

Next Generation Ag Executive Interview questions for John W. Miller, President & CEO, Miller St. Nazianz, Inc.

1. What different types of crop spraying machinery are currently available on the market?

There are two primary types of traditional field sprayers: pull-type sprayers that are towed by a tractor, and self propelled sprayers.

As farm sizes have increased and timely spray applications have become more critical, pull-type sprayers are giving way to highly productive, faster, and more versatile self propelled sprayers.

In turn, there are two primary kinds of self propelled field sprayers: four wheel hydrostatic drive, and mechanical drive sprayers, of which Miller offers both versions in our Nitro and Condor Series.

2. What factors should customers take into consideration when selecting spray application machinery?

Customers should consider whether the sprayer has the technology, features, and productive capabilities to meet their operation's needs for the next five years.

It's a common mistake to opt for less sprayer that's "good enough" today, but may not meet the needs of a growing operation within the next few years. If a sprayer does not meet your productivity requirements, it could end up costing you more in the long run.

Other important factors include operator comfort, boom width, tank size, horse power, required crop clearance, annual operating costs, product reliability, and the dealer support network. Careful consideration of all these factors up front will help ensure you are able to maximize your productivity with the right sprayer for many years to come.

3. What new innovations have been introduced to improve spray application machinery?

Innovations that ensure non-stop productivity are critical. Sprayers have become larger and more robust, with tanks up to 1,600 gallons and booms as wide as 120 feet. We've developed powerful yet efficient machines boasting up to 365 horse power. Operator comfort is also very important, resulting in more comfortable cabs and improved suspensions.

Other innovations include improved spray nozzle technologies, such as our Spray-Air™ air boom, designed for maximum plant coverage and efficiency. Precision guidance and steering technologies, automatic boom section controls, as well as boom height controls for accurate applications have also revolutionized field spraying. Operators spray more acres with greater accuracy today than at any time in the history of spraying.

4. What are the biggest challenges companies face when it comes to crop spraying?

Canopy penetration, plant coverage, and drift are always challenges. Often, challenges are weather related, narrowing the window of opportunity for effective spraying. Being able to power through deep mud or over rough ground, and effectively spray 1,000 to 2,000 acres per day can mean the difference between a crop reaching its maximum potential, or losing valuable yield to harmful pests.

Another challenge is spraying tall crops at critical growth stages. Often, operators resort to spraying at earlier, less effective stages, or pay for an aerial application, or simply choose not to spray if their sprayer is too low to enter a tall crop. The Nitro Series sprayers, unlike the majors, offer a full 6 feet of clearance, the highest clearance in the industry, enabling operators to make critical late season applications in tall crops like corn.

5. How can Miller St Nazianz's products help to overcome those challenges?

At Miller, we have focused on building productivity into our sprayers, with the horsepower and drive trains necessary to tackle the most extreme field conditions. We are unrivalled in offering the largest tank capacities and the best suspensions in the industry, and offer leading spray technologies and options to maximize your productivity.

Our products include the efficient mechanical drive Condor Series with tanks to 1200 gallons, booms to 120 feet wide, as well as the exclusive Spray-Air™ air boom. Our Nitro Series offers the ultimate in productivity and comfort, with our HydraLink™ suspension, 6 foot ground clearance, full-visibility front mount boom, 365 HP engines, and tanks to 1600 gallons. Your productivity is our business at Miller, and we feel our product line truly reflects that.