

Growers Edge: Launching a New Product... and ESG+Impact Measurement Program

About Growers Edge

Growers Edge is revolutionizing the agriculture industry. Through innovative fintech products, Growers Edge is facilitating the transition to regenerative agriculture. Regenerative agriculture is an approach that emphasizes the restoration and enhancement of natural ecosystems within agricultural systems. It goes beyond sustainable farming practices by actively working to improve soil health, biodiversity, and water quality while also reducing carbon emissions. Rather than solely aiming to minimize negative impacts, regenerative agriculture seeks to create a positive impact on the environment and communities.

Growers Edge recognizes the importance of regenerative agriculture and has positioned itself as a catalyst for change within the industry. By combining their expertise in finance and technology, Growers Edge has developed innovative fintech products that empower farmers to adopt regenerative practices more easily and effectively. These products not only provide financial solutions but also offer valuable insights, data analytics, and customized recommendations to help farmers optimize their operations.

One of Growers Edge's key strengths lies in their ability to deliver new products and technologies that address the specific challenges faced by farmers transitioning to regenerative agriculture, as well as Agriculture Retailers and Input Manufacturers operating in the regenerative space. Growers Edge understands the unique needs of their clientele and works closely with them to develop tailored solutions that maximize productivity while minimizing environmental impact. Through their comprehensive suite of offerings, Growers Edge helps farmers and downstream stakeholders navigate the complexities of adopting regenerative practices, reducing the inherent risks associated with change.

As a member of the Field to Market initiative, Growers Edge is actively involved in a collaborative effort to energize the ideas of regenerative practices in agriculture. [Field to Market](#) - funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) brings together stakeholders from across the agricultural supply chain, including farmers, retailers, manufacturers, and environmental organizations, to drive sustainable and regenerative practices. By participating in this initiative, Growers Edge is not only contributing to the collective knowledge and progress of the industry but also reinforcing its commitment to supporting resilient ecosystems.

Growers Edge Solutions

1 Crop Plans - Warranty Product

Farmers can mitigate the risks associated with adopting new technologies by leveraging Growers Edge's warranty product. By agreeing to specific regenerative practices, farmers gain access to a safety net that protects their investments, while retailers benefit from increased margins. This offering significantly reduces the exposure of farmers to the inherent risks involved in transitioning to regenerative agriculture, allowing them to embrace sustainable practices with greater confidence.

2 Input Financing - Flexible and Modern

Farmers incur significant input costs prior to being able to harvest and sell their goods. Especially for farmers transitioning to regenerative practices, they may see years of lower yields while new practices are being put in place and soil is rehabilitated. By offering input financing, Growers Edge relieves farmers of the burden of the upfront costs required to fund crop inputs. Farmers can then access the necessary inputs without the need for immediate payments, enabling them to prioritize their financial resources during growing season or while making a sustainable transformation.

3 Land Value - Real-Time Farmland Valuation

Land value market intelligence and data management tools empower farmers, investors, lenders, and real estate professionals with real-time data and transparency. With the Growers Edge platform, clients can evaluate and claim opportunities with ease. Growers Edge allows users to gain valuable insights from essential data, including soil mapping, topography, and satellite imagery, to make informed decisions.



At Growers Edge, we wholeheartedly embrace our responsibility towards our planet and the dedicated individuals who care for it. That's why we love using Proof, a powerful solution that empowers us to measure our impact and provides us with a comprehensive governance framework to support our sustainable growth journey. With Proof, we can confidently track our progress, make informed decisions, and pave the way for a brighter future in agriculture.

Ahraz Husain

VICE PRESIDENT OF DATA, GROWERS EDGE

The Challenge

When launching a new product, it is critical for a company to prioritize activities that “keep the lights on.” As an ambitious organization with plans for expansion, Growers Edge has a near-term focus on the following business objectives:

- Effectively scaling its sales practices
- Raising new capital to support its growth objectives
- Developing strategic partnerships with key stakeholders in the agriculture industry to enhance market research and facilitate the adoption of regenerative agriculture practices

Put simply, the Growers Edge team is busy. Growers Edge recognizes that it can contribute to all of these business goals by aligning its operations with environmental, social, and governance (ESG) principles, and integrating ESG+Impact measurement into its business practices. However, as an early-stage company with a busy schedule and numerous resource demands, finding the time to manage, track, and report ESG+Impact data is difficult.

Enter Proof.

Growers Edge’s investor iSelect provides complimentary access for its portfolio companies to Proof’s leading ESG+Impact data intelligence platform. iSelect recognizes that it is essential for its portfolio companies - many of which have ambitious plans to issue an IPO - to build a scalable ESG+Impact data foundation. By leveraging the Proof platform, Growers Edge can efficiently measure and track its ESG+Impact performance, enabling the company to make data-driven decisions, identify areas for improvement, and showcase their progress over time. This not only supports their current goals of scaling sales practices and raising capital but also aligns with their long-term vision of generating a positive impact on the environment and society as a leader of the regenerative agriculture industry.

Follow Growers Edge’s blueprint for setting up a scalable approach to ESG+Impact measurement and management that contributes to achieving mission-critical business outcomes.

1 Step 1 – Align to Business Goals

Allocating any team resources to ESG+Impact measurement and management requires making an effective business case. ESG+Impact measurement is a strategic fit for Growers Edge, as it aligns seamlessly with the company's overarching business goals:

- **Scaling Sales Practices:** As Growers Edge aims to scale its sales practices, ESG+Impact measurement plays a vital role in building trust at scale through transparency. By providing accurate and comprehensive data on its ESG impacts, Growers Edge showcases its commitment to sustainable practices. This transparency helps build credibility with potential customers, enabling Growers Edge to smoothly transition from a traditional handshake-based business model to a digital-first approach. Leveraging its ESG+Impact progress via growth marketing tools empowers the sales team to efficiently reach and engage with a wider audience.

- **Capital Raise:** Growers Edge closed a \$40 million Series B round in 2020. With a Series C capital raise on the horizon, the company's ESG+Impact measurement practices will face increased scrutiny. Investors and stakeholders are particularly interested in environmental sustainability efforts, including emissions reduction and energy conservation. By implementing robust ESG+Impact measurement strategies, Growers Edge can demonstrate its dedication to addressing these concerns, bolstering investor confidence and increasing its chances of securing the capital needed for expansion.
- **Investor Reporting:** Alongside the capital raise, Growers Edge must respond to the reporting requirements of existing investors. Implementing a comprehensive ESG+Impact measurement framework allows the company to accurately capture and report on key metrics, providing investors with the necessary insights into the company's progress and performance without expending additional effort. This transparent reporting fosters stronger investor relationships and showcases Growers Edge's commitment to accountability and continuous improvement.
- **Field to Market Initiative + USDA Partnership:** Growers Edge's involvement in the Field to Market initiative, funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), further reinforces the importance of ESG+Impact measurement. These collaborations aim to support farmers to reduce emissions, conserve energy, and boost sustainable production while promoting the inclusion of underserved communities, including minority and female beneficiaries and employees. ESG+Impact measurement allows Growers Edge to monitor progress on these commitments and broaden its community reach.

2 Step 2 – Keep it Simple

With the volume of ESG+Impact measurement frameworks and guidance available, there is no need to spend time developing and perfecting a complex custom framework and management approach from scratch. To ensure a streamlined and efficient ESG+Impact measurement process, Growers Edge keeps it simple by focusing on the following strategies:

- **Metrics that Matter:** By identifying and prioritizing the most relevant metrics, Growers Edge ensures that its ESG+Impact measurement efforts align with its business goals. Growers Edge reports against Proof's ESG and Regenerative Agriculture metric sets. These metric sets align to the leading frameworks and standards, including the [GIIN's IRIS+ metric catalog](#), the [SASB standards](#), and the [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#).

Sample Metrics

- **ESG:** Percent Female and Minority Employees, Percent Female and Minority Board Members, Water Conservation Strategy, Biodiversity Protection Strategy
- **Regenerative Agriculture:** Total Decrease in Water Consumption, Percent Soil Nutrients Replaced, Number of Farmers Served, Acres of Land Impacted, Acres of Land Converted to Sustainable Management

- **Streamlined Data Collection:** Growers Edge implements internal systems and processes that facilitate streamlined data collection. By leveraging technology and automation, the company optimizes the collection, analysis, and reporting of ESG+Impact data, making the process more efficient and reliable and reducing the manual reporting burden.

→ **Compare to Benchmarks:** Through Proof’s dashboard, Growers Edge can easily see how reported data compares to industry benchmarks. For example, Growers Edge can review how its workforce gender data compares to the 2X Challenge threshold for gender inclusion. Where performance exceeds the threshold, Growers Edge knows to continue and further enhance its existing policies and practices. Where performance lags behind the threshold, Growers Edge can prioritize its performance improvement efforts.

3 Step 3 – Control What You Can

With the continuous monitoring enabled by Proof’s ESG+Impact measurement platform, Growers Edge chooses to focus its actions on the highest impact areas of its business operations.

→ **Workforce Diversity:** Recognizing that workforce diversity is limited in Central Iowa compared to other U.S. labor markets, Growers Edge takes deliberate steps to attract, hire, and retain a diverse workforce. The company benchmarks its performance, identifies areas for improvement, and actively works towards creating a workplace that embraces and values diversity. By participating in initiatives such as the Great Place to Work program, Growers Edge is committed to enhancing its inclusivity and becoming an employer of choice. Growers Edge genuinely embraces all dimensions of a diverse workforce - gender, race, geography, income, education, religion, and others. A generous remote work policy contributes to attracting and retaining top talent.



We make purposeful decisions related to hires. We want as diverse of a workforce as we can have in central Iowa.

→ **Data Privacy and Security:** To maintain the privacy and security of sensitive data, Growers Edge ensures SOC2 compliance. This certification assures stakeholders that appropriate controls and safeguards are in place to protect the confidentiality and integrity of data shared through the Growers Edge platform.

→ **Acres of Land Impacted:** Acres of land impacted is a “North Star” metric for Growers Edge. Growers Edge diligently tracks and measures the acres of land impacted by its regenerative agriculture practices. This data provides valuable insights into the company's environmental footprint and provides a foundation for Growers Edge to forecast the expansion of its impact over time.

4 Step 4 – Improve and Expand over Time

Transparency about where the company is and where the company plans to go is the most important aspect of a successful ESG+Impact measurement program. Growers Edge remains committed to continuous improvement and expansion of its ESG+Impact measurement efforts. As Growers Edge grows, it will expand its impact and will have greater resources to dedicate to ESG+Impact measurement for its expanded products and services.

→ **New Metrics for Existing Products:** Growers Edge’s ESG+Impact measurement efforts currently focus on core ESG and Regenerative Agriculture metrics that are reported on across all iSelect Fund portfolio companies. As Growers Edge expands its existing product offerings, it can also expand the ESG+Impact metrics tracked. This may include:

- **ESG:** Identifying additional ESG metrics to cover material dimensions of Growers Edge’s environmental, social, and governance performance.
- **Outputs:** Identifying additional output metrics that capture the amount of positive and negative impact delivered via Growers Edge’s products and services.
- **Outcomes:** Surveying employees and customers to learn more about the impact of Growers Edge on its internal workforce and communities impacted.
- **Financial:** Overlaying financial metrics to determine the correlation between financial and impact outcomes.

By continuously evolving its ESG+Impact measurement framework, the company ensures that its products align with its sustainability goals and meet the changing needs of customers and stakeholders.

→ **New Metrics for New Product Offerings:** In the development of its new lending platform, Growers Edge has the opportunity to identify and measure impact metrics from the start. With a focus on Financial Inclusion, Growers Edge has the potential to report on a new dimension of its stakeholder impact compared to its prior reporting initiatives. Demonstrating its impact in Financial Inclusion (e.g. application approval rate, average loan size disbursed, total disbursement value) will aid Growers Edge’s capital raise and enable data-driven decision-making on enhancements to the loan product. By incorporating ESG+Impact measurement from the platform’s launch, the company ensures that its lending platform is effective, efficient, equitable, and contributes to positive social and environment outcomes.



iSelect has been a fantastic partner. iSelect brings us resources and people who see the value of farming and agriculture in producing the crops that feed the world.

Craig Hanken

DIRECTOR OF MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS, GROWERS EDGE

Through the support of its investor iSelect and the Proof platform, Growers Edge has witnessed ESG+Impact measurement transition from a time-consuming task to a value-adding exercise that contributes to social, environmental, and business outcomes.