do just need to know your land and have a goal in mind and work from there.

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MS: Trent really does a good job of simplifying this complicated process. Finding out where to start can sometimes be as simple as thinking about where you want things to end. Trent suggests finding a goal first, then taking a holistic approach on how to achieve that goal. It's going to be different for every farm. Regenerative ag can't really be defined in a narrow way because it varies in so many different sectors and regions across the country.

I'm interested in shifting gears a little bit because in some of my pre-work to get to today, I realize that you guys have a website.

TH: Yes.

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MS: But that's not a common practice in our industry. So, tell me why the website was born and what your purpose is with it.

TH: Well, when we all came together, when both the brothers came back, we did a succession plan and we transitioned it then. We identified that the next five years, there is a large consumer lack of awareness on what farmers do, and who we are, and where their food even comes from. We did it as an open-ended invite for people to find out who farmers are, what they do, how they do it. And wanted just to touch base with the end consumer, I suppose. And from a growth perspective, we wanted to have an open invite to landlords. If somebody wanted to rent some land, we wanted to be the one that was top of mind. Also, from a retail perspective, if a company that was crushing oil wanted to say this oil came from this farm, we wanted them to think of us. So, overall, it's just a connection of product to the farm.

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MS: I almost hear you saying that it has two parts to it almost. There's the day-to-day operation side, as a landlord, as maybe someone wants to rent out land, if you've got a credible, viable place, they look at it on the website. Then the other side feels like a public trust play where you're opening your arms to anybody that wants to look deeper into the industry and your farm specifically.

TH: Yeah, exactly. So, the website was more an introductory into the consumers on just who we are and where our food comes from. And it was also a business play on that exact same thing, why would you want us to farm your land? The blog is more directed towards consumer education on who we are and what we do, I suppose. But it was meant to be an introductory into the blog for consumers.

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MS: So, for those listening, how do I find your blog?

TH: It is on PrairieSerf.com.

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MS: What would I see in the blog? Is this your brother writing this, or are you writing these, Trent?

TH: I've got three brothers, so two of them farm with me, and then the other one is a freelance journalist in Victoria. So, he writes a blog for us. And we colluded a little bit on what he's writing about, but he's really in tune with where our farm wants to be, and he has a much better mindset of putting words to paper than any of us do.

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MS: There's yet another brother in the mix with a very specific role. While Trent runs the farm with two of his brothers, his other brother in Victoria helps manage their blog. It's a great online space for the brothers to share a lot of valuable insight about the strategic innovation that they're doing on their farm. Trent seems really keen on educating the public about their farm and has no reservations allowing people to see what they're up to. To build on this theme of transparency in modern technology, Trent has some really interesting thoughts to share on another topic you may not know much about.

So, you've got some strong opinions on blockchain and traceability?

TH: Yeah. I wouldn't say strong opinions. My knowledge is very limited on blockchain. My understanding is it's just a general ledger transaction system, if I'm understanding it correctly. So, I think there is a lot of value in the blockchain technology coming forward. I've talked about consumer awareness, and they want to know where their food comes from. Well, it's a transaction process that can be traced back right to what seed you use, or what lot number it came from, from the land location, to the farmer, to the whole

supply-chain process that it went through. I think there's demand for it and then I think there's consumer interest in it. So, I think it'll play a great role in that. Also, going back to the consumer awareness side of it, there's that non-GMO label that has the little butterfly on it. I recently heard that 90% of the products that are labelled non-GMO don't even have the option of having a GMO product in it. That just tells me that it's more about a sale than it is about consumer awareness. So, maybe blockchain will help the transparency throughout the industry to say that this is what it actually is. It'll just help the overall understanding of where the product comes from.

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MS: And I think you're on the edge of a food system problem. I heard a stat one time that 70% of fish sold on the eastern seaboard of the US is mislabeled. And it sounds kind of offensive and I don't know if it's deliberate or by accident, but that's the amount of mislabeling going on. And I think what I'm hearing in all, whether it's my friends in the cattle business, or the canola you're crushing, is this general desire to at least have a traceable system and transparent system that a consumer would have confidence in. Does that mean you think that we don't have that in agriculture?

TH: I think consumers have confidence and trust in farmers still, but I don't think that there's understanding of where our food comes from at all yet, no. So, I think we do lack education in that.

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MS: Are you suggesting that as we engage consumers, we can't be telling them what they should feel or believe?

TH: Yes.

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MS: But more demonstrating what we stand behind?

TH: Yeah, exactly.

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MS: I'm sure a lot of your heads are spinning thinking about the term blockchain and how this connects to modern farming, so thankfully Trent connects the dots well for us. But I'm going to try to simplify this yet further. Blockchains are really a digital way to make sure there's integrity in the data. And it uses fancy words like decentralized ledger, and transactions, and the idea that things can't be deleted or destroyed. But really just think of it as a complex digital system that offers integrity in the data so that it really works hard to ensure public trust, and trust in the entire supply chain, for that matter. So, speaking of future innovations, I thought this is a really good time to ask Trent one of my

favourite questions. What does he think agriculture is going to look like in the next 20 years?

TH: There can be a lot of change in 20 years. You look back 20 years, and I don't think anybody could have predicted where we'd be at right now. I think I'd go back to, there'll be full transparency throughout the industry. People will know exactly where their food comes from, probably right down to what piece of land that it came off of. I also see a transition to more plant-based proteins. I think we're seeing it happen right now. So, maybe that's more of a 5- to 10-year. Twenty-year, I can see there's going to be autonomy in farming, for sure. I don't think it'll be full autonomous, I think we're still going to need people in the seat, but it'll be a semi-autonomous system.

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MS: Those are all great predictions. I would share your views on all of those. What about the margins in the industry, do you see them changing?

TH: The world is such a volatile place right now, sometimes economics don't even make sense on what you do. So, that's a hard question to answer. I can't see them getting much tighter, but land values don't reflect what the margins actually can be. There are some outside factors that are always at play that are unpredictable, and a person never really knows until ... hindsight is 20/20, right?

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MS: Yeah, for sure. Well, man, you're segueing like a rock star on this call. That takes me to one of my favourite questions is, so, if hindsight is 20/20, if you look back to when you came out of college, what would your do-over be, if you went back 12 years?

TH: I would have purchased land as soon as I possibly could have. I held off. I would have made it work a lot easier. Hindsight, you know it would have worked. I was much more conservative mindset on growth at that point, so I should have bought more land when I had the opportunity to.

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MS: I wish I had a nickel for every farmer that said that. So, I'm going to ask you another question around that, then. So, if you had, let's just say you had bought double. You went all in, and you were able to double. How would it be different for you today, knowing that? If you had twice as much land, would it have mattered?

TH: I think it would just be more of a comfort level. I like being the master of my own fate, so you can just make predictions way easier because you know it's always going to be there. And we're in it for the long haul. We know that it's never going to go anywhere with rented land. You try to have a five-year, four-year lease on it, so you know you're going to have four years. But it's hard to make a long-term regenerative plan. We treat

our rented land the same as we treat our own land, so it's really hard to only have a four-year plan on rented land. Whereas, if you own the land, you know it's never going anywhere. You can maybe do something in the short term that costs you more money than it would if you were renting it in the short term, but the long-term, the benefit is going to be there, I guess, if I'm saying that right.

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MS: So, you answered that in a way I maybe didn't expect, which speaks to the sophistication of how you guys are operating. Your answer, what I thought you might say was, I'd have a stronger balance sheet and I could use that money to grow. But what you said was, it would de-risk your investment around rented land and how you manage your soil.

TH: Yeah. And that brings me back to, there was an FCC article, I don't know if it was a year or two ago, and it really stuck with me. It was, bigger isn't better, better is better. I want to have the best producing land and have the best balance sheet. I don't need to have more acres. I want to do really good with what we have before we get more acres. Expansion isn't the number-one answer. It's about being better at what you're doing right now is more important than having more acres and doing it poorly.

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MS: My last question, you were kind of the edges of it, but if you had to give advice to someone listening here ... maybe I'll pin you down. If you had to give advice on how to engage in a regenerative farming model, where would I start? For that person that maybe isn't invested in it yet, and as far as a management practice. I'm just listening to you talk about the value of it, and I'm not sure where to start if it's not part of my thinking today. What's your coaching?

TH: Well, I guess take a step back and look at your operation and look at what you're doing right now. And just start recognizing, okay, well, how is the rotation that I'm doing, or how are the crops that I'm seeding right now affecting ... what are they doing to my land? How can I get more diversity through the land? There's no real answer for that, I don't think. I think it's more of a mindset of being open to change, and make every decision on your farm, think, well, what would that do to my soil? Will that affect my soil in five years time? Am I mining it? Am I improving my organic matter if I choose to use this product or choose to seed this crop? That's one thing that we do. If you know you're not going to improve your soil, don't do it.

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MS: Great advice. And it doesn't matter which part of this country you live in or where you're listening from, that applies.

TH: Exactly, yeah. And it's about knowing your own soil and making the right decisions based upon what you know.

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MS: Trent, is there anything else that we maybe wanted to share, or something we maybe missed you wanted to hit on?

TH: An important part in the farm is just a continued commitment for ongoing education. I think it's really important to keep an open mind with everything. And we like to make a commitment of, say, 80 hours a year of some sort of continued education learning. Whether it's just, we have a board of advisors and they're what we can lean on. I guess I'm touching on two topics here. But it's important to keep an open mind and continually push the boundaries on what you want to get out of farming. I really enjoy being on the leading edge of it. We're maybe sometimes bleeding edge, so we're in between the two. But I think it's important to just continually push and strive for change.

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MS: I think that's great advice, and I'll maybe leave that as the last word. I think the people listening should see themselves in that.

I had a really good time today chatting with Trent. His passion for innovation and his focus on always growing as a farmer should inspire us to enter the future of farming with confidence. Trent highlighted some wonderful developments in the industry, and it's fair to say that he's an early adopter in the ag world. So, what are my big takeaways? 1) Strategic innovation can take many forms, but to be effective, it needs to be tailored to your specific needs. Trent shares a lot about really looking forward and the ideas that he can generate out of that, in particular around regenerative agriculture. These kinds of topics can be really exciting and provide us with a lot of innovative solutions for challenges we face, however not every idea is going to work for everyone. Trent views regenerative ag holistically, so he understands there's no one magic innovation that's going to solve all of our problems. It's the right combination of practices that will ultimately be effective for Trent in reaching his goals. Every farmer needs to consider their own circumstances and decide what aspects of regenerative ag make sense for them. Trent also adds that sometimes the best place to start is at the end. To get started on something, you need to have a good idea or a goal or end in mind. After all, it's pretty impossible to create a road map to an unknown destination. 2) Diversity of thinking can lead to better decision-making and increased efficiency. In Trent's business, there's multiple brothers at the decision-making table, and they all bring their own specific area of expertise. While Trent's more of an agronomist by trade, he has a brother who's in charge of the finances, and another who's responsible for the marketing and sales. They have regular business meetings where they make business decisions together, and this seems to function well in their company. The diversity of thought can really focus their decision-making process because you can learn from each other and use the expertise from your colleagues to make well-rounded decisions. It also sounds like this diversity makes the business easier to manage. It frees up time for people like Trent, who are really good at agronomy, to focus on what they're good at. I think many of you sole

proprietors out there can relate to how hard it is to switch focus between providing a service and working on the logistics of your business. Having people who specialize in different areas of the business can help improve your efficiency. 3) Bigger isn't better, better is better. We've tossed this idea around on the podcast before, but it's worth mentioning again. This isn't to say that you can't grow or that you shouldn't consider expanding into different areas of the operation. I think what the point here is, is that growth on its own doesn't make your operation better. Trent has a really clear vision on what he wants to accomplish as a farmer. His overall goal is to leave the farm better than he got it. Trent understands that growth for growth's sake doesn't fit into their vision. He's more concerned about things like having the best-producing land possible. Trent believes that being better at what he's doing right now is more beneficial than growing his farm from a scale standpoint. You can have all the acres in the world to farm on, but if you don't do a good job on the land that you have, then are you really adding value? So, again, bigger isn't better, being better is better.

Well, that's all the time we have for today. I want to thank Trent Hilderman for stopping by our podcast. If you want to take a peek at what Trent's up to, check out their blog at PrairieSerf.com. Also, big thanks to all of you for listening. And as always, dream, grow and thrive. Until next time, this podcast has been brought to you by AgExpert, farm management software designed for Canadian agriculture. Learn more at AgExpert.ca. The FCC Knowledge Podcast is a Farm Credit Canada production.

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