



# make it grow

**Successful  
farming:  
Maintenance  
tips.**

**Irrigation  
control:  
Technology  
at its best.**



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**make  
it grow**

Spring 2020  
n° 8

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**Pierce**

# A WORD FROM THE CEO



JOSÉ FERNANDO TOMÁS



A few days ago, my eldest daughter asked me about the sector of the economy AISCO stands in, as a company that manufactures metal structures but whose purpose is none other than to water parcels efficiently all over the world, in order to produce food... and the truth is that the question is a very good one, because even some of the people we deal with, whether they are clients, providers or even shareholders, don't see the answer clearly.

But for all of us who work at AISCO, the answer is clear... so clear that our most important publication, this magazine, has the answer in its name: MAKE IT GROW. Because everything our team of professionals does, and here we include the technicians of all the companies that collaborate with us, have one very obvious objective: Support our farmers in FOOD PRODUCTION. To this end, AISCO is undertaking important projects all over the world, both private and public, collaborating with NGOs

***AISCO is undertaking important projects all over the world, collaborating with NGOs and Institutional Funds, with the objective of increasing world food production.***

and Institutional Funds, with the objective of increasing world food production. One of the projects we have set in motion is a marvelous and ambitious initiative, consisting of an assistance program in certain countries, under which food production centers are installed (initially we are focusing on milk and meat) to improve the diet of our children and young people of school age. This scheme, entitled **Smiles For Africa**, consists of installing milk and meat production centers, employing our efficient

irrigation systems (Western and Pierce) and the best control and monitoring systems of the whole range (iControl Remote and iControl Total), on land close to urban centers where the schools and other educational centers do not have access to fresh milk and meat. The objectives of this program are manifold: Improve the diet of children of school age; encourage pupils to attend their schools; foster greater interest in the school subjects and enhance learning. And think of the consequences of attaining these, such as reducing poverty by improving the local economy, improving the human capital and reducing the risk of armed conflicts by fostering social harmony.



With this modest role, AISCO wants to contribute to the real challenge society has to tackle this century: Increase the production of food, reduce hunger and attain the Food Security each country should envisage as its principal objective.

But to make our dream a reality, years of hard work still lie in store for us. And in the meantime, I can be confident that AISCO will continue offering our best advice through our Project Engineering department, supporting execution with our Project Managers, furnishing the best agricultural and irrigation equipment, guaranteeing the best possible installation and maintenance of our machines, either directly or through our network of distributors, companies and partners. In short, **lifetime solutions....**



# Irrigating Mexico by the hands of Francisco Guerrero.



Mexico has the sixth largest irrigated area with over 6.4 million hectares under irrigation. The Pierce distributor in the central zone, Francisco Guerrero, shares his experience of over 20 years in the irrigation sector and his vision of the future of Mexican agriculture.

*What is your relationship with pivot-type mechanized irrigation?*

I got started 20 years ago with Lockwood pivots, and through Valmont I later met Eduardo Ruiz, and we began to work together. For a variety of circumstances, last year we changed to Pierce. Changes are not easy, although they are always for the better, and in this case it was change due to conviction. Our company AGROCONSULTORES DE RIEGO is based in Tlaxcala, which is a small zone in terms of area, although with good opportunities for irrigation. We are dedicated to distributing pivots, supplying spare parts and giving services to all kinds of systems and brands.

*Those clients you worked with before and who have followed you with Pierce - do they note any difference in the irrigation systems?*

What clients seek is assurance and service, so once you offer both of these and the machine is in a high-quality segment, they raise no objections. Evidently, each brand is different, each one has its own strong and weak points, but the client takes these differences on board as natural. Recently, we supplied a movable Pierce unit, and for me, it is the best trolley I have installed in my whole career. The same has happened to us with the linear trolley. We are very content with the Pierce products.

*Do you sell any other type of agricultural machinery?*

We work only in the irrigation sector, principally with pivots, although due to how small the holdings are, it isn't always possible to install these, and so we complement our activity by installing other irrigation options. In the past we installed a lot of drip and sprinkler systems, and currently we also install coverage in the corners of the pivots left unwatered, on small parcels or irregularly-shaped ones.

*Apart from selling and installing irrigation machinery, what other services do you offer your clients?*

We carry out the complete irrigation project cycle. We start by visiting the field, survey the land and collect all the information about the sources of water, energy and agronomic needs... We continue with the desk phase, processing the information and doing analysis and consultancy work. As a result, we present several proposals to the client to give them a choice and so they can choose the option best fitting their needs.

*What type of irrigation machines are most widely used in central Mexico?*

In our zone, fixed central pivots are very common, although some movable ones too. Systems moving straight aren't used so much, because of the average parcel size. Here, the typical pivot has four or five spans, though it is also common to find bigger ones, and even small pivots watering the corners around bigger ones.



**We start by visiting the field, survey the land and collect all the information about the sources of water.**

*Is the farmer in your zone aware of pivots or have they never come across these systems?*

In this zone where we are, the farmer has experience with irrigation for more than 40 years. That's why we're at a very interesting moment for replacement. We also want to work in new zones and expand our perimeter for action.

*What is the water source?*

The water is got from wells, and it's of very good quality because it's the seepage from the snow on the highest mountains in the country. The zone is closed, and you can't drill new wells, but it is possible to replace wells already conceded.

*What are the crops mostly sown here?*

We are in a zone which is basically grains, legumes, barley and wheat, and there are three major breweries around here. As crops under irrigation we find: barley, wheat, corn, amaranth, potato,

vegetables-carrots, broccoli and onions mainly. Product is fairly intensive, and the pivots water around 3000 hours per year, which requires constant maintenance and service by irrigation companies. We take this opportunity to offer the best service and supply the spare parts our customers demand.



*Are your customers brand-loyal or do they look for other things in pivot systems?*

Until recently, American brands sold three quarters of the pivots bought in the country. The mentality is changing, and it has happened just as in other sectors like automobiles. Before, the Mexican consumer was addicted to buying everything that came from the US, even if it cost more. Now, the consumer is looking for machinery that can do the job, has a good cost-benefit relationship and which accomplishes the work plan with the team, and it doesn't matter now whether it's blue, red or yellow. This is combined with the fact that there is a change to a type of service agriculture. You have to remember too that the client does not belong to the brand - rather, the relationship is with the dealer. I have clients who have followed me, whatever the brand I am working with, they trust me and my duty is not do disappoint them.

*How is agricultural activity distributed in the country?*

In Mexico there are ejidatarios, smallholder farmers who got land grants from the government in the past, but with very tiny areas, no more than one hectare, and only useful for auto-consumption, without considering agriculture as a business. There is also the medium-size owner, who leases out parts of their holding, and the large landowner, located mainly in the north of the country, even though two thirds of the water is in the southern part and one third in the north. There is also a lot of foreign investment from Latin American countries and the US, who lease or buy land in Mexico.

**6.4**  
million  
hectares  
under  
irrigation

*Is the Mexican farmer very technology-minded?*

Up to now there wasn't much interest in technology, as the farmer didn't need it and the majority of holdings had few machines installed. Over the last few years, we're

**“we want to grow with Pierce.”**

seeing a change in trend, and the farmer who needs and can afford new technology is investing in it.

*To finish, what are the future prospects with Pierce?*

Prospects are good, but I see them more in the medium-long term as the country is immersed in a major recession. We want to grow with Pierce step by step, and the path has started already.



# SUCCESSFUL FARMING: MAINTENANCE TIPS

*The maintenance and revision operations are necessary for the proper operation of your pivot during the irrigation season. To keep your pivot working properly in terms of safety, performance and durability will increase the life of your system.*

**WHEN SHOULD MAINTENANCE BE PERFORMED EXPERT'S ADVICE**

The content and frequency of the revisions depend on the hours of use and the age of the machine. Maintenance also depends on the type of water and the geographical area.

If you answer 'yes' to one of more of the following special conditions of use, it will be necessary to perform enhanced maintenance:

- The pH of the water is outside the normal limits.
- The water used for irrigation contains grit or residues.
- Torrential rain is normal.
- The ground is clayey.

**MANTENACE PRIOR TO EACH IRRIGATION SEASON**

This is the most important regular revision because it has a high preventive value and, performed correctly and at the right moment, it will prevent technical problems from arising at the most inconvenient times such as in the middle of the irrigation season.

Please contact to your Western distributor who will indicate the best moment for your machine and area, and propose the procedures to follow.








**DURING THE IRRIGATION SEASON**

In addition to the proper revision at the start of the irrigation season, the user should verify that the equipment is working correctly during that season and be alert to resolving any problem that could arise.

In particular, it is very important to verify the irrigation conditions in relation to the pressure available in the equipment and the flow being applied, as well as the presence and proper operation of all the sprinklers. Defective application of irrigation water might not become apparent until the moment of harvest, when it would be too late to do anything about it.



*Recommendations for maintenance:*

 <p><b>Electrical</b></p> <p>The ground connection must be correctly installed.</p> <p>Verify the machine voltage and the connections of the electrical boxes and terminal blocks of the control panel.</p>	 <p><b>Structure</b></p> <p>Check the alignment of the machine regularly.</p> <p>Traverse the pivot structure as a matter of routine: spans, overhangs and towers, and review the condition and tightness of bolts and nuts.</p>	 <p><b>Sprinkler package</b></p> <p>Verify the irrigation conditions in relation to the pressure available in the equipment and the flow being applied.</p> <p>Verify there are no leaks.</p>
 <p><b>Oil levels</b></p> <p>Review the oil level in the gearboxes and gear motors regularly, and top up when necessary.</p>	 <p><b>Lubricants</b></p> <p>Use a lubricant of type which meets the requirements recommended by the manufacturer.</p>	 <p><b>Greasing</b></p> <p>Revise, and grease when necessary, the swivel elbow, the collector ring and the oil seals of the tower gearboxes. Use waterproof grease.</p>
 <p><b>Tires</b></p> <p>If the tire pressure is very low, the tires will lose height and could burst. Check the tire pressure and tightness of the lugs frequently.</p>	 <p><b>Cleaning</b></p> <p>The principal pipes of the pivot should be flushed clean of grit and residues regularly.</p>	 <p><b>Safety</b></p> <p>Safety, all the safety measures should be reviewed regularly, and replaced whenever necessary.</p>

*Any work on the machine must be performed exclusively by qualified technicians and with the machine off and disconnected.*

*Given that your pivot cannot be stored in a barn like all other equipment, there is a series of recommendations which will leave you prepared for the start of the following season.*

**Parking the machine**

- Search for flat areas to park the pivot, endeavoring not to leave it on slopes.
- If there are livestock, put an electric fence or some other kind of protection around the pivot.
- Avoid parking the pivot next to public roads or in view. This will prevent your machine becoming an object of amusement for third parties.
- In places with major changes of temperature, disconnect the machine at the couplings to allow the metal to contract.
- Park the pivot in the direction of the

prevailing wind. This will reduce the area of contact between wind and machine. In zones of strong winds, moor the pivot to the ground.

- Do not park it upon its own tracks. In zones with major changes of temperature, the metal will expand and contract. If it were to freeze upon its own tracks and be left immobile, the contraction could damage the structure.
- If these changes are extreme, it is recommended to let machines more than 400 meters long run some 40 or 50 meters once a month to release stresses in the pipework.



**Preparation of the machine:**

Disconnect all the switches of the system. Make sure that the switches of the electrical boxes are in the “off” position.

- **Clean the pipework interior of grit and residues. Open all the drains and allow water to run continuously through the whole pivot. Afterwards drain the pivot completely: pipework, drops, overhang, end gun, etc. On finishing, close all the drains again.**
- **To prevent freezing, make sure you have let all the water out of the pipework.**
- **To prevent the entrance of rodents or insects, make sure you cover or close every aperture of the system.**
- **Gather up all the exposed cables and store them away.**
- **Check and top up the lubricant levels of the motors and gearboxes.**
- **Grease the swivel elbow liberally. For movable ones, grease the gearbox liberally.**
- **Check that the lugs of the wheels are at the right torque.**



**iControlExpert.com**

# Irrigation control: Technology at its best.

iControl

*The journey hasn't finished yet. In the past decade, farmers and business owners never realized that they would be able to monitor their farms and control irrigation remotely. Operations and other processes, via a smartphone or any other technology that relieved them of the trouble and hardship of relying on traditional assets*

We made all of these things something available to farmers and clients who are looking for modern technology that facilitate irrigation operations to monitor their business and preserve them from damage and loss, and as a challenge to many climatic changes that cause the agricultural crop to be lost.

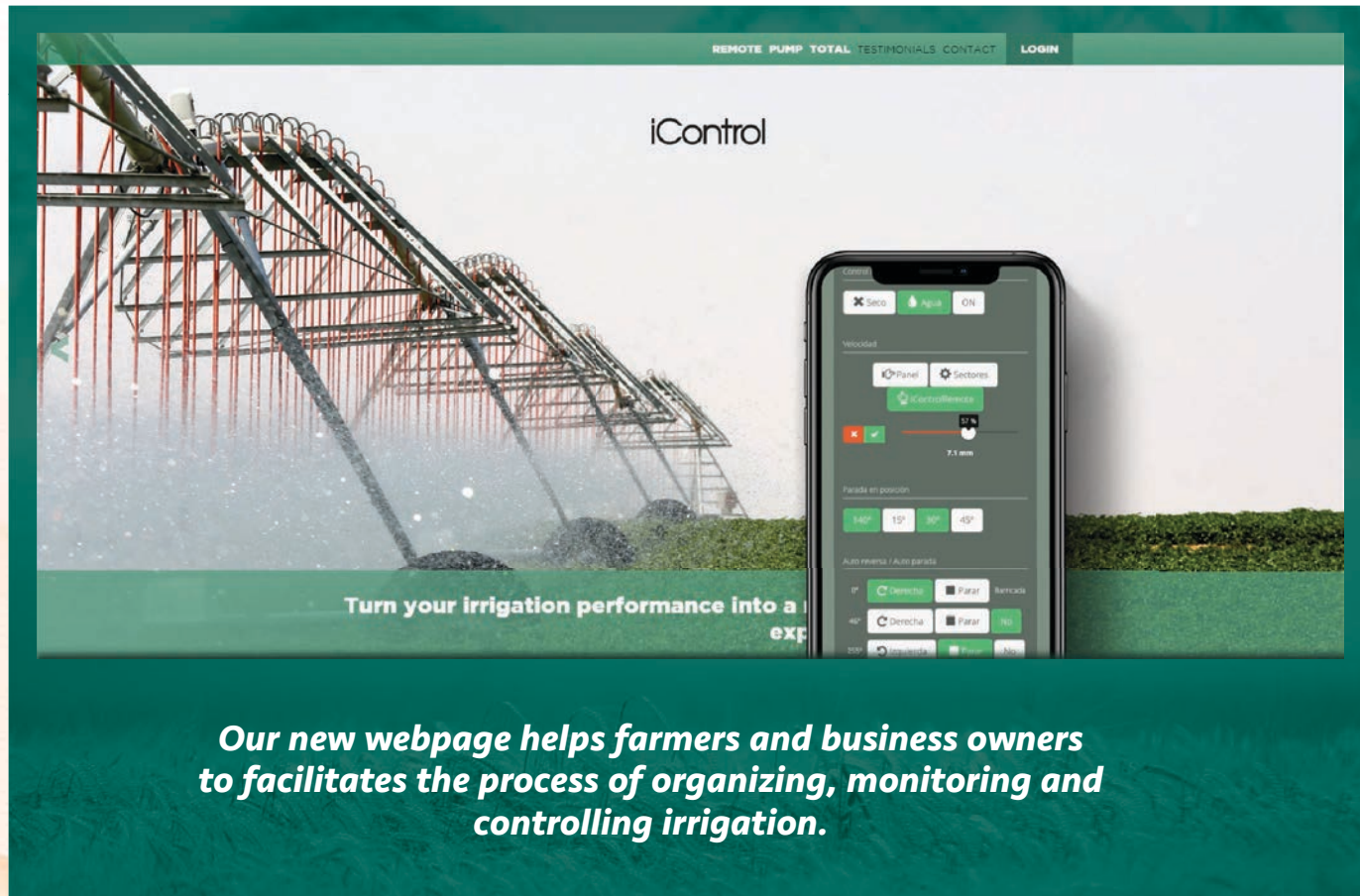
This unique remote irrigation management

product that uses GSM technology to monitor and manage your irrigation systems from just one place which is your mobile phone. You'll be able to find all charts and reports will help you make the good decisions for the maximum productivity of your operations.

In addition to that, our new webpage helps farmers and business owners to facilitates

the process of organizing, monitoring and controlling irrigation. The system works by installing the control device and linking it to pivots, pump, temperature and humidity sensors, and supports connecting to the mobile phone network, the Internet, and controlling and following up operations through smart phones. This offers to our clients' multiple advantages and facilitate a lot of time, effort and money.





Our new webpage helps farmers and business owners to facilitates the process of organizing, monitoring and controlling irrigation.



## iControl Remote

You can find on our new webpage all data and information about of **iControlRemote** which is a state-of-art technology designed to easily manage your irrigation systems remotely, without changing your existing control panel, thus users of iControlRemote.com can login though the web to the new platform. So the website allows you to simultaneously control and manage your irrigation systems remotely. **iControlRemote** displays your historical operations in a graphic format to help you easily visualize the status of your irrigation systems during the growing season.

## iControl Pump

Another tool is the **iControlPump** which is the automation and remote management tool for pumping that lets you manage your system from any computer, tablet or mobile phone. It makes you manage and program the pumping and irrigation processes in a centralized, remote way for all your property from anywhere in the world. It's a well-known as problem-free connection between the pumping process and the solenoid valves even on irregular land or where there is no mobile telephone coverage. The wireless solenoid valve control modules make installing and removing the system easier and faster.

## iControl Total

The third tool is the **iControlTotal** which is a remote management and automation tool for pumps, solid set, drip and pivots using a PC, tablet or smartphone connected to the Internet. It will help in improving your profits thanks to increased precision control of the frequency and consistency of the irrigation, water, energy usage and reduced labor costs. iControlTotal can also take weather conditions into account to help you make the best irrigation decisions. It's also a multifunctional product custom-designed according to each field's needs thanks to the expansive available features catalog.



*“iControlExpert.com is your perfect choice for future irrigation processes.”*

It is need to put in our consideration many factors, such as we offer 24/7 support for a comfort and easy experience and for safety and security so we are welcoming all feedback and reviews about our new technology; also, you will get an alert whenever an unauthorized person enters your premises.

Our new webpage came after many researches and consideration to every single user experience that make your journey easy and offer you the utmost comfort in management and control at home.

**iControlExpert.com** is your perfect choice for future irrigation processes.



# Hidroconta:

## Managing and monitoring water resources

Asexhaustivemonitoringandmanagement of the hydrological resources distributed around the planet is a fundamental need, Hidroconta has developed precise measuring equipment to get the very most out of the available water.

Hidroconta is a Spanish company with over thirty years' experience which has evolved constantly over the decades, to adapt to client needs and embark on incorporating new technologies into its

of its revenue comes from overseas, from South and Central America to Southeast Asia and the Arabian Peninsula, without overlookingits commercial expansion into the northern part of Africa with the recent opening of a site in Rabat (Morocco).

As a pioneer in manufacturing products which foster the efficient use of water, Hidroconta assesses each productive process and conducts exhaustive tests and studies of every one of the products it launches onto the market.

Hidroconta possesses the capacity to adapt its products to the needs of the consumer, as could well be the case of the synergy with Alkhorayef Group in Saudi Arabia, and the need of the latter's clients to reckon the water supplied to large irrigated holdings. Meeting this need means, simply, that they can continue growing on their land. The aim of this

endeavor is to protect the environment in a country with very limited water resources.

Hidroconta and Alkhorayef have introduced economical and effective remote flow metering systems in the province of Al Jouf. By employing electromagnetic flowmeters and autonomous GPRS telecontrol terminals, they can successfully monitor the

extractions of water from the aquifers, with the information available anywhere in the world over internet and updated in real time.

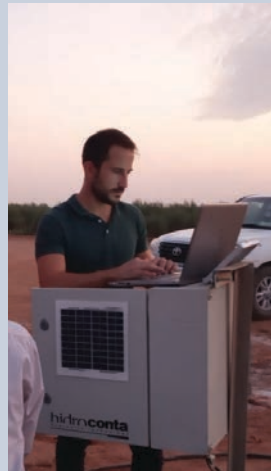
To be able to offer a comprehensive service for the proper working of the hydraulic

*“The company is a player on the international market.”*

installations, Hidroconta can call on a technical team made up of engineers specializing in the topic, thus facilitating the first application of the products for our clients.

Another aspect important to the company is conveying know-how to its clients, offering an added value which facilitates feedback, with the constant objective of advancing the development of new products that create value for our clients, as well as offering the user the tools indispensable for the proper action in critical situations.

Positive customer experience, the versatility of our products and rapid response by our team are the keystones for us to continue advancing and meeting our targets.

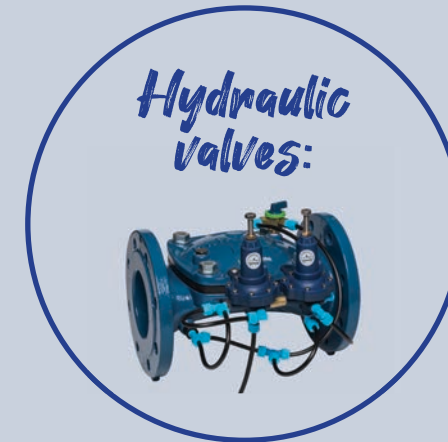


## Among the key products in the Hidroconta portfolio are:



The indispensable asset for monitoring the fundamental resource of water. Knowing how much is consumed helps to rein in excesses and establish consumption per user. Hidroconta has meters with calibers from DN 15 mm to over DN 6000 mm available for several measuring technologies (mechanical, ultrasonic and electromagnetic).

*“Hidroconta and Alkhorayef have introduced economical and effective remote flow metering systems.”*



As important for accounting for the resource as for controlling it to avoid waste and conflicts in the distribution network. The Spanish company Hidroconta has a wide range of hydraulic valves to meet any kind of need, including pressure reducers and limiters, flow stabilizers and accelerators, and level valves.



As we commented earlier, Hidroconta has evolved by adapting new technologies to its products, one outcome of which is Demeter, a telemanagement system able to monitor and manage thousands of hectares and adaptable to any type of terrain, with different communication systems (GPRS or radio). The system consists of remote units that send their signals to a server with a web platform where it is possible to view the status of the network equipment, as well as carry out actions on it, program irrigation cycles and raise consumption alarms, among other functionality.



*HIDROCONTA. WHEN WATER COUNTS.*

[www.hidroconta.com](http://www.hidroconta.com)

# EVENTS

## EXPOPAPA

We start the international fair season with the participation of Pierce Corporation in the “Seventeenth National Potato Congress” held in Mexico in November. The Mexican National Potato Producer Confederation (CONPAPA) organizes this annual event to inform and support the producers of potatoes in Mexico. The general manager of Pierce Corporation, Mr. Eduardo Ruíz, and his technical sales team, gave an interesting talk on the importance of efficient irrigation to this crop. In parallel with the technical sessions, field demonstrations and visits to stands in the complex were organized. The Pierce team attended to the numerous visitors who came to their stand to learn the latest about irrigation systems and telecontrol.

**Congratulations to the entire team for the magnificent event!**



## AGRITECHNICA



Once again this year, Western participated in the Agritechnica fair in Hanover, Germany. This fair continues to be a benchmark in the agricultural machinery sector, a fact confirmed by the participation of 2750 companies from 51 countries, and 447,000 visitors. The full team received visits from numerous collaborators and has established interesting contacts with potential clients and distributors. On another tack, our Product Manager, Mr. Regis Simier, organized several informational sessions on the new iControlRemote functionality using its online platform. Nine very intensive days which finished with a highly positive overall balance.

**See you at Agritechnica 2021!!**

## AI SHOW



During the month of December, the AI Show took place in Las Vegas. All the international manufacturers and installers from the irrigation sector got together there. The Pierce team could not miss this important date, and attended as an exhibitor from December 2 to 6. This gathering continues to be a key meeting-point for the manufacturers and distributors of all kinds of irrigation equipment and the associated technology. Our colleagues at Pierce received numerous visitors to their stand who were interested in discovering the new iControlStandard and iControlRemote products. Thank you to all for your visit, and see you again next time at San Antonio 2020.



## AIS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

We conclude this hectic year 2019 with the AIS Annual General Meeting at the Group’s headquarters in Saudi Arabia. Once again, the general managers of the Business Units of the division, together with the managers of the Service Units, met under the chairmanship of the CEO of AIC, Mr. Mohammad Basem A. Tohmeh, and Mr. José Fernando Tomás, CEO of AIS. Over two intensive days, the results for fiscal year 2019 were presented, and the corporate objectives and strategies to be pursued in 2020 were reviewed. To conclude the event, Mr. Abdullah I. Alkhorayef had the kindness to organize a teambuilding session for everyone present, which concluded in some emotional closing words at sunset. Unquestionably the best way to round off a year loaded with challenges and successes. **Many thanks, Mr. Alkhorayef!**

## TECHNICAL SEMINARS

### Western

What better way to welcome the year 2020 than by organizing a technical seminar for the distributors of Europe and Ukraine. During the second week of February, technicians specializing in the electrical operation of pivots, from Romania, Hungary, Ukraine, Portugal and Spain met up in the south of Spain to attend a theoretical-practical seminar given by the senior technicians of AISCO EUROPE. The meeting was divided into theoretical sessions, followed by practical workshops and field visits to see the concepts previously learned in situ. These were three days of deep learning for everyone present. The team closed the training with a visit to a historic vineyard in the area and attended a dinner show typical of southern Spain. We hope that everyone there found this seminar useful and that it will help them to give quality service to all the clients who trust in the Western brand.

### Pierce

And we continue to talk of seminars, but this time of the Pierce team in the US, which organized technical training for its US, Mexican and Canadian distributors. The sessions delved deeply into the electrical operation of pivot and linear systems, as well as the iControlRemote remote control system. In addition, the team gave specific training on the application of water and calculating sprinkler packages, supported by a major provider from the sector. Those who were there have expressed their satisfaction for having taken part and thanked the whole Pierce team for the

wonderful initiative and organization of this event. **Congratulations to the Pierce team!!**



### Background

Frederik Nel is joining the Alkhorayef Industries as a Regional Manager in Region-2. He is a South African living near Cape Town, South Africa with his French-Canadian wife, Claudie with their two small children.

Frederik grew up on an irrigation farm, in the Northern Cape Province, on the banks of the Vaal River. The Vaalriver feeds the Vaalharts Irrigation Scheme, the largest irrigation scheme in South Africa, from a canal close to where Frederik lived as a child. Centre pivots irrigation is the main form of irrigation in the area and also on the farm where he lived as a child. As this is a low rainfall area irrigation is the only method for farmers to grow crops. Pivots have been in this area since the late 1970s and this have been an important pivot market for a long time. The largest dealers of two American pivot brands are in this area and also two South African pivot manufacturers.

### Experience in the irrigation sector

While completing his M.Sc. Agric at the University of the Free State, in South Africa. He worked as a research assistant at the university as part of a research group working on irrigation research. It is through this research that he ended up in the irrigation industry.

After this experience in research he worked with an irrigation contractor and later in irrigation sales in the United Arab Emirates. From there he moved on that he worked with 4Points Solutions, a company for agriculture projects in Iraq.

In the beginning of 2010, Frederik moved to Abu Dhabi, where he was Head of the Irrigation Unit of the then newly established, Abu Dhabi Farmers' Services Centre. In January 2016 he and his family relocated from Abu Dhabi to South Africa. From 2016 to 2019, Frederik was the Commercial Manager. Sales and Marketing with an American centre pivot manufacturer, based in their Cape Town offices.

### Prospects for the Africa market

Frederik is truly excited about the African market. "Africa has a great potential for growth in our industry. To fully utilise this potential market, we need to expand our dealer network. Expanding the dealer network, training dealers and marketing Alkhorayef's pivots are the main focus at the moment.

### An anecdote

Frederik enjoys his involvement with the irrigation industries. "I am lucky to be in the irrigation industry where we see many interesting and remote places. With the phone calls with dealers in other countries and with Dr Khaled Shalabi, our 4-year-old girl said the other day: 'one day when I am big, I am also going to work in the country called Khaled, like papa."



We are pleased to announce that our international distribution network has incorporated two new members: **IMPER REGAS** and **BRAZAFRIC**.

**IMPER REGAS**, founded by José Alexandre Da Silva Caeiro in 1996, is a leader in the irrigation sector in Portugal. Quality, innovation and professionalism are the foundations which have led Imper Regas to become consolidated in the local market and expand internationally.

According to Daniel Fernández, General Manager of AISCO Europe, "We are confident that this will be a successful union for both parties. Our companies are at a similar point of development, which means that we share objectives and ambitions".



**BRAZAFRIC ENTERPRICES** has more than 22 years' experience in supporting the agribusiness sector in Eastern Africa, doing installation of agribusiness machinery and equipment. The company offers outstanding after sales support and prevention maintenance, supply of original spare parts. The BrazAfrica Group CEO, Marcos R.G. Brandalise and Khaled Shalabi, AIS Africa General Manager, had the opportunity to meet and discuss about the future of the strategic alliance between both companies.

*We welcome to Imper Regas and BrazAfrica teams to the family!*



<https://imperregas.pt>



<https://brazafricenterprises.com>

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