



## CASE STUDY

### OVERVIEW

**Country/Region:**

Glenavon, Saskatchewan, Canada

**Industry:**

Grain farming

**Customer Profile:**

Sluser Farms, Inc., is a 17,000-acre, family-run grain farm in southeastern Saskatchewan. The farm employs five full-time workers and produces mainly canola, wheat, durum, and peas, along with some specialty crops that are in less demand by local buyers.

**Problem:**

Selling specialty crops such as pasteur wheat, red lentils, and canary seed when local buyers are only interested in wheat and canola, crops that have a large and steady market.

**Solution:**

Co-owner and manager, Lee Sluser, uses FarmLead to find buyers to purchase his specialty crops, to price his offers, and for additional leverage in negotiations.

**Benefits:**

- Helps locate the right buyer for crops that are more difficult to sell
- Helps users know how to price crops that are not traded on an exchange
- Gives users leverage when negotiating pricing, transport, and other terms of sale

## Sluser Farms, Inc.

*Grain farmer finds buyers for specialty crops when local buyers only deal in wheat and canola*

### *Sluser Farms, Inc*

Sluser Farms is located in rural Saskatchewan near the town of Glenavon, an hour-and-a-half drive southeast of Regina and about the same distance from the US border. It's one of the larger farms in the region, covering 17,000 acres and employing five full-time farm workers and several more part-time staff during busy seasons. Lee Sluser is co-owner of Sluser Farms, along with his wife Shannon. The Sluser Family manages the farm, which is strictly a grain farm, and Lee's wife also breeds and competes dressage horses.

There are a lot of small farms within a 20-mile radius, about half of which are mixed operations raising livestock and grain, and half of which are strictly cash crop operations, focused mainly on wheat and canola. The closest grain elevator is ten minutes away from Sluser Farms and buys only spring wheat and canola. There is another elevator about half an hour away from Glenavon that buys a larger variety of grains.

The Sluser family mainly grows high-demand crops—canola, wheat, peas and durum are staples in their rotation—but they also like to experiment with other crops on the side to see how they do: pasteur wheat, yellow flax, oats, red lentils, and canary seed.

### *FarmLead Gives Producers More Options*

Before he discovered FarmLead about five years ago, Lee sometimes used brokers to sell his crops, but generally went through the two local grain elevators. Those used to be his only options.

Selling his wheat and canola was not usually a problem. But when it came to his specialty crops, the larger buyers were just not interested. "The bigger companies tend to deal only in the high-demand crops," he says, "and some won't even look at our red lentils, flax, or canary."

When he came across FarmLead (either at an agricultural show or in a magazine, he can't quite recall which anymore) Lee saw the potential right away. He thought the app was very user-friendly, and began using it to sell his pasteur wheat.

In the past five years, Lee has used FarmLead "quite a few" times, most often to sell pasteur wheat and feed wheat. His biggest deal has been for 50,000 bushels of pasteur wheat, which the buyer picked up FOB. A big part of Sluser Farms' revenue now comes from moving their pasteur wheat through FarmLead (although he also uses it for peas and canary seed). "I've sold about 75 percent of our pasteur wheat with FarmLead," he estimates. "It has given

us another avenue to market our grain, and a say in the negotiating price, delivery and payment terms.”

Having a Buyer willing to pick up on the farm was also helpful - it helped Lee Farms avoid the costs of hiring a driver, paying their time, and paying for fuel and vehicle wear and tear. That made the deal even more lucrative. While they may not have made money from an on-farm pickup, it definitely helped their bottom line and increased their profits.

### *Pricing and Negotiating: FarmLead Levels the Playing Field*

Having a greater say in negotiations is another reason Lee likes FarmLead.

First, he finds it handy to use FarmLead to help him price the Slusers’ specialty, non exchange-traded crops, because it’s otherwise hard to know what to charge for them. Knowing the prices that other buyers and sellers are offering gives users an idea of what their crop can command locally. “I find it very useful,” he says, “even just to check and see what some of the guys are looking to sell or buy at, and how much of a gap there is between seller and buyer. It gives me an idea of where I should be, so I’ve got a bit of pull.” Otherwise, he says, “the buyers can tell you to take it or leave it.”

Second, Lee says he often gets prices above what the elevators are offering when he uses FarmLead. “When multiple elevators are at \$4.50 to \$5.00 a bushel, I can usually gain about 25 to 50 cents more a bushel, and that’s a big reason why I like to use FarmLead. It’s not just one sale; this happens in many of my FarmLead sales.”

Third, Lee is also able to negotiate other terms of sale, such as transport. For example, he likes to arrange to have his grain picked up on the farm, because transport can cost anywhere from 30 to 70 cents a bushel. “So if I don’t have to worry about that extra cost and the wear and tear on my trucks, it’s quite a savings.” He likes that the FarmLead process gives sellers these kinds of choices. “Other apps don’t give you so many options to negotiate.”

“We don’t use FarmLead all the time, but when we do, it definitely helps us out. About 40 to 50 percent of the time it works out [to a completed deal] and then you’ve got more money in your pocket than you’d get from the elevator.”

### *Secure, Low-Risk Transactions*

Over the years, some of the buyers Lee has made deals with on FarmLead have not been the big, established, well known companies, but more like smaller operations whom he was not familiar with, so he appreciates FarmLead’s buyer rating system. All the buyers registered on FarmLead are carefully vetted and their credit rating is regularly monitored by Dun & Bradstreet. Many are also bonded, and this is visible to the seller in the buyer’s user profile.

### *“Just Try It”*

When asked what advice he would give to people who are considering using FarmLead, Lee says, “Just try it. It doesn’t cost anything to download the app and post your offers online, so it’s pretty straightforward to sign up and pretty easy to do. It gives you options when you’re trying to market your grain. It gives you leverage when you’re trying to negotiate your price. All you’ve got to do is just try it.”

## Contact Us

### Canada

240 Bank St Unit 500,  
Ottawa, ON  
K2P 1X4

### Toll-Free:

1.855.332.7653

### Find out more:

[FarmLead.com](http://FarmLead.com)

© FarmLead