

GOING FROM BEARS TO PIGS,

Jeff Ley makes sure customers get the most from PrairiE Systems

Jeff Ley, Solutions Deployment Specialist at PrairiE Systems, took a roundabout way to join the team. After graduating with a degree in Sport Management from Taylor University, Jeff's dream was to one day work for the Chicago Bears. However, life didn't work out that way after a college buddy offered him a job.

His friend asked if he would join him at a United Animal Health (UAH) research farm. After 10 years, Jeff remained at UAH in a slightly different role as a research trial facilitator. Through this role, he got to spend a lot of time with pigs — something he had not done before starting at UAH — and he slowly defined a new dream. Jeff and the team he was working with realized he was interested in and naturally excelled at technology development.

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So, 17 months ago, after collaborating with PrairiE Systems on research projects, his answer was an easy 'yes' when Joel Stave, Managing Director of PrairiE Systems, offered him his current position.

Now, when asked what he likes most about his job, Jeff is quick to respond. "I have a hard time believing I get paid to do what I do," he said. "It doesn't always feel like work."

He thoroughly enjoys the day-to-day challenges of working with different clients who have individual needs. You see, Jeff is tasked with travelling to visit new clients to make sure

everyone understands how the programs work and what the features are designed to do. He also offers customers initial trainings after implementation. After customers understand how to work the applications and why they are pushing certain buttons, he moves on to next steps.

With existing customers, Jeff looks at their processes to see if there is room for improvement: maybe it's just pushing buttons in a different order, or maybe it's taking it a step farther into how they can use the data they collect.

"Helping customers maximize the data that they already have is a big part of the job," Jeff explained. "I also point out any additional data that they have never really considered collecting and determine if that additional data can add to or create even more value than some of their current monitored metrics."



When Jeff isn't busy traveling and training customers, he is likely with his wife, Jenny, at his daughter Lily's swim lesson, or is witnessing Captain Destructo — aka his 2-year-old son Liam — take on the world.

The way he sees it, the future of agriculture is bright, and whether or not Jeff knows it, he's playing an integral role in what he sees as the future of agriculture.

As he described, "The future will involve piecing some of the data together to create an efficient data exchange. From the person at the barn to the person at the dinner table. It is coming. It is not so much a matter of how it is just a matter of when. Do we want to grab on and make it our own? Or hold back until it is forced on us? I'd like to grab it and take a hold of it and make it what it can be, not what it is regulated to be."