

Advancing Eco Agriculture Supports Growth on the Farm and in their Business

With support from Aries Solutions' B2B consulting expertise, AEA is empowered to grow its business and continue to help its customers grow theirs.

The Snapshot

Advancing Eco Agriculture (AEA), a B2B regenerative agriculture solution consultancy, set out to take its business to the next level. Their objectives were to optimize their unique competitive advantages and to evolve their IT capabilities. With support from Aries Solutions' B2B consulting expertise, AEA is empowered to grow its business and continue to help its customers grow theirs.

“The overarching challenge was going from Entrepreneurial to Best Practice. The volume of transactions, the need for applications, and even our highly skilled employees, gets tougher to manage as you grow. Our job as a leadership team is to put our arms around everything we value and figure out the right way to support sustainable progress without destroying the foundation.”

– Mike Gedeon, CFO, Advancing Eco Agriculture

Meet the Client

Advancing Eco Agriculture is a national company headquartered in Middlefield, Ohio, U.S.A. Founded in the early 2000s when trailblazer John Kempf saw a desperate need for a *“scalable, whole-systems approach to revitalizing soil and plant health,”* AEA offers agronomic consulting, plant nutrition analysis, and technology solutions in the form of biological and nutritional products. *“We’re very focused on our customers and bringing solutions to our growers inside of regenerative practices,”* says Eric Girdler, CEO of AEA. *“What makes us different from other similar companies is the fact that we have the world’s best agronomy coupled with product solutions for all growers.”* AEA is consistently expanding and offering new ways to help those who rely on the environment for their livelihoods.



AEA is headquartered in Ohio.

Goals

1. **Leverage Expertise:** Onboarding new agronomists and getting them to the same level of proficiency as their top agronomists was worthwhile but a lengthy process. AEA desired tools and technology that reduced that learning curve and educated new team members efficiently without sacrificing the quality and depth of knowledge that serves their clients.
2. **Evolve IT Capabilities:** AEA could see the company needed to prepare for another phase of growth. They sought to improve their tech stack, adjust their internal processes, and invest in their IT organization to better reflect their capabilities.



The Fertilizer: Aries Solutions' B2B Consulting Expertise

Every successful business can identify with this storyline – starting out small but mighty, and recognizing when it's time to build on that foundation and implement quality expansion. AEA committed to taking their company to the next level and partnered with Aries Solutions' B2B consultants to achieve their goals.

Aries helped AEA prioritize and formulate a plan to enable faster and better onboarding and training programs for their agronomists, allowing them to fulfill the demand for their brand of expertise from clients.

Aries also recommended ways AEA could invest to support their IT organization's growth, including best practices and technology built on their already solid foundation. With these investments, AEA could shift the IT department from solely an internal service provider to a full-service agronomic tech company providing those same tools and services for customers.

Eric expanded on this, stating *"We knew there were problems and we were looking to Aries to come in and confirm it. They not only did that, but they also shined a light on other issues we didn't realize yet, which was wonderful. It's what you hope for when you engage like this. You don't want to invest in a project only to confirm that you were right. You want to invest and learn something new."*

Harvesting Benefits

In the months since partnering with Aries Solutions B2B consulting services, Advancing Eco Agriculture has already felt the positive effects of streamlining and growing both its agricultural consultancy as well as its IT organization and services. New team members are using new technology and tools to become proficient agronomists at a pace that better serves clients. A more mature IT organization reflects what their business is capable of.

Chris Rogers, Director of Client and Product Strategy at Aries, describes AEA as *"...a strong team that's going to take initiative. They're not going to wait around for problems to solve themselves. We wanted to lean into how to combine that innate drive with AEA's unique competitive advantages and agronomic expertise to create strong collaboration within the business. That's the number one thing we've been trying to help push forward as they continue to grow; facilitating those conversations with all those smart minds."*

Mike agrees by saying, *"We have really good developers and we've built really good internal tools. Bringing Aries in just led us to best practice. We're now rolling out an application called TigerPaw that's going to market, and that's something new for us. We never had anyone in the company with experience launching a product of that magnitude, which is one reason why we recognized it was time to reach out."*





AEA is a strong team that takes initiative.

Advancing Eco Agriculture Today

AEA is well into its next phase of growth. They now hold the power to leverage their expertise and evolve their IT capabilities. They continue to work with Aries to optimize processes such as vendor management, reviewing and consolidating custom applications, and modernizing their architecture and integrations.

"When we engaged Aries originally to do the audit assessment of our IT silo, it quickly felt like a true partnership in every way," says Eric. "They were professional and operated in a confidential manner knowing the result could impact our talent. I can call Jake, Tim, or Chris at any time, and I'll get a response. They also took on a leadership role running the TigerPaw project. But most importantly, they listened to us from the very beginning and approached our goals inside of our core values as a company."

Mike agrees, saying, *"Aries is staying within budget. They're working hard and they're helping us reallocate some of that budget to make AEA even better."*

