

grainster

grainster™  
ECOSPHERE

*Business Plan*

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## Preface



## Mission and Vision Statement

While the rest of the global marketplace has developed and transformed with new and unfolding technological advances, the market that farmers encounter remains firmly entrenched in the foundations of a bygone age. Grainster's mission is to offer a new platform to the agricultural commodity marketplace that is global and transparent, connecting farmers and buyers directly through its revolutionary trading platform.

Grainster, an Arkansas startup, envisions changing the world of agriculture by giving farmers and buyers worldwide the ability to trade grain directly with one another through a secure online platform. Grainster's promise to farmers is a new liberation from the price-setting dictates of a handful of corporate and market executives, and its promise to buyers is a transparent marketplace where prices are negotiated directly with the farmers themselves.

### *Sustainability & Stewardship Pledge*

We at Grainster understand that careful, conscientious and responsible management of global natural resources is of central importance to any long term sustainability plan and the short term steps we set to achieve that goal. We pledge a focus to seizing opportunities at collaboration with organizations whose goals reflect this sensibility, and to actively do our part in developing programs and partnerships which promote, educate and empower our clients to employ more effective means of stewardship as well.

## Industry Trends

Four mammoth companies dominate the market exchange of agricultural products: ADM, Bunge, Cargill, and Louis Dreyfus. Their control of market trading has become opaque by complex design; farmers and food processors no longer know each other, and the genealogy of the product is hopelessly lost along the way. This "missing link" in today's supply chain is of particular concern to the U.S. Food & Drug Administration and consumers alike. In light of growing global concern for food safety, a sense of accountability is necessary. Currently, it seems only to be passed back and forth amongst parties interested in defending their bottom line at any expense.

In times past, commodities trading was simple and straightforward. Today, the availability of high speed internet and computerized trading have provided a platform for exponential growth in terms of transaction volume and complexity. The days of 'open-outcry' have been replaced by intuitive algorithmic trading systems executing microsecond decisions. Billions of dollars are traded daily by investors, banks and other financial institutions who use these modern day systems to generate profit through the sales of derivatives for price hedging and other speculative transactions. These institutions generate that profit without ever taking physical ownership of commodities.

This tectonic shift in commodities trading has resulted in a condition known as 'financialization' an overarching term for the increasing role financial investors and traders play in agri-food systems. This speculative trading creates unrest at the farm level, consequently and directly affecting the cost of food to the consumer.

### *Grassroots Farmers & Sellers Want a Simpler System for Trading*

Possessing a direct understanding of farmers' pricing frustrations in the current trading environment, Layne Fortenberry, a second generation farmer, launched a market research project to determine what the future of grains trading should look like.



His efforts yielded a clear conclusion: that farmers and buyers alike were begging for change to an antiquated system which no longer serves its public equitably. From this, Grainster - a simple, secure, and efficient trading system; a system providing true cash price discovery and the ability to bypass the oligopoly and intermediaries - was born. Grainster would empower them to buy or sell directly to anyone in the food supply chain, at any negotiated price.

### *Grainster to the rescue with the Grainster Ecosphere™*

Creation of this trading platform provides farmers and buyers with:

- The ability to negotiate prices directly
- A secure payment system (no more bounced checks)
- International market access (bypassing traditional and outdated buying systems)
- Reduced logistics costs
- Opportunities for premium pricing on specific varieties and niche crops
- Third party arbitration and dispute resolution
- Reputation rating system for buyers and sellers
- Grain pedigree tracking capabilities from seed to table
- A proprietary dashboard providing industry pricing data, news features, hedging ideas, and other tools useful for increasing profitability

We're building strong relationships and alliances across the globe within the agricultural industry as well as complimentary partnerships with telcos and transport industries to effectively facilitate global exchange. We have received valuable feedback and support regarding our concept and have received confirmation that the world is ready for Grainster now. From Africa to India, and across all continents, the need for transparent price discovery, efficient markets, and the need for global food security and traceability is paramount.

The Company has a detailed product development plan and has identified the resources required, including key personnel and technology partners, to begin offering its trading services within in the next six to nine months. In order to complete the development of our basic trading platform, begin development of follow up product offerings, fund a marketing and sales campaign, and offer salary to its executives, Grainster is seeking to raise six million dollars.

We believe execution of our plan will result in a profound change in the way agricultural commodities are traded now and into the future. We also believe our business can grow rapidly and be highly profitable as the platform is scalable.

## Capitalization

Grainster received an initial angel investment of \$250,000 in November of 2014. It is currently structured as a Limited Liability Corporation, with classification of shares, warrants and options. The Company intends to continue this form of organization for the foreseeable future.

*(The actual offer to sell units to accredited investors is made by the Company's Private Placement Memorandum).*

## The Grain Trading Markets and Industry Background

Agriculture is a central global market. Total annual agricultural output for the four top producing countries in the world (China, India, United States, European Union) is over \$2.2 trillion (USD).

A summary of selected grains for several of the highest GDP producing countries indicates the significant role grain trade occupies within the larger space. Grainster is positioned to participate in these huge industries through its grains trading platform.

	Rice	Soybeans	Maize	Wheat <sup>1</sup>
Estimated Annual Production (MT)				
United States	8,724,621	106,953,981	345,488,671	55,839,559
Worldwide	488,550,000	319,780,000	966,216,216	728,090,000
Estimated Value of Annual Production				
United States	\$28,700,000,000	\$34,580,000,000	\$48,960,000,000	\$10,260,000,000
Worldwide	\$292,663,000,000	\$99,783,000,000	\$152,600,000,000	\$165,462,000,000

<sup>1</sup> Compilation, USDA-FAS, ERS Reports Data 12/2016, 01/2017

## Four Major Players

Four major companies dominate the commodity trading industry. Therefore, it is important to understand who they are and how they conduct business. The companies are; Archer Daniels Midland (ADM), Bunge, Cargill, and Louis Dreyfus. These four companies are collectively referred to as the ABCD companies.

The traditional realm of the ABCD companies (bulk commodities) is growing only slowly relative to consumer-oriented or intermediate products in the agri-food sector. Meanwhile, their share of world trade in food and fiber products is diminishing due to the major shifts taking place in world production and food trade. Consequently, there is a redistribution of power along the agri-food supply chain with the emergence of global retailers such as Wal-Mart. Supermarkets and major grains buyers such as Budweiser and Papa John's Pizza now reach down directly into the fields where crops are grown; sometimes halfway around the world.<sup>2</sup>



It is notable that among the four big categories of global agri-food companies (input providers, grain traders, food processors, and food retailers) it is the grain traders who have remained stagnant during the last two decades of extraordinary change in the food system. Chemicals companies such as Monsanto and Ciba-Geigy have been reborn as 'life sciences companies' with their move into agricultural biotechnology and pharmaceuticals. In the process, they have seen many mergers and splits, and have largely taken over the commercial seed sector. Food processors, too, are constantly in motion – Unilever and Nestlé are two continuing giants in this group, but many other firms have been swallowed up or have merged into new entities; and the existing processors are also constantly changing and adapting.

A rapid expansion in the consumption of meat products has fueled significant growth in the demand for feed, which is made from crops such as soy, wheat, and maize. Similarly, the rapid growth of the biofuels sector is dependent upon the crops in which the ABCD companies specialize, especially sugar and maize for ethanol, and palm oil and soy for biodiesel. These new areas of demand ensure the continuing expansion of commodity trading companies.

The ABCDs continue to play a unique role in the changing global environment in which the global agri-food system operates. They have the capacity to produce, procure, process, and deliver the raw material inputs that are at the heart of the modern agri-food system, and they are uniquely placed to exploit opportunities across a wide range of activities tied both directly and indirectly to the production and trade in agricultural commodities. Consequently, they continue to exert a great deal of influence over global food systems, the lives and livelihoods of farmers, and the consumption patterns of consumers around the world.

Obviously, the ABCDs do not operate in a vacuum. There are other trading companies, like the Japanese

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<sup>2</sup> (Note: much of the information regarding the ABCD companies in this section of the business plan was derived from a research report prepared by Oxfam International in 2012 entitled 'Cereal Secrets'. Oxfam is a global organization working to address poverty and hunger, working with 90 countries to create lasting solutions to poverty.)

trading firms Mitsubishi and Marubeni, which are vertically integrated and powerful, but by and large they source globally to sell locally. Others, like Glencore, started in minerals and metals and have moved into agricultural commodities. Several Asian firms are emerging as powerful companies, too, including Singapore-based Olam and Bangkok-based Charoen Pokphand Group.

## *The Big Four Business Model*

The following components constitute the main framework of the companies' business models.

### *Originators of bulk commodities*

The ABCD companies are so dominant in the bulk commodities sector that – especially in soy and palm oil – they play a central role in the decisions that producers make about what to grow, where, how, in what quantities, and for which markets. They do this by providing inputs and other services directly to farmers, and by securing the sale of those products to traders at harvest. Origination is about sourcing grains directly from the farm. ADM, for example, says on its website:

*“ADM is a world leader in the origination and transportation of grains and oilseeds. Our strategy here is to extend our origination footprint as we have in Canada and Eastern Europe, and to grow our destination opportunities in the Middle East, Asia, and Africa.”*

But the strategy is about more than just sourcing from the farm. It is about deciding what the farm should grow.

### *Price-setting and market power*

There are relatively few traders purchasing bulk agricultural commodities for international trade. Because they deal in high volumes, the trading houses have enormous leverage in terms of manipulating prices, particularly with farmers with whom they contract directly, but also with the grain elevators to which farmers in industrialized production systems deliver their grain. Ultimately, the ABCD firms dominate the domestic and export markets of the major exporting countries, particularly in the Americas.

### *Active risk and financial management*

A high level of risk characterizes trade in all commodities. Any number of factors – natural disasters, crop failures, political or economic shifts – can affect prices of commodities, which may be locked into a long supply chain. While prices can change quickly, commodity traders are dealing with a physical stock that is bulky, expensive to store and harvested only at certain periods of the year. Prices are as much about anticipated supply and demand as they are about existing conditions. The level of risk and volatility in the trading of standardized and generic products pushes the companies to look for strategies that will increase their stability and predictability.

The finance and risk management divisions of the ABCD traders are huge and absolutely central to their businesses. The merchandising companies trade in futures markets on their own account and on behalf of others. They also use hedge funds and other financial tools to manage risk and enhance their returns. One of the big risks they must hedge against is currency fluctuation, which can have a major impact on the profitability of any given transaction.

### *High-volume bulk trade*

The commodities in which the ABCDs specialize are produced and traded in large volumes, though sometimes on low margins. The profitability of trade in these commodities depends not just on world prices, but also on factors such as freight rates, currency exchange rates, and ownership of elevators and other infrastructure, as well as government policies related to export credits, aid policies, subsidies, and tax policies. The grain traders' profit is not simply a percentage of the sale price.

As discussed below, these companies profit from other activities surrounding and relating to bulk grain trade such as financial speculation on agricultural commodity markets and index funds, transportation, and storage. The price of grain on world markets is certainly important to them, but they can profit regardless of the rise or fall of prices – what is important to them is sustained maintenance of high trade volume.

This ability to profit from virtually all volume purchased and sold comes from basis trading strategy: by using the futures market as a hedging tool, merchandisers can buy in below market and sell above market at different times. Since the cash markets and futures markets are very highly correlated; the merchandisers create margin by the amount they buy below the market plus the amount they sell above the market, regardless of the direction of price movement.

### *Focus on 'ingredient' or 'input' commodities*

Large commodity trading houses focus their activities on commodities which are not typically end products in themselves, but rather serve as inputs to processed food, animal feed, biofuels production, and industrial processing. These commodities – including palm oil, soybeans, wheat, and maize – are unspecialized and generic, and can easily be substituted for one another. Such commodities are usually traded on commodity futures markets (and associated derivatives markets, such as commodity index funds), which allows for forward purchasing, futures trading, and hedging. The nature of this business – servicing other industries – is one reason for the companies' relative anonymity; ordinary consumers rarely have any contact with an ABCD subsidiary.

### *Transportation, storage, and logistics*

Trading in bulk poses a number of highly detailed and critical logistical, storage, transportation, and delivery challenges. These involve significant planning and management tasks, including the transportation of a variety of (sometimes perishable) products by land and sea, and the planning and tracking of shipments. The big firms have developed significant expertise in this area; it is a large part of their value-add as traders. The large commodity traders own and operate global storage and delivery systems that are indispensable to the global grain trade.

Since the elimination of most public stockholding programs in the big exporter countries, including the USA and the EU (a gradual process that started in the 1980s), the ABCD firms have themselves begun to hold more physical stocks. The existence and control of these physical stocks can have a powerful impact on grain prices, and information about them is likely to be central in guiding these firms with respect to their financial investments in agricultural derivatives markets. In this way, the storage function of the ABCD firms is tightly integrated into other aspects of their business activities.

### *Continuous growth through acquisitions, mergers, and private family funding models*

Given that commodity traders' shares of the value of world food trade is declining and that they are growing relatively slowly, their expansion will come mainly from growth in new products (e.g. biofuels, industrial products such as those derived from agricultural inputs, and the like), or acquisitions of, and mergers with, other companies.

### *Active engagement in shaping the regulatory context*

The large commodities trading firms are able to exert considerable control and influence over the regulatory context within the agri-food sector. They do this through a number of channels, including high-powered lobbying with governments, placing former staff in key decision-making roles in government, and hiring former government officials to lobby on their behalf. These companies spend a lot of time and money influencing public and political debate on trade, production, and investment regulations at the domestic and international levels.

### *Summary*

Together, the above eight business features turn a spotlight onto a larger model seeking to minimize risk and manage outcomes by controlling as much as possible of the production, pricing, trade, logistical base, financial income, and regulatory context by hedging against future uncertainties of global food source. Through each of these strategy components, access to privileged information is key to these companies' success. Their activities in all of these areas guarantee them access to the information they need regarding supply, demand, and risk, while promoting a regulatory environment that privileges their way of doing business.

The business model of the agricultural commodity trading companies combines specific and unique features that have enabled them to become major and significant factors in the ongoing restructuring of the overlapping food, feed, and fuel complexes. Through their roles in biofuels investment, large-scale land acquisition, and the 'financialization' of agricultural commodity markets, the ABCDs stand at the forefront of the transformation determining where money in agriculture is invested, where agricultural production is located, where the produce is shipped, and how the world's population shares (or fails to share) the bounty of each harvest. They are also, directly and indirectly, shaping the world in which the majority of the world's food must somehow survive, and be allowed to thrive.

The wide-scale restructuring of the food and agricultural landscape has significant implications. New kinds of investment and the size of those investments are reshaping the relationship that smallhold farmers have with the land and natural resources (especially water), as well as their access to food. They're also reshaping public discourse about agriculture and food security, the processes determining how public investments will be made, and how those markets will be regulated.

### *The "Financialization" of Commodity Trading*

Financialization can be defined as an overarching term for the increasing role that financial investors and traders play in agri-food systems, and how modern trading affects farmers' profits as well as the cost of food to the consumer. Financialization is a factor in both the commodity futures markets and in agricultural production itself. Until recently, the food system largely involved producers and a series of commercial entities that traded, processed, distributed, and sold food. Today, banks and other investors, as well as dedicated investment funds established as subsidiaries of the ABCD companies themselves, have invested

billions of dollars in food commodities, with no interest in taking possession of any physical commodity. Their behavior is linked to what is happening in the physical trade of food, of course, but it also affects that trade by influencing prices and behavior. The ABCDs have long used financial instruments (derivatives and hedging devices) to support and expand their businesses. The world's largest commodity traders face new competition from speculative traders and other financial institutions, now that the markets have been deregulated.

Another aspect of financialization affecting today's farmers is that agricultural prices are discovered by the trading on the Chicago Board of Trading ("CBOT"). Pricing on the CBOT is reflective of a number of world-wide factors from drought in Russia, to an expected overabundance of wheat in Brazil, or a wildfire in Texas - any number of exogenous events that have little to do with farmers outside of those markets.

### *Conclusion*

The ABCD traders have become key players in the financialization of commodity markets, significantly increasing the complexity and sophistication of the trading environment.

Commodity prices are increasingly influenced by factors having nothing to do with physical reserves or demand. While debates have raged in recent years as to whether financial speculation in agricultural commodity markets is a leading driver of food price volatility, a growing consensus exists that increased financial speculation on those markets has had a detrimental impact on food prices. We believe a serious risk exists of financialization affecting prices in real markets, thus hurting some of the world's most vulnerable populations.

Deregulation of financial markets has created new, more complicated investment tools and products. The ABCD traders have capitalized on these developments, as have other financial institutions. In fact, the ABCD traders (in addition to trading firms such as the CME Group and the Intercontinental Exchange) are facilitating the speculation of others by offering agricultural commodity tools to third party investors via their financial services divisions.

Hedge funds, private equity firms, and pension funds are investing in farmland and, in some instances, are actively involved in the day-to-day management of on-farm operations. Their desire for these investments is driven by several factors:

- o Decreasing per capita availability of land;
- o Anticipated increase in commodity prices over the long term due to finite resources and still-growing (and increasingly wealthy) global population;
- o Shifts toward meat-based diets;
- o Creation of markets in farm-related carbon credits and water rights;
- o Increasing levels of investment by land-poor and food-deficient countries;
- o Increasing value of farmland.

The broader public possesses little awareness of the dominant role ABCD firms play in the financialization of commodity markets, nor that their food prices are largely determined them.

# The Grainster Solution

## The Old Model Needs to Change

For years, Farmers have disputed the current structure of our commodity trading environment. They are sensitive to trading spreads and traditional pricing that are becoming a greater portion of their expense. As the rest of the agricultural industry makes great strides, it seems as though our pricing system has not.

Under the current system, one way farmers are attempting to market their products in a better pricing environment is to increase grain storage capacity by building more and more bins in hopes that future prices will rise. Of course, hedging is an alternative option, but it is very costly and requires a keen skill set and extensive market knowledge.

Buyers, food processors, and the USDA are increasingly aware of the need to eliminate the opacity of the current trading process. They desire the ability to track food from its origins by providing accountability in the food chain, all in the interest of health and prosperity.

Further, global buying and selling via Grainster, with a targeted view for facilitating developing countries, permits formerly poor farmers or farmer associations in poorer countries to expand markets, save on conventional middlemen, sell off new surpluses thus expanding production, profitability and income.

Certainly most developing countries' economies are agriculturally based. Such new opportunity, presented with empowerment sensibilities rather than exploitation, sands potential for great transformation of not only individual farmers and farmer organizations in these regions, but national-level economies.

Grainster has developed a team of representatives, each targeting Africa, Europe (Malta), India and the Middle East individually. The Executive Vice President of each region has longstanding ties or associations to his or her region, so is genuinely vested in facilitating success to these regions. They own their positions and value the contributions they seek to make. Each has devised specifically-targeted strategies for entry into these regions with knowledge of the cultures, governmental and socioeconomic structures; the potential restraints and challenges.

## The New Model = Grainster

Grainster understands the unique challenges farming, as a profession, presents; increased frustration with an outmoded trading model no longer designed to benefit either party directly shouldn't be one of them. Our response? The Grainster trading platform. A simple, direct, transparent connection between buyers and seller facilitating price, delivery, efficient logistics and certification of product heritage from seed to table.

Local farmers and industry insiders alike have encouraged Grainster's mission of streamlining the trading process, reducing selling costs, reducing the risk in trading, and providing the accountability needed in the food chain while still actively serving in guiding that development process.

We've developed a dedicated team working everyday to better understand the specific governmental,

transport and financial structure challenges of farmers in targeted regions around the globe. We are also forming alliances with governmental representatives, NGOs, cooperatives and service providers to effectively navigate improved global trade potential.

Grainster empowers farmers to better see the world around them, to assess and more effectively meet its needs; it also opens a window for the world's buyers to better appreciate farmers' unquestionably vital contributions.

We believe strongly that buyers and sellers around the world want to advance toward easier, more cost effective transactions, ensuring a long lost security and peace of mind. We believe Grainster is the future of grains trading.

## Market Evolution Precedents

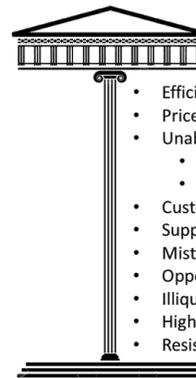
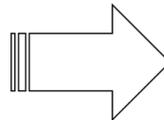
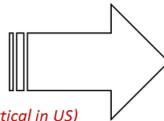
*Food Verticals are The Last Market to Move to Modern Dynamics Mechanisms*

- Crude oil & gas
- Consumer goods
- Derivatives
- Commodities
- Bonds/Trading
- Equities
- Currency/Trading
- *Agri-Commodities (still single vertical in US)*

*Agri-Commodities is the last market to effect this transition*

### Benefits Derived from the Transition/Modernization

- Effective
- Price to market
- Responsive
- Customer driven
- Supplier informed and armed
- Resilient
- Transparent
- Liquid and high velocity of cash
- Low risk/Ethical profits
- Flexible



### Speculator Driven Vertical

- Efficient not effective
- Price inflative
- Unable to respond
  - Oversupply
  - Emergent demand
- Customer input is minimal
- Supplier input is minimal
- Mistakes amplify catastrophically
- Opportunity for abuse
- Illiquid
- High risk/Low profits
- Resists innovation & development



### Market Driven Vertical

3

## Grainster's Value Proposition for the Farmer:

In the past, farmers contacted small groups of local and regional buyers to find the best prices for their grain. This practice typically left farmers' profitability at the mercy of these buyers.

Until recently, no U.S. legislation existed to protect farmers who felt the pressure of an unfair, less than transparent grain trading system ultimately stacked against them.. This lack of structured legal support has led to many farmers falling victim to large grain defaults at the hands of dealers. One recent and near-catastrophic example:

*In August of 2014, farmers in the delta region of Arkansas who sold grains to the Turner Grain Merchandising Company came to the shocking realization that their checks from Turner were bouncing. Ultimately, Turner filed for bankruptcy and farmers lost some \$25 million. While these financial disasters are not all that common, farmers need to be protected not only by legislation and criminal*

<sup>3</sup>[MARKET AND PRECEDENT PRESSURES SET STAGE FOR TECHNOLOGY-DRIVEN AGRICULTURAL VERTICAL CHANGE](#), Roger Cunningham, 2017

*prosecution but also more importantly, by a trading intermediary that will guarantee safe and secure funds transaction.*

Grainster provides farmers with a new tool affording a secure, convenient, transparent environment for negotiating the sale of their grain to a global marketplace comprised of buyers from around the world as opposed to the small groups with which farmers have historically dealt. Through Grainster, the farmer sets the price for his grain (as opposed to the CBOT price discovery) and the buyer negotiates with him from that price. This approach gives both farmer and buyer more leverage in negotiations, ultimately allowing increased profitability for the farmer and innovative levels of transparency for buyers from around the globe.

In addition to the Grainster trading platform for negotiation farmers have a tool to ensure transparency as well: Grainster Accreditation gives farmers a simple “star score” showing each buyer’s past transaction performance. Moreover, Grainster’s credit department will analyze available financial and credit information of new buyers as added protection.

Some manufacturers require specific varieties of grain which they purchase directly from a network of farmers contracted to commit a certain number of acres per year. This is becoming more common every day. In fact, when we speak with foreign buyers it’s obvious they prefer the prospect of buying directly from American farmers in order obtain the level of product quality they desire – something not standardly afforded when they buy in the mass market from *The Big Four*. So farmers who raise specific crop seed varieties stand the potential to command higher prices from buyers looking for those specific varieties.

The Grainster Pedigree is a data tool corresponding to a specific QR code on the packaging of food sold to consumers. When the code is scanned on a mobile device the data collected for that particular grain (corn, wheat, rice, etc.) is then returned to the consumer along with the farmer’s bio and farm location. This is a value-add that food processors and producers can pay forward to consumers, commanding higher prices for legitimately increased value, thus paying the farmer a better price for his participation in the program.

We also plan to reduce logistics costs for farmers and buyers through Grainster Logistics. This Grainster service will provide an app-accessible database of hopper-bottom truck drivers local to origin who are available to transport grain to its destination. Not unlike Uber, request for transport is simply matched up with an available driver who bids on the price for the haul, thus providing dynamic pricing for better matching of supply and demand. The value proposition for the trucker is an opportunistic haul incremental to his scheduled hauls, or opportunistic for a deadhead drive back toward home.

### *Grainster’s Value Proposition for the Buyer:*

Grainster provides buyers with direct access to farmers marketing their crops on its trading platform. This level of access to the farmer does not currently exist even though buyers have been desirous of this for many years.

Our platform gives buyers the ability to search for: specific grains (varieties, GMO/ Non-GMO) as well as by geographical locations. Such direct dealing with farmers increases buyer assurances of getting exactly what they are looking for in terms of quality, moisture, variety, milling, etc. In addition to providing direct access to farmers and reducing costs related with brokers and middlemen, Grainster also provides buyers a convenient, easy to use tool for meeting budgetary and production scheduling demands.

The Old Model	The Grainster Model:
Conventional Pricing (CBOT)	Farmers set their own price
Unprotected Payment System	Secure Payment System
Limited Access to Global Markets	Global access and cost-effective logistics
Convolutd, opaque channels	Pedigree tracking of products (seed to table)
Costly Grain Brokers	Higher Profits for Premium, Niche Products
Grain Marketing Confusion	Transparency
Disconnected from Producers	Direct Communication with Grower
Volatile and high risk	

## The Grainster Ecosphere

Grainster’s mission is to provide simple, cost effective management of everything needed to transact grain sales between buyers and sellers. Grainster has seven principal products characterizing a collective ‘ecosphere’ in which buyers and sellers can safely and confidently conduct business.



### *Grainster Transaction Engine*

Once an agreement between the farmer (seller) and the buyer has been negotiated along with related transaction terms, the Grainster Transaction Platform is used for the buyer to transmit funds to the seller. At this stage, Grainster acts the independent, bonded agent that ensures funds are held in an escrow account until the transaction is completed to the satisfaction of both parties. This process gives the farmer (and lender) security knowing that their payment is valid and waiting on them upon completion of the transaction.



### *Grainster Accreditation*

Under the “Old Model”, when a crop is sold to a buyer, a two party check is issued to the farmer and his lender. As of right now, there’s no universal tool that alerts or pings the lender to let them know that the crop that they have financed has been sold. This alert is also extremely valuable to crop insurers (who may be positioned to pay out partial settlements on farms that had crop damage, etc.) and landlords who operate on a percentage basis with their renters, for instance. A common practice for landowners is to arrange a 25% payment from the overall yields in their fields. This is still being handled on the honor code today.

With Grainster Accreditation, when the transaction is complete, an escrow agent alerts each of the related parties that the disbursement is being made in accordance with instructions to make the appropriate payments, as applicable, to the farmer’s bank and landowner. Grainster Accreditation also provides the farmer with simple access to a “star score” system that shows how the buyer has performed in the past, similar to what we see with Amazon, eBay and Uber. Additionally, Grainster’s credit department will analyze available financial and credit information about buyers as added protection.



### *Grainster Logistics*

Another process that occurs inside the Grainster Ecosphere is the coordination of transport of the grain between buyer and seller. This service not only allows the party responsible for transportation costs to find best possible rates for transport through our network of hopper-bottom equipped trucks and international freight forwarding service providers, but it

also assists truck owners and brokers to maximize their profits by network participation in our proprietary system.

With Grainster Logistics we will not only provide the farmer and the buyer with the most competitive rate for transport of their grain, we will also help truck operators increase profitability and maximize drive time. Our approach is unique in that our mobile app serves as a “beacon” for the drivers as they travel across the country. The buyer (or seller) responsible for transportation of the grain posts their transport need onto our system and drivers in the area or across the country bid it on. Available drivers simply switch on their beacons and immediately see our mapping platform and freight opportunities. Drivers in closest proximity will likely be the lowest to bidder, providing the most efficient transport. This provides the shipper with the best possible rate – and in many cases provides the driver with income on both legs of their trip.

Grainster Logistics mobile app can function as a standalone application or can be integrated seamlessly into the Grainster Ecosphere. Farmers, buyers, and shippers that operate outside of the Grainster Ecosphere will also be able to use this app. The benefits to this solution are numerous. We will be able to provide a complete “life- cycle” of the grain from the moment it enters the farmer’s bin (through API partnerships with leading farm management software providers) all the way through the drying and storage process and ultimately its journey from the farmers bin to the processor. This data will be stored in the Grainster cloud and made available to any processors that wish to license the data. By licensing this data, the manufacturer will be able to place a small Quick Response Code (QR Code) on their product packaging that a consumer can scan in order to get the entire history of the food they are eating. A representative from the USDA cited this feature as the missing link to transparency in the food chain, all for healthier food.

Once domestic shipping delivers the grain to a port of origin we will continue to track the grain through our network of international freight forwarders. The industry standard for international freight brokerage is 15%. Grainster will offer a 0.5% logistics agency fee or 2% brokerage fee with a 12% fulfillment services fee, in line with our strategy to provide simple cost effective services.

Any time of the day, buyers and sellers can login to our system and find out exactly where their grain is located. In addition to food for human consumption, our “pedigree data” is also of interest to pet food manufacturers. We believe that our data will be of interest to insurance providers, lenders, financial institutions, homeland security, USDA, schools and universities, beef and dairy farmers, and local grain elevator operators. Over time, we believe farmers will be able to demand a premium for “pedigreed grain”, just as organic farmers have been able to capitalize on growing demand for their products.



### ***Grainster Pedigree***

Grainster Pedigree is a revolutionary way to promote seed to table food safety with a global food security and traceability system. Through use of RFID sensors and other proprietary technology, Pedigree will track important events and characteristics through the growth, harvest, transport and production of food. All relevant information will be available for transmission through wifi, satellite and 4G provider partners in real-time.



### ***Grainster Analytics***

Our data warehouse is a collection of real-time cash data trading information. Access to this data will be licensed to other boards of trade, government agencies, traders, and commodity brokers, through our proprietary dashboard.



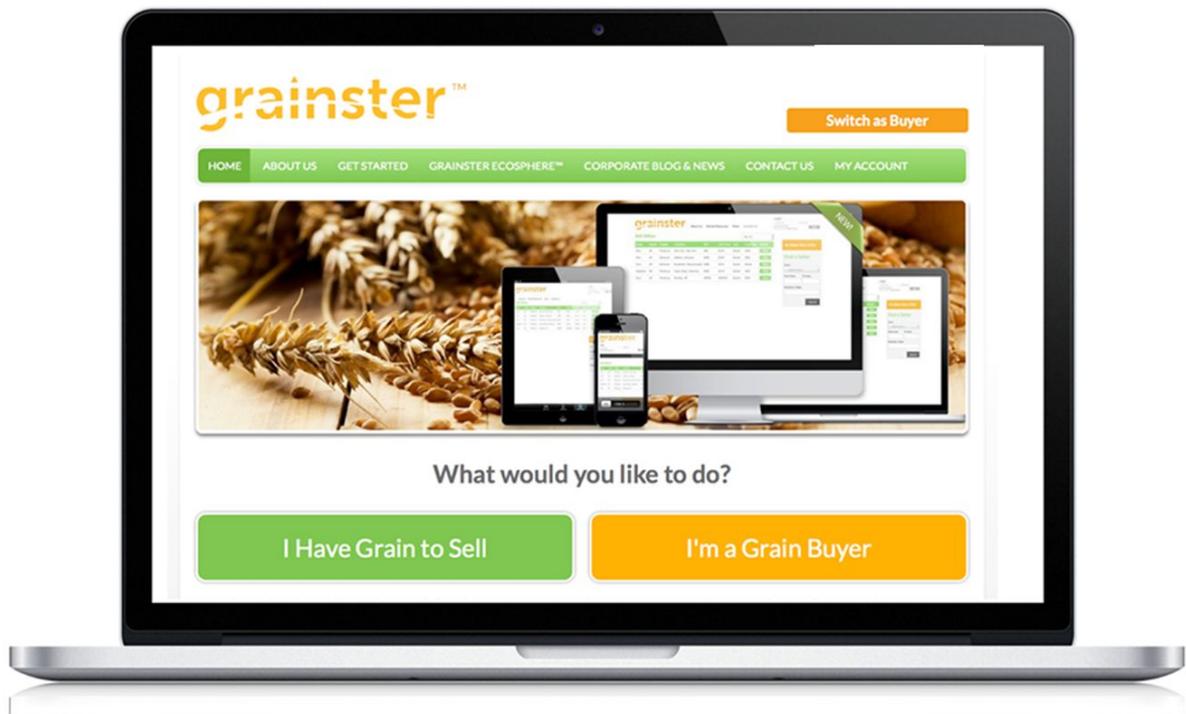
### **Grainster Concierge**

Grainster Concierge consists of Call Center Agents available for direct contact between buyers and sellers for large, multi-year contracts. In this profit-based exchange model, buyers will prepay sellers 100% prior to the commodity leaving the farm: 25% payment at time of farmer input, 25% at time of planting and the remaining 50% at harvest. In the event of crop failure prior to shipping, seller's crop risk insurance will allow the Service to source from another, unaffected farm.



### **Grainster Connect**

Is a revolutionary social platform that will keep buyers and sellers informed of their customized information feed. This platform also allows for buyers and sellers to connect through a set of product marketing tools insuring pinpoint streamlined marketing. Grainster Connect will keep users connected and informed of daily information to help make them more informed farmers and buyers.



## **Initial Product Pricing**

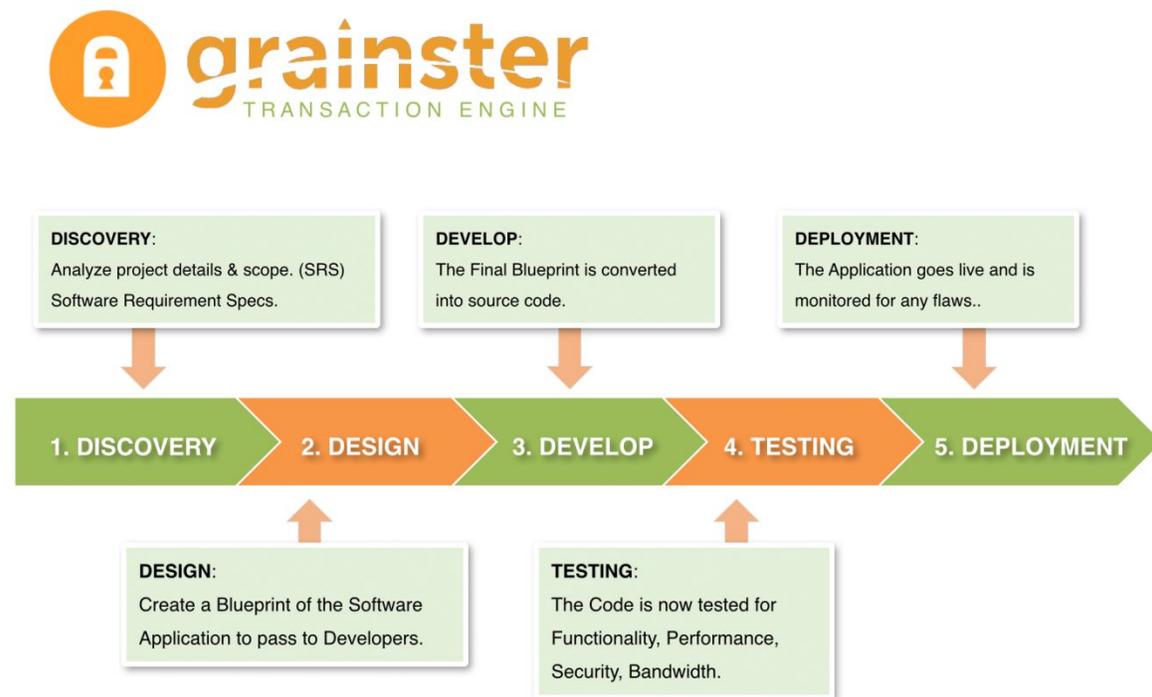
Grainster revenue model is based upon the following components:

- Grainster Transaction Engine  
3% transaction fee applied to the gross buy/sell price
- Grainster Logistics  
Logistics agent fees = .5% of logistics fee  
Logistics broker fees = 2% of logistics fee on 25% of executed logistics

- Logistics service fees = 12% of logistics fee (12-15 actual experience)
- Grainster Concierge (long term foreign contracts)  
1.5% of gross transaction values
- Grainster Pedigree Premium Services Fee  
1% of class transaction gross buy/sell price
- Grainster Analytics API & Dashboard  
Farmers will receive free access if they are enrolled in the Pedigree program  
Institutions will be charged an \$8,000 dollar annual subscription
- Grainster Connect  
We will generate additional revenue from farmer focused ad placement on our social platform Grainster Connect.  
Based upon a very small percentage of annual transactions, this alone can generate 100+ million annually.

*(Please see the Revenue Model of this plan for further discussion regarding our future product pricing.)*

## Trading Platform Development



### Grainster Transaction Engine

The Grainster Transaction Engine is the business logic and proprietary technology that processes all financial transactions originated through Grainster.com, Grainster Accreditation, and Grainster Logistics, and produces the transactional data that makes up Grainster Analytics.

An attractive layer to the Grainster Transaction Engine is its ability to function as trust and escrow to hold funding in place for a period of time until both parties (buyer and seller) are satisfied with the transaction or

enter into an external arbitration process. The Grainster Transaction Engine also has a secure programming interface for 3<sup>rd</sup> party systems to access and transact trades through our Grainster API.

- o Authenticate Buyer & Seller
- o Generate Transaction ID
- o Retrieve Transaction Details
- o Confirm Transaction Details (Buyer & Seller)
- o Retrieve Account Details (Buyer & Seller)
- o Confirm Account Details (Buyer)
- o Transmit Transaction to Bank
- o Bank Authorization
- o Report Authorization Status
- o Initiate Transfer (Bank to Grainster)
- o Receive Transfer (Grainster)
- o Secure Funds in Escrow (1%)
- o Report Transfer Status
- o Check Transaction Details / Terms
- o Apply Rules / Logic
- o Confirmation (Buyer & Seller)
- o Process Transaction Fee (3%)
- o Initiate Transfer (Grainster to Seller)
- o Report Transfer Status
- o Append Transaction Details to User

#### *Technical Sequence of Events and Logic of the Transaction Engine:*

1. Once the buyer and seller have negotiated the terms of their transaction they will both be transported to the next phase of the ecosphere, our “transaction engine” in which the buyer and seller must first authenticate their accounts (via Grainster accounts)
2. Next, a transaction ID is generated
3. The system retrieves data (negotiations) related to the transaction and requires each party to confirm the details
4. Next, the buyer is asked to confirm their banking information. Once the information has been confirmed, it’s then transmitted to the bank for authorization
5. Once authorization is returned, a report is generated that is emailed to both parties (or we can generate a text message)
6. Once the funds have been received on our end (Grainster) they are held for a short period of time where we may earn a nominal return on the float of the funds
7. Once the funds have hit the Grainster account a confirmation email, and/or text is sent to each party
8. When the transmission is completed an email is sent to each party to alert them of the status of the transactions
9. Once the buyer and seller have confirmed that the transaction was completed successfully the funds are then queued for transfer into the farmers (sellers) account
10. (In the event of a dispute, the funds are then held up while a 3<sup>rd</sup> party arbitrator settles the dispute, while there is an appeal process with the arbitrator (we honor the rulings).
11. Prior to transmitting the funds, we deduct our fees from the total amount.
12. Once the funds have been transmitted a report status function runs to let everyone know that it’s complete.

13. All of the data generated from this transaction is then sent to our database for later collection in our analytics product.
14. Finally, a status report is generated that is sent to both parties to alert them that a transaction has been completed
15. The details are then recorded in each user's "history" table.

## *The Transaction Engine Development Plan*

The Grainster development plan was created with several business and technical goals designed to respond directly to our customers' requirements. The following are some of the most significant goals:

- o The Grainster Ecosphere (GE) will be designed using the latest Blockchain security architectures to ultimately protect our customers. Significant effort has been committed to planning and development of the security mechanisms to support the User Interface, Mobile Applications, Service Oriented Architecture, API's, Application Server, and Databases.
- o The GE will be designed to perform rapidly as well as support many simultaneous users in highly available configurations.
- o The GE will support internationalization requirements, allowing support for multiple languages and multiple currencies.
- o The GE software architecture will be designed using best practices for financial services software including; security, traceability, and reliability necessary to handle large monetary value transactions with confidence.
- o The GE design will support the integration of 3<sup>rd</sup> party software from companies such as Fidelity Information Services that may be used for various financial business functions.

The Grainster development team sees these goals as challenges to be met throughout the software development life cycle. Our development team will meet these challenges with strict development methodologies as well as staffing trusted people possessing extensive experience. We are in the process of securing commitments from business analysts, project managers, software and hardware architects, and developers that have extensive experience building software in the financial services industries with companies such as Fidelity Information Services, Acxiom, Zenmonics, and Jack Henry. The current team has been responsible for building key financial services software that is currently running in banks around the world such as Bank of America, Banco De Credito, Thai Military Bank, USAA, Bank of the West, and National Bank of New Zealand.

## Patents, Trademarks, and IP

### *Trademarks:*

- o Grainster
- o Grainster Accreditation
- o Grainster Analytics
- o Grainster API (Application Program Interface)
- o Grainster Cloud
- o Grainster Data Warehouse
- o Grainster Ecosphere

- o Grainster Logistics
- o Grainster Transaction Engine
- o Mission of Grainster
- o Vision of Grainster

### Patents:

Patents for the fundamental operating system for grains trading were filed with the U.S. Patent office prior to the incorporation of Grainster, Inc. The patent issuance is pending and has been assigned to Grainster, Inc. Grainster will continue to seek patents on all proprietary product development efforts.

## Sales & Marketing

### Fast Facts

- o In 2012 3.2 million Farmers operated 2.1 million farms covering 915 million acres that dot America's rural landscape.
- o More than 21 million American workers (15 percent of the total U.S. workforce) produce, process and sell the nation's food and fiber.
- o Today's farmers produce 262 percent more food with 2 percent fewer inputs (labor, seeds, feed, fertilizer, etc.), compared to 1950.
- o In 2015, \$133 billion worth of American agricultural products were exported around the world. The United States sells more food and fiber to world markets than we import, creating a positive agricultural trade balance.
- o One in three U.S. farm acres is planted for export.
- o Farmers strive to provide the highest quality food possible. They work hard to gain the knowledge, training and skill to use chemicals safely and responsibly. Many farmers learned from their parents and have a lot of experience. But, like other professionals, they also go to college, attend seminars and work with consultants.
- o 31 percent of U.S. gross farm income comes directly from exports.
- o About 23 percent of raw U.S. farm products are exported each year.
- o Farmers and ranchers receive only 16 cents out of every dollar spent on food at home and away from home. The rest goes for costs beyond the farm gate: wages and materials for production, processing, marketing, transportation and distribution. In 1980, farmers and ranchers received 31 cents.
- o U.S. farm programs typically cost each American just pennies per meal and account for less than one-half of 1 percent of the total U.S. government budget.
- o Americans enjoy a food supply that's abundant, affordable overall and among the world's safest; thanks in large part to the efficiency and productivity of America's farm and ranch families.

### Sales and Marketing Strategy

Grainster markets its services on a direct to customer basis. The company has access to lists identifying targeted farmers and commodity buyers and plans to make contact with these potential customers through a number of activities:

- o Town hall meetings with farmers
- o Internet advertising
- o Facebook advertising (6,000+ active followers)
- o LinkedIn advertising
- o Twitter
- o On-site magazine – publication for agricultural lenders and dealers
- o Radio and TV advertising
- o Industry and Newspaper advertising
- o Agriculture trade show participation (e.g. The Mid-South Farm & Gin Show in Memphis where we received leads for over 5,000 farmers)
- o Speaking opportunities at industry events
- o Speaking opportunities in agricultural business academic institutions
- o Partnerships with cooperatives, NGOs, and governmental agencies to promote and educate on optimal platform utilization on targeted global stages (initially to include Africa, India, select Middle Eastern regions)

41 billion metric tons of rice, 142 billion metric tons of corn and 140 billion metric tons of soybeans traded globally by close of FY 2016<sup>4</sup>. Our objective is to obtain signed trading service subscriptions from 1500 farmers and/or farmer cooperatives cumulatively from our targeted regions by the end of 2018, and subscriptions from 375 buyers. We forecast the base of subscriptions for farmers to increase 300% by fiscal year 2019 and average 100%/year subscription growth through 2023, reaching over 36,000 by 2023 through direct subscription supplemented by our API. We expect buyer subscriptions to increase 25% per year reaching 915 by 2023.

In addition to direct subscription services, we expect tertiary onboarding through our API (application program interface) which will allow third-party software vendors specializing in Farm Management Software to extend their product capabilities by adding the Grainster Ecosphere to their applications. Our API will be designed to contain data which sends information seamlessly from the Grainster trading platform back into these farm management software applications for a complete farm management solution. The Grainster API will be available for free download on our website and can also be integrated for an additional cost per instance by our in-house development team.

### *Seller vs. Buyer Growth*

While each farmer generally performs at least three grains trades per year, we have forecasted that our base of subscribers will initially use Grainster for one of those trades, increasing to three trades (through increased service acceptance) within the third year after initial product introduction.

2017 FY projections for U.S. corn, rice and oilseed & product exports (driven by soybean) alone were set at \$56.9BN<sup>5</sup> Grainster's potential share of reasonably similar projected U.S.-based transactional values is expected to be about 0.015% in 2018, growing to .27% in 2025.

(See the Financial section of the plan for more information on projected revenue)

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<sup>4</sup> USDA Foreign Agricultural Service Reports, Jan 2017

<sup>5</sup> U.S.D.A. Economic Research Service Report, August 2016

## API Integration

Grainster API will facilitate solutions integration with 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Farm Management Software Providers to onboard large groups of new users rapidly. Most farm management solutions track “seed to harvest” for their users. Typically, once a farmer has completed harvest and sold the crop, data has to be manually entered back into farm management software to complete year-end accounting. Integration with the Grainster platform assures that solutions providers users never have to leave their software.

## Competition

Grainster strongly believes that providing an online trading platform freeing farmers and buyers to negotiate directly with each other in an open market environment is how grains trading will be done in the future. As such, we expect there will be multiple competitors entering this space. We also believe that the global market opportunity is prodigious, providing ample share for many players. The key differentiators will be; speed to market, starting with a liquid market by building relationships before launch, security in transactions, ease of use, providing extensibility of products and features, comprehensive support and counsel regarding farming economics and pricing.

## Direct Competition

The concept of democratizing grains trading is fairly new and the implementation is in its infancy. Products and services addressing this nascent industry are currently being rolled out by a handful of new companies. Following are companies pursuing this market opportunity:

1. **FarmLead ([www.farmlead.com](http://www.farmlead.com))**, a Saskatchewan, Canada Company, has the following description of its business on its web site:

*“FarmLead.com is a risk-free, transparent online and mobile grain marketplace that allows grain buyers and sellers of any size to list, negotiate directly with one another, and finalize grain trade connections from anywhere and at any time. FarmLead.com is not an auction, but a marketplace that automatically creates a better grain marketing and/or procurement strategy. From ratings on all users, to making sure as a farmer that you're guaranteed payment on your grain, we try to manage as much risk as possible. Thus, whether you're a grain producer, end-user, broker, or trader, FarmLead.com is most efficient & cost-effective asset when it comes to the chore of buying and/or selling grain.”*  
*FarmLead states that it has 400 buyers and 1,700 farmers as customers.*

2. **Bushel ([www.busheldirect.com](http://www.busheldirect.com))** is located in Portland, Oregon. Their website includes this description:

*“Bushel Direct is an independent firm specializing in the development of modern, web-based business solutions for buyers and sellers of grain. With the bushel team, our clients are able to leverage a unique blend of expertise in web-based software development, business development, and forward contracting in the grain industry. We have worked hard over the last three years to develop a modern solution to help traders discover pricing in the market and conduct trade as close to market pricing as possible.*

*We are working even harder to ensure that we continually improve it for today's market. In 2012 our team began developing the concept for Bushel to help facilitate improved trade efficiency and help ensure that our clients receive the best, real-time information for price discovery. With the latest technology and vastly improved internet connection capability, we believed that our mission to create an ideal platform for everyday commodity traders was ready to become reality. We are proud to present Bushel as the latest trading network and application for forward grain contracts."*

3. **Grain Hedge ([www.grainhedage.com](http://www.grainhedage.com))** is located in Montana. Here is how they describe themselves:

*"Our mission is to educate and empower traders through the use of technology and innovation focusing on agricultural commodities. We strive to provide actionable information to help our customers meet their profitability goals. Our platform has been developed specifically for the agricultural producer and provides live futures quotes, direct market access, and cash market bids and intelligence. Finally, the information you need to make profitable marketing decisions can be accessed under one Grain Hedge log in.*

*Even though our accounts are self-directed, farmers are not alone. Our team of brokers can be reached easily through a phone call, email, online support, or a web meeting. Our brokers work hard to provide education so that each client can execute their strategy with confidence. The avenues we use include: Grain TV, cash and futures market commentary, blogs, Twitter, Facebook, and weather intelligence from Planalytics."*

4. **Clear Grain Exchange ([www.cleargrain.com](http://www.cleargrain.com))** is an Australian company offering a service that appears to be similar. Clear Grain was launched in 2008 as a market solution for the commodities industry post deregulation. In 2009, it was purchased by The NZX Group with the purpose of expanding its footprint in the Australian industry. Today, they claim to be Australia's largest online marketplace for the trading of both physical grain and forward contracts.
5. **Kisan Market ([www.kisanmarket.com](http://www.kisanmarket.com))** is an online market for many agricultural goods in India, and is based on the idea that the farmer knows best. Kisan recognizes that the marketing chain leaves the farmer at a disadvantage.

*"Kisan Market is an online agriculture market place, where the farmer can sell their crop with competitive prices in India. This is beneficial to farmers without mediators in between. This marketplace helps agricultural and rural-based businesses to expand market share through an online trading community."*

6. **PanXchange ([www.panxchange.com](http://www.panxchange.com))** is an online market operating mostly in East Africa. They started globally in the sugar market and claim to currently have liquid markets for grains, and pulse and oilseeds.

*"PanXchange was founded in 2011 by a veteran trader and entrepreneur who used her own experiences in agricultural and energy markets to develop PanXchange's trading platform. The platform provides instant market access and price discovery for all players along the commodity supply chain, from suppliers and processors to trade houses and end users."*

7. **The Seam ([www.theseam.com](http://www.theseam.com))** is an online market based out of Memphis that is specializing in

cotton. Started by four cotton companies in 2000, they recently teamed up with IBM to work on a Blockchain technology.

*“The Seam, founded by leading global agribusiness companies, began operating the world's first completely online, neutral exchanges for cotton trading in December 2000. Since that time, other commodities such as peanuts have been added to the company's trading platforms. To date, the company has cleared or processed through its systems more than \$5 billion dollars in commodities.”*

## Indirect Competition

There are a number of web-based services providing farmers with data tools for identifying opportunities to maximize the profitability of grains trading. One such example is GeoGrain ([www.geograins.com](http://www.geograins.com)). They provide a wide array of data and analytics to help the farmer determine how to best market their grain. Following are some of their advertised features:

Key features of the Standard Optimizer tools

- Identifies the best local markets based on prices, storage and trucking costs
- Bid data available within a 200-mile radius of farm locations
- Data can be filtered by commodity, hauling rate, and storage rate
- Results can be displayed by net returns or by driving distance from the farm
- View spot bids and forward contract prices up to 12 months out
- Charting and mapping of local spot and forward basis
- Net returns over trucking costs are generally 10 to 20 cents a bushel

Key features of the My Grain Trades tool

- Quickly monitor the value of your unsold grain as it is updated daily to the nearest cash market prices
- Easily track open futures and options trades as they are updated to current futures market values throughout the day
- Enter a profit goal and monitor your progress toward achieving it
- Record transactions for cash sales, futures, options, crop insurance, government payments, and LDPs with ease
- View account summary and transaction reports
- Store previous years' crop records for comparison and analysis

Benefits of the Corporate Branded Standard Optimizer

- Improve your clients profitability by providing precise cash market information
- Strengthen your client-business relationships by becoming a resource with powerful marketing tools

## Broad Market Competition

There are a number of companies who will increasingly represent competition in the conventional grains trading market. While the four major (ABCD) trading companies still maintain a dominant position in the world trade in grains, oilseeds, sugar, and other commodities, for the first time they are facing a degree of

competition from a number of new trading companies, most of which have only recently been established. While the names of several of these new companies, such as Wilmar International (established in 1991), Olam (1989), Sinar Mas (1962), the Noble Group (1986), COFCO (1949), and Glencore (1974) are already familiar, there are others including Gavilon (2008), Libero (2010), Agrottrade (1989), Vitol (1966), or the United Grain Company (2009). Also, countries such as South Korea and Abu Dhabi intend to establish alternative trading platforms on the back of attempts to ensure their own food security by importing the foodstuffs they do not produce themselves.

Following is a review of certain companies representing increased competition in the broad worldwide commodities trading industry:

### *Wilmar International*

Wilmar International is based in Singapore and is Asia's leading agribusiness group. It was founded in 1991 as a palm oil trading group and is today the world's largest integrated palm-oil company, with a market value of \$35.6bn. It is also one of the largest plantation companies in Indonesia and Malaysia (with landholdings of some 573,400 hectares), the largest trader and processor of edible oils and oilseeds in China, and the largest edible oil refiner in the Ukraine.

### *COFCO*

COFCO was originally established in 1949, as the China National Cereals, Oils and Foodstuff Corporation, with a monopoly over the import and export of key commodities such as fats and oils. It remains under state control, and operates as a conglomerate with operations in real estate, hotels, and financial services, as well as food and agribusiness. It is China's largest food and agri-business Company, as well as the country's largest grain trader.

### *Olam International Limited*

Olam was established in London in 1989, but subsequently moved its headquarters to Singapore, and listed on the Singapore Stock Exchange in 2005. The largest shareholder is the KC Group, an India-based conglomerate company employing more than 12,000 people in over 54 countries. The Group, which was founded in 1860, manufactures and distributes a wide range of products, including textiles, electronic goods, and cars.

### *Noble Group*

The Noble Group was established in 1987 and is headquartered in Hong Kong and listed on the Singapore Stock Exchange. The Group derives most of its revenues from its mining and processing interests and its supply of raw materials such as iron ore. Although agriculture currently accounts for only 22 percent of its revenues, it is a fast-growing focus for the company and accounts for 38 percent of its gross profits. In 2009, China Investment, Beijing's sovereign wealth fund, took a 15 percent stake in Noble, and further joint ventures between Noble and Chinese investors are anticipated.

While the commodity crisis of 2006–08 had its greatest impact on poor people in the poorest countries, it also led to the realization by many wealthy countries that the food supply system they had long taken for granted

was, in fact, not as secure as they had believed. In particular, the resource-rich, food-poor states of the Middle East became very aware of their situation, and started to seek ways in which they could secure future food supplies, in particular by using the resource wealth they had accumulated in sovereign wealth funds to acquire land overseas, and establishing state-owned and operated farms producing commodities such as beef, wheat, and sheep.

## SWOT Analysis

<p><b>Strengths</b></p>	<p><b>Strong brand image</b> - Grainster has an established and rapidly growing brand value</p> <p><b>Effective and innovative process</b> - Currently, our only competitor using Blockchain technology to track product movement is The Seam - an organization that does not currently have the technology in place</p> <p><b>Scalable platform</b> - Targeting new users will be seamless through our global reach, API integration, and potential commodities markets</p> <p><b>Product and platform expansion</b> - Once the platform is built, unlimited products and commodities can be easily added and accepted</p> <p><b>Profitability</b> - Under the current business model we would incur low overhead and infrastructure costs give room for profitability</p> <p><b>Representation</b> - Highly respected industry experts have agreed to represent Grainster globally</p> <p><b>Ethicality</b> - Grainster vows to always operate in the interest of the agricultural industry and its farmers with an eye toward sustainability and responsible stewardship practices</p>
<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p>	<p><b>Acceptance rate</b> - Traditional farmers who may wish to continue doing business in the current marketing chain</p> <p><b>Business contracts</b> - We do not currently have business contracts in place to support break-even revenue</p>
<p><b>Opportunity</b></p>	<p><b>Global discussion</b> - There is concern of global food security and traceability moving into the year 2050</p> <p><b>Recognition of imbalanced marketing chain</b> - Rising demand for alternative grain marketing practices</p> <p><b>Future mergers and acquisitions</b> - Existing niche marketplaces will help make large advances into other markets starting with liquidity</p>

	<p><b>API integration</b> - We will target existing 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Farm Management Software Providers to onboard large groups of new users rapidly</p> <p><b>Fertilizer market</b> - Revolutionary strides are being made in fertilizer processes and production, even as native soils suffer seemingly irreversible consequences of overproduction and climate change. Grainster remains diligent to these issues, as with others, and is actively pursuing partnerships to help address them in sustainable, ecologically-responsible ways.</p> <p><b>Consumer trends</b> - Organic, Non-GMO, and healthy living trends will drive demand for specialized products</p>
<b>Threats</b>	<p><b>Aggressive software competition</b> - As traditional practices evolve and go digital, AgTech companies will be fighting for space in an emerging market</p> <p><b>Traditional competition (ABCD)</b> - These existing companies are powerful and well-funded, potentially capable of creating a similar platform</p>

## Financial Projections

Grainster’s business plan is to develop a secure, comprehensive trading platform which will reduce the costs associated with grains trading, provide cost effective logistics, and valuable industry data. The Company will market its services to grains farmers and buyers.

The Company will charge a 3% transaction fee (applied to the gross buy/sell price) 0.5% for logistics agency, 2% as a logistics broker and 12% fulfillment services fee. In the future, we will generate additional revenue from farmer focused ad placement on our Grainster social website.

The principal operations of the Company include engineering development costs for service products, communication expense related to online trading, professional services for industry compliance and corporate governance, capital equipment acquisitions, administrative costs, and facilities expenses.

*(Please see the attached financial documents for detailed information)*

## Regulatory Compliance

We are subject to a number of rules and regulations as promulgated by the regulatory agencies in the United States and regulations by certain foreign jurisdictions. Grainster will source its compliance requirements from its in house Chief Counsel, Don Cook.

## PCI Compliance:

Payment Card Industry (PCI) compliance is a complex and ever-evolving subject affecting millions of businesses – acquiring banks, Independent Sales Organizations (ISOs), payment processors, Web hosts, shopping carts, ecommerce and retail merchants, and others who accept electronic payments or provide services to those who do.

## Sarbanes-Oxley

The Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 (often shortened to SOX) is legislation passed by the U.S. Congress to protect shareholders and the general public from accounting errors and fraudulent practices in the enterprise, as well as improve the accuracy of corporate disclosures.

## Email Archiving/Regulatory Compliance

Email archiving is an automated process for preserving and protecting all inbound and outbound email messages (as well as attachments and metadata) so they can be accessed at a later date should the need arise. The benefits of email archiving include the recovery of lost or accidentally deleted emails, accelerated audit response, preservation of the intellectual property contained in business email and its attachments and “eDiscovery” in the case of litigation or internal investigations (what happened when, who said what). Some of the primary compliance requirements driving the need for secure email archiving are (alphabetically):

	Compliance Requirements
Canada	Investment Industry Regulatory Organization of Canada (IDA) 29.7 Mutual Fund Dealers Association (MFDA) <sup>[3]</sup> PIPEDA
Germany	GDPdU
Switzerland	Schweizerische Obligationenrecht, article 962
United Kingdom	British Standards Institution - BS 4783, BS 7799/ISO 17799, BS ISO 15489-1, BSI DISC PD 0008, BSI DISC PD0010, BSI DISC PD0012 Data Protection Act 1998 Freedom of Information Act 2000
United States	FDA Title 21 CFR Part 11 Federal Rules of Civil Procedure (FRCP) Freedom of Information Act Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act HFTA (Hedge Fund Transparency Act) HIPAA Investment Advisors Act NASD Rule 3110 and NYSE Rule 440 Sarbanes-Oxley SB 1386 (Only in California) Securities and Exchange Commission Rule 17a-4 and SEC Rule 17a-3 The USA Patriot Act

Note that many of the compliance regulations require the preservation of “electronic business communications” which consist of not only email, but may include instant messaging, file attachments, Bloomberg Messaging, Reuters Messaging, PIN-to-PIN and SMS text messages, VoIP and other electronic messaging communications used in business.

## Risk Factors

You should carefully consider the risks and uncertainties described below before you decide to buy our stock. While these are the risks and uncertainties that we believe are important for you to consider, you should know that they are not the only ones facing our company and our business. If any of the following risks actually occur, or any other risk or uncertainty arises, such event could materially adversely impact our company, its financial condition, and your investment.

1. There is currently no public market for the company’s stock. An underwriter has not evaluated our stock and there has not been any objective or third-party determination made or relied upon in establishing the offering price.
2. The company is effectively controlled by our principal shareholders and management, which may limit your ability to influence the direction of the company.
3. There is risk in forward-looking statements, including financial projections. Historical financial statements are unaudited. Our company was only recently formed, has no significant track record, and makes no assurance of success or profitability. Also, there is very little operating history from which to assess future performance.
4. This business plan document may not be sufficient for your evaluation of our business or the investment.
5. You will be relying on the judgment of our management regarding our use of proceeds.
6. Our business may be adversely impacted by general economic conditions.
7. Our principal operations are conducted over the public Internet. There is a risk that local or global network failure could have a material impact on the Company’s ability to conduct business. There are also potential threats from computer hackers and predators that can inflict significant damage to the Company’s computer systems and networks. Such threats can also undermine the security of transactions conducted by the Company’s customers. These threats could have a material impact on the Company’s business that may take a substantial amount of time to resolve.
8. The market’s adoption of our product is uncertain and may not develop as fast as management forecasts in this plan document.
9. There is significant competition from larger companies having greater resources than ours.
10. The company’s success is dependent on a single product line.
11. Potential inadequacy of funds. Gross offering proceeds of six million dollars may be realized through this Offering if completed. These funds will be used primarily for the product development expenses allowing the Company to start commercializing its trading platform within six to nine months following the completion of this Offering and to launch adequate multinational marketing and platform utilization training efforts to include Africa, India, the U.K. and select Middle Eastern states in support of platform commercialization. In order for the Company to fund its operations subsequent to the initial commercialization of its trading platform, it will need to raise significantly more money through sales of its securities. In this regard, the Company currently anticipates raising

as much as another \$194 million through the sale of units or other terms, the means of which to be determined by the end of 2018. The exercise of this capital is anticipated to execute in three tranches from late 2018 through 2021. If only a fraction of the anticipated future sales of Units occurs, or if certain assumptions contained in the Business Plan prove to be incorrect, the Company may have inadequate funds to fully develop its business and may need debt financing or other capital investment to fully implement the Company's Business Plan, which additional funding may not be available. Full implementation of the Company's Business Plan depends upon, among other things, the success of this offering of Units in the Company.

12. Our product is regulated, and agencies such as the SEC and USDA may change their policies and impose new regulatory requirements. As a 'financial broker' we are subject to significant litigation risk and potential commodity and securities law liability. If we fail to comply with applicable laws, rules or regulations, we may be subject to censure, fines, cease-and-desist orders, and suspension of our business, removal of personnel or other sanctions.
13. The company's research and development efforts may not be successful and product and service fees may not be come to fruition.
14. We rely on third party manufacturers and suppliers. Delays or problems in manufacturing kiosks could harm our business. Our supply chain partners may not be able to meet the demand for our products.
15. Errors in the company's trading platform could result in significant financial losses for its customers that the company may be responsible for. Any such individual or multiple errors could result in significant damage to the company's financial condition, and even its ability to continue its business.
16. We will need to significantly expand our skilled personnel base and retain those personnel that we do hire. There can be no assurance that we will be successful in recruiting and hiring enough qualified personnel in order to execute our plan. And, there can be no assurance that the qualified personnel we identify will work for the company for the wages that we have forecasted in our financial forecasts.
17. Revenues may not cover operating expenses and there can be no assurance that the company will be profitable as planned, or will be profitable at all.
18. Our targeted market is subject to domestic and international economic and political conditions which are beyond our control, and which could significantly affect our financial condition.
19. We intend to operate in an industry that is heavily regulated and may impose significant costs and competitive burdens on our business that could significantly damage our ability to sell our products, or even cause the company to fail.
20. As a company which is highly dependent of computer internetworking, and as a member of the agriculture food chain, we are at risk of cyber-attacks from terrorists and others, and security risks. Such attacks could have a significant damaging impact on our ability to continue to provide our services.
21. Our clearinghouse operations expose us to substantial credit risk of our third party clearing firms and, consequently, a diminishment in their financial resources could adversely affect us.
22. The company does not have substantial intellectual property rights that would preclude another entity from developing similar product offerings that may be superior to ours. Such development would be detrimental to our ability to market our products.
23. The management of the company may explore the acquisition(s) of other companies in the future. We may not be successful in acquiring companies at favorable prices, and may not be successful in integrating any such completed transactions.



## Meet the Team

The Grainster team is a multifaceted, diverse group of experience and expertise. Each member offers institutional knowledge, depth in their field, and brings not only unique perspective, but a true passion for Grainster's Vision and an understanding of their contribution in executing it. Through their combined efforts and years of sweat equity, this group of driven executives has built Grainster from one man's vision at a rice mill, to an intuitive software platform with a global reach.

### Executive Officers



#### **Layne Fortenberry, Chairman & CEO**

Layne was born in Paragould, AR. His family moved to Greenville, MS early in his life to follow his Father's rice milling career to a mill where Layne eventually took his first job, while still in High School. His involvement in the rice milling industry took an even more involved turn when his family bought a rice mill, going into business for themselves in 1999.

His involvement with the family business garnered valuable skills, allowing him to see both sides of the Industry. He bought rice from the farmers, processed the rice, and then marketed it to end-users. Through this vantage point, Fortenberry saw the need for a new system, sparking the passion to develop Grainster.



#### **Crissy Fortenberry, Vice Chairman**

Crissy is Layne's wife and business partner. For the last several years she and Layne have worked together developing market research on the Grainster concept. Crissy has past experience in Sales, Public Relations, and business operations, not to mention growing up on a Northeast Arkansas soybean and rice farm.



#### **Stephen Gantz, President**

Stephen started his professional career in 1999 with establishment of his first company, a nationwide anesthesia server. Success from the business and investment into equity markets led to working and investing with startup companies; the latest among them being SwarmCloud Nano, a climate mitigation drone research and development project.

He serves as Executive Director to 501(c)3 organization NextPhase Foundation, an organization promoting high tech entrepreneurship and STEAM education through creative programs with an eye toward inclusive program provision and development and as an Advisory Board Member to space-based human behavioral research organization AdvancingX.

Stephen brings to Grainster 17 years of experience both in working with top company executives and in developing companies from the ground up.



#### **Nic Conzemius, Director of Operations**

Conzemius grew up working on the farm in Breckenridge, MN where his family grows corn, soybeans, sugar beets and wheat. He graduated from North Dakota State University in December of 2015 where he earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Economics.

Nic's career in agriculture has allowed him the opportunity to study the industry from the inside out. His experiences working for CHS, Gavilon and Bunge have built his understanding of Agriculture from the farm level to the global supply chain, and molded his vision for reshaping the way agricultural commodities are traded, leading him to Grainster in the summer of 2015.



### **Roger Cunningham, CFO**

Roger brings to Grainster a strong, capable high-energy leadership style, featuring consistent success facilitation, proven strategy, and planning and execution skills. A keen understanding of consumer goods trade, retail and Omni-channel consumer goods operations, resource trade, corporate governance, international finance, vendor sourcing, imports/exports and multinational operations characterize his resume.

As Managing Partner of his consulting firm, Roger's teams have delivered strategy and advisement to over 160 consumer goods clients, including 15 years at Under Armour, the People's Republic of China, Macy's, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the nation of India, REI Sporting Goods, Williams-Sonoma, Ross Stores, CB Richard Ellis, Louis Vuitton, Kmart etc. Having provided strategy and follow through execution to leaders in every US consumer goods sub-vertical, with an average client tenure of 7.5 years, and a client business repeat rate of 78%, a significant portion of US Consumer Trade moves through infrastructure devised and enacted in part by Roger's teams since 1990.

Roger has led startup of over seven personally-owned businesses, not including those assisted in startup with his clients. High retention rates, clear vision and increased profitability are the consistent hallmarks of businesses started and run by Roger Cunningham. Nominated for 2007 Georgia Entrepreneur of the Year by accounting firm Gifford, Hillegass & Ingwersen, Roger is a frequent speaker and is rated as one of 3 top experts in his field by Manhattan Associates. Roger was ranked as well as a top 1% Naval Officer, earning his command qualification as a junior Ensign, and performing in Middle East theatre operations and intelligence activities early in his career in the Navy.



### **Rob Schmidt, CCO**

Robert Schmidt was appointed Chief, Office of Technology Services at the California Department of Technology in September 2015. With his leadership in a span of over 25 years of State IT service, he has been influential in the area of technology-related decisions and changes across internal and external stakeholders statewide, including state departments, boards, and commissions.

Robert was previously Agency Chief Information Officer and Director of Executive Office/IT Services for the California Department of Food & Agriculture. In his prior roles at California Department of Technology and Franchise Tax Board, he developed a reputation for successful execution of large-scale, complex projects and programs.

With a Master of Business Administration from California State University at Sacramento, and Bachelor of Computer Science from California State University at Chico, Rob's academic achievements are a true fusion of business and technology.



### **Travis Taylor, CTO**

Travis is a technology executive with over 20 years of experience in enterprise software development, Software Sales, vendor management, project management and technology management in the financial services industry. Travis has managed software development projects for some of the largest banks in the world in North America, South America, Europe, and Asia. His experience brings mature development practices to build highly scalable and secure global software solutions.



### **Robin Smith, SEVP Africa Initiatives**

Having grown up on a family farm and working for a family-based residential construction business from childhood, Robin can best be characterized by her identification with hard work, conscientious service, an entrepreneurial spirit and cross-functional team building through identification & creative utilization of skill and resource. She started her first independent businesses very early on, rallying siblings and cousins to sell watermelons from a roadside stand at ten years old; then progressed to development and management of a small but successful housekeeping business and a sizable customer base as an independent sales rep for Olympia Sales Club at twelve.

Robin brought these strengths forward into adulthood, honing them into skills through her associations with numerous startups and reorganizations, as well as having worked in virtually every facet of real estate transfer, from legal to sale to title. She has extensive experience in creditor representation foreclosure and bankruptcy, held a REALTOR's license for a number of years, and completely reorganized a Final Title team with a two-year backlog into a standalone Department for a real estate closing company in less than one year.

In addition to serving Grainster as its EVP of Africa Initiatives, Robin sits as CEO/Co-Founder of NextPhase Foundation, a 501(c)3 organization promoting high tech entrepreneurship and STEAM education through creative programs with an eye toward inclusive program provision and development, is Co-Founder of SwarmCloud Nano, a climate mitigation drone research and development project, and serves as an Advisory Board Member to National Graphene Association, an organization bringing together researchers, entrepreneurs and government officials to further the commercialization of graphene and space-based human behavioral research organization AdvancingX.



### **Abhishek Chakrala, EVP India Initiatives**

A former researcher at Indian Space Research Organization and winner in SPACE RACE CHALLENGE 2016, Abhishek received his Master's Degree in Electrical and Computer Engineering from University of Windsor.

Abhishek carried his childhood passion for space into adulthood, and his specific interest in satellite communications led him to participate in various space competitions. He was recipient of Special prize in European Satellite Navigation Competition 2015. His outstanding research work during his bachelors led to his achievement of "Best Research Student Award" from SCSVMV University and "Best Outgoing Student of the Year 2015" from Cognizant Technology Solutions – Chennai. Abhishek specializes in telemetry and tracking, and is Co-Founder of SwarmCloud Nano.

In addition to these assets, Abhishek brings to Grainster a unique and enthusiastic insight into trade and connection to India as the country begins the process of opening up its borders for more empowered trade and compensation.



### **Ambassador Lewis Lucke, EVP Middle East Initiatives**

Ambassador Lewis Lucke is Board Chairman of Fuelie Systems Inc. [www.fueliesystems.com](http://www.fueliesystems.com) that is developing telemetry enabled mobile fueling systems for more effective disaster response and medical evacuations by helicopter. He is also SVP of the Emerging Markets Access Group [www.emaginc.com](http://www.emaginc.com) and Executive Director of Daroke Resources LLC [www.daroke.com](http://www.daroke.com).

Ambassador Lucke has deployed several times for USAID and the Department of State since 2014 on official business—respectively to Jordan, Mauritania and Saudi Arabia and retains his clearances and diplomatic status while on these assignments. In 2010, he served as lead "US Response Coordinator" for the Haiti earthquake, leading the United States' \$1.0 billion emergency relief and recovery effort. Ambassador Lucke was nominated by President George W. Bush and served as US Ambassador to the Kingdom of Swaziland during the Bush Administration. He served for 29 years overseas with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). He was the first USAID Mission Director for Iraq 2002-2004, where he directed a \$4.0 billion reconstruction and economic development program, USAID's largest program ever and the largest reconstruction effort funded by the United States since the Marshall Plan.

Ambassador Lucke is from Austin, Texas, married with three grown children. He received a Bachelor's degree from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill and an MBA from Thunderbird School of Global Management in Arizona.

Mr. Lucke served in the U.S. Foreign Service in ten countries: Mali, Senegal, Costa Rica, Tunisia, Bolivia, Jordan, Haiti, Brazil, Iraq and Swaziland. He was USAID Mission Director in Bolivia, Jordan, Haiti, and Iraq and interim Mission Director in Brazil and Mauritania.

Ambassador Lucke has received USAID's two highest awards, the Administrator's Distinguished Career Award in 2001, and the Agency's award for Heroism in 2004. He was named a Distinguished Alumnus of 2003 from the Thunderbird School of Global Management. He received the Secretary of Defense's Award for Exceptional Public Service in 2004.

Mr. Lucke is fluent in French and Spanish and has a working knowledge of Arabic. He is the author of "Waiting for Rain: Life and Development in Mali, West Africa" published in 2000.



### **Cyril Moreau, EVP, Head of Business Development**

Mr. Moreau is a visionary executive accomplished in designing ground-breaking solutions for global organizations. He is exceptionally well-versed in all aspects of strategic business development with an impressive track record of generating multimillion-dollar sales growth and expanding revenue streams. Decisive, strategic, and results-driven with an extraordinary talent for building channel partnerships and customer loyalty for the long-term. Committed to improving bottom-line profitability.

In 2010, Mr. Moreau founded International Executive Consulting LLC, to serve as interim C-Suite executive for global public/private companies. Provide transformational leadership, change management, and insightful recommendations while consistently exceeding client expectations. Leverage advanced expertise to maximize project opportunities, operations, and revenue streams. Aggressively expand organizations worldwide. He had several Interim CxO assignments and board member positions with public and private companies helping them for their M&A, funding and growth activities domestically and internationally.

Early 2008, Mr. Moreau joined Strategic Thought to overhaul underperforming Global Services organization. Served as board member while running services based in both the United Kingdom and the United States. Created new project methodology and market-right offerings to improve efficiency and grow revenue stream. Ended unprofitable partnerships and opened Latin American/Asian market. Relocated to District of Columbia in order to turn around underperforming finances/operations. He transformed the region and significantly improved productivity and client engagement. He surpassed sales quota for the Americas market by 350% after implementing revolutionary new sales approach.

Prior to this, in early 2006, Mr. Moreau was headhunted to join Thomson Reuters as their International Client Services Director. Optimized financial performance of Client Services organization while hiring/managing 250 technical experts and certified project managers throughout the United Kingdom, Australia, Dubai, and Hong Kong. He forged partnerships in the Middle East. He formulated and spearheaded offshore services strategy, creating new services, implementation methodologies, and support infrastructures

In 2005, Mr. Moreau joined Panacea as an Interim Development and Services Director, Board Member. Designed new business structure and pricing strategy to increase efficiency and market competitiveness. He finalized management buyer process and formulated ISO 900x audit response strategies.

From 2001 to 2005, Mr. Moreau was with Niku Corporation (acquired by CA in 2005) as their Director Global Services EMEA. He combined Customer Support and Professional Services Departments to optimize staffing levels, margins, synergies, and customer satisfaction.



### **Catherine Baker, EVP Human Resources**

Catherine is EVP of Human Resources for Grainster, and is a licensed attorney in Arkansas. She received her Juris Doctor from the University of Arkansas School of Law, and graduated *cum laude* with a Bachelor of Science in Political Science from Arkansas Tech University. She has received numerous academic scholarships and competitive writing awards.

She is a candidate for an LL.M. in Agricultural and Food Law at the University of Arkansas, where she maintains a 3.82 GPA in the program. Her thesis work explores local government regulatory issues under Arkansas' newly adopted Amendment 98 medical marijuana provisions.

She is an Arkansas native with a family farming background, and has always lived in the South. She has managed a law firm, and was an owner/manager of a veterinary specialty clinic. In these capacities she hired and trained employees, managed cashflow, payroll, and benefits and salary offerings, and directly managed credit accounts, payroll taxes, and corporate tax and licensure issues.

She has volunteered as a political County Executive Committee member in Florida, where she chaired and organized fundraising dinners with up to 700 guests. She ran for political office in a county race with 300,000 voters, volunteered in many other campaigns, and served on the Board of Directors of the Humane Society of Sarasota County.



### **Don Cook, Chief Counsel**

Dr. Don Lloyd Cook is currently Chief Counsel for Grainster and NextPhase Foundation. Having served previously as AVP for Data Privacy at Scottrade, with a focus there in building an enterprise-wide privacy program; as Counsel in the Privacy and Technology practice at the law firm of Gill Ragon Owen; as a Director of Privacy at Lunarline, Inc., and at Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. Additionally, he served as the Chief Privacy Officer and General Counsel of Feeva Technology, Inc., an online advertising firm and as a Senior Consultant for Acxiom Corporation, specializing in global privacy and regulatory issues. He is a member of the International Association of Privacy Professionals, the Arkansas Bar Association and the American Bar Association.

Dr. Cook regularly speaks on privacy issues and has authored academic publications relating to marketing, privacy and intellectual property. Dr. Cook has practiced general and appellate law in Arkansas, where he received his JD and MBA degrees from the University of Arkansas. He is licensed in state courts in Arkansas, federal district courts in Arkansas and the Northern District of Oklahoma, the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals and the US Supreme Court, where he successfully opposed a Petition for Writ of Certiorari by the State of Arkansas.

Professional certifications include the CIPP (Certified Information Privacy Professional), CIPP/C (CIPP Canada) CHP (Certified HIPAA Professional) and CHSS (Certified HIPAA Security Specialist). He received his Ph.D. in Marketing from Virginia Tech where his dissertation focused on privacy regulation. While at Virginia Tech, he was selected as the first Virginia Tech Congressional Fellow and was a Legislative Assistant in the office of Congressman Rick Boucher, a co-founder of the Internet Caucus.



### **Will Baker, CAO/Controller**

Will Baker, CPA, received his B.B.A and Masters in Accounting from the University of Central Arkansas and has been employed with Deloitte & Touché, LLP in external audit since 2011. He has served mid-size to large organizations in his current role in industries that include Retail & Distribution, Financial Services and Government/Not for Profit. He currently holds active CPA licenses in Arkansas and Georgia and is a voting member of the American Institute of Public Accountants and the Arkansas State Society of Public Accountants. In addition to his position with Grainster as CPA, Will currently serves as Chief Financial Officer for NextPhase Foundation and serves or has served on Boards of Directors for multiple organizations, including the Women's Shelter of Central Arkansas and Conway Cradle Care.



### **Bill Jacobs, Business Analyst**

Bill has maintained lifelong ties to the agricultural community; including leading the launch of the FFA program at his high school.

His relationship with the agricultural community motivated Bill to earn his bachelor's degree in agricultural business from the University of Arkansas, and later dual Master's degrees in International Agricultural Economics (University of Arkansas) and Rural Development (University of Ghent). This dual master's program was designed to foster closer agricultural relationships between the US and the European Union by fostering long term relationships and knowledge of policies in both regions.

In addition to an extensive understanding of agricultural trade policy in the US and European Union, Bill's academic endeavors have provided invaluable life experience and broad network-building throughout Europe.

Bill is passionate about the importance of improving the agricultural marketing chain both globally and locally. His expertise will help Grainster achieve recognition and growth in Europe by leveraging existing relationships as well as working closely with the academic community.



**Phillip “Pip” Barton, Deputy of Business Development**

Phillip Barton has worked in finance for over three decades in a diverse range of capacities as a serial entrepreneur to a diversified portfolio manager at Fidelity Investments and as a counter-terrorism official at the Office of Intelligence and Analysis at the U.S. Treasury Department. He completed FinCEN training and has held licenses in good standing in the financial advisory and real estate professions. He earned his BA from Yale University with a double major in Economics and Political Science, receiving honors in thesis on paradigm shifts. He received an MBA from Columbia Business School with a major in Finance and Management of Organizations focusing on Innovation Theory. He earned his Chartered Financial Analyst designation in 1989 and has been an advocate for financial integrity, disclosure and stakeholder interest representation.

He brings a depth of experience across financial classes and different financing stages of firms to Grainster. He has traveled the globe widely and lived overseas as an expatriate for Fidelity International. Moreover, he is engaged as an Advisor with a number of early stage companies in the U.S., U.K., Hong Kong, and India involved in business development in Fintech, Frontier Tech and AgTech. He is also a Fellow at the American Center for Democracy and volunteers at a number of worthy charities in Boston.



**Lexie Sisson, Social Media Manager**

Lexie is a double major Junior at University of Central Arkansas, focusing her energies on Graphic Arts and Interior Design with a minor in Business. She is an accomplished Artist, Creative Generalist with NextPhase Foundation and serves as Special Assistant to Rhonda Murphy of Rhonda Murphy Interiors.