

well as dealership service technicians and corporate employees.

For instance, Dave had difficulty with an early version of auto-steer. The source of the difficulty turned out to be two-fold: wiring problems and gaps in customer training. Todd relayed the hardware problems to engineering and worked with AGCO's training manager on how to better train operators.

"At AGCO we try to determine how much of the customer experience is educational or operational, and how much of it is really that the unit's not working. Is it that the right button isn't being pushed, or pushed out of sequence? Sometimes, it's that the customer just doesn't know exactly how to set it up, versus it really doesn't work."

Taking the time to analyze feedback and the cause of various operational problems has resulted in better training in a number of ways. One is at the time the product is sold; another is via technical support hotlines, such as AGCO Answers, and in more comprehensive training events, such as field days and classes offered by field reps and dealerships. It's also had a broader impact in the form of research-oriented Voice of Customer programs, which Todd says his staff and others at AGCO conduct in one-on-one meetings and in groups, in office settings, as well as in the field.

"Every new product we design going forward," Todd explains, "we've got to tie it to customer needs, customer wants, so we make sure we're designing the right equipment. It's not just that we're asking about problems with our equipment—



*The Stuckes worked with and provided feedback on AGCO Auto-Guide, which helps farmers run equipment efficiently, not to mention well past dark. Here, Dave's son, Alex, operates the family's Gleaner Super Seven.*

that's important—but we're also looking for opportunities, ways to advance and improve the equipment. These are often ideas that come straight off the farm from customers, and those ideas are gold."

Todd, who's worked at AGCO and one of its heritage brands since 1989, has recently taken another step to further infuse the farm into AGCO culture. Last year, he brought members of his department and other personnel to his family's farm for several days of meetings. In addition to marketing plans and budgets, they interviewed area farmers about their challenges and worked in the field with their own equipment, including Massey Ferguson and Challenger tractors, harvesting equipment, auto-steer and AGCOMMAND. "We learned a lot,"

Todd says. "We talked to farmers and their wives about the importance of safety and how important it is for them to preserve the farm for future generations. We heard a lot about difficulties, but also about passion for what they do.

"I think above all, though," continues Todd, "the guys who were here got their eyes opened. It became all the more real to them, that when the weather is right, you have to get the work done, the crop out of the field, or seeds in the ground. We can make all the best equipment and all the biggest, fanciest everything, but what really means a lot to Dave is uptime."

"It hit home," adds Dave, "that when we say, 'We gotta go,' that we gotta go. We don't have time for breakdowns. We work mad." **FL**

## Dealer Support Is 'Unbelievable'

### YOUR LOCAL AGCO DEALER

is a terrific resource for information about how to operate and maintain your AGCO equipment and a partner in your efforts to

maximize uptime. They've been known to go over and above the call of duty on behalf of their customers. Consider this example from Dave Stucke:

"We deal with North Star [Hardware & Implement] up here. Their dealer support is unbelievable. I tell everybody this story.

"I had trouble one Saturday with my combine, and the service

technician, Tom Greenwood, who's been out working on combines all day, knows I'm out there on this particular Saturday night. We got the problem fixed, and still, later, Tom calls me on his way home at midnight and asks me, 'Hey, you got any other problems? Do I need to stop?'

"That is," continues Dave, "a hell of a technician that calls me and asks me if I got any problems at midnight."

In addition to your local dealer, there are other resources from AGCO to help answer questions as well as provide training. For more on these resources, contact AGCO Answers, 1-877-525-4384, or visit [www.AGCOAnswers.com](http://www.AGCOAnswers.com).