

A grayscale photograph of a herd of cattle in a field. In the foreground, several cows are visible, some looking towards the camera. In the background, more cows are scattered across a grassy field under a hazy sky.

# QUICK START GUIDE

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Gardiner Angus Ranch, Ashland, KS

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***Fantastic accomplishment, and thanks to you all!***

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## ***Cow Sense Quick Start Guide***

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Thank you for considering Cow Sense® beef herd management software. We realize that there are several cattle management software products on the market and appreciate the time you have taken to review Cow Sense. You can feel confident in choosing Cow Sense as we have been designing and building software for the beef industry since the mid 1980's. In fact Cow Sense was the first Windows® based herd management program released in 1993, and still the industry leader today! We continue that pioneering leadership today with the release of this most revolutionary next generation of our software...Cow Sense NxGen!

Perhaps at no other time in the history of the beef industry has information management and analysis been more important to the decisions we make, or fail to make, within our operations! As cattlemen ourselves, we understand the demands upon your time, yet it is becoming more and more evident that the key to success in the beef industry today, is in managing these details. Cow Sense from Midwest MicroSystems helps accomplish that by providing you with the easiest to use, yet detailed analysis software solutions for the cow-calf industry. No two cow-calf operations are alike, and your needs for information management tools are specific. That is why the Cow Sense Suite of software allows you to pick and choose from a whole buffet of options and customize Cow Sense to meet your needs.

The purpose of this document is to provide you a basic understanding of how the program works. Refer to the NxGen Video Tutorial series and the NG Guides for more detailed assistance and guidance for full operation. In Trial Mode you can review and experience the powerful reporting capabilities in the Cow Sense Sample Herd. In addition you can even create a herd of your own and enter up to 100 cows and 10 bulls and related progeny (200 total Active animal limit). We don't buy a pickup without a test drive and don't expect you to buy our software without the same opportunity. The Cow Sense Trial Edition provides you that "test drive". This trial provides ten (10) opportunities for you to open and work with Cow Sense so you can decide if this product is right for your operation. These are the only limitations to the Cow Sense Trial Edition. That way you can fully experience the Cowboy Compatible features of the program for yourself. When you decide to buy the program we will provide an activation key to remove this limitation and you can input the balance of your herd.

### **SO, LET'S GET STARTED!**

In order to fully operate Cow Sense, a true Windows® program, you should know how to:

- Use a mouse to navigate in a Windows icon-oriented and drop down menu environment
- Operate the Start Menu and Windows Explorer™.

This *Quick Start Guide* will lead you through the installation procedures for Cow Sense.

## INSTALLATION INSTRUCTIONS

### *Minimum System Requirements*

- Windows XP, Vista, 7, 8, 10 or later.

**Have the serial number found on your installation CD handy.** Please write this number inside the front cover of this guide. You will need it for the last step in the registration process when you purchase and activate Cow Sense. Your serial number entitles you to included support, registered user upgrade prices, and special offers.

If you have downloaded the Trial Edition from the Internet you may have already installed the software and can skip to page 4. However, you may find a review of these installation steps useful.

### *CD Installation*

1. Insert the CD into your CD-ROM drive (usually drive D).

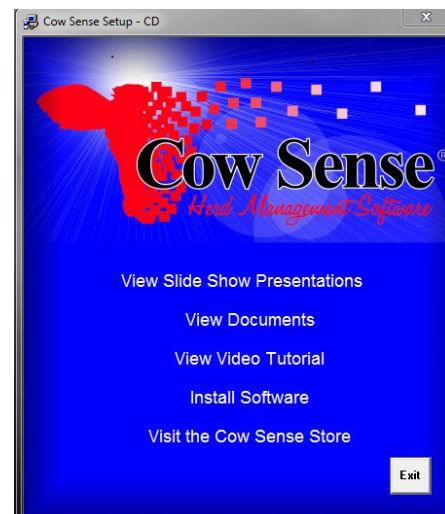
2. Wait a few seconds, and Cow Sense AutoPlay should appear. Select Run setup.exe. If Setup **does not** launch, open “My Computer” select the CD drive in which you placed the Cow Sense CD, and run Setup.



3. The first **Cow Sense Setup** window will appear giving you options to view slide show presentations, view documents (which include this Quick Start Guide), view Video Tutorial, Install Software and Visit the Cow Sense Store. The slide shows included on the CD are industry focused presentations. The documents included range from User's Guides to past Newsletters.

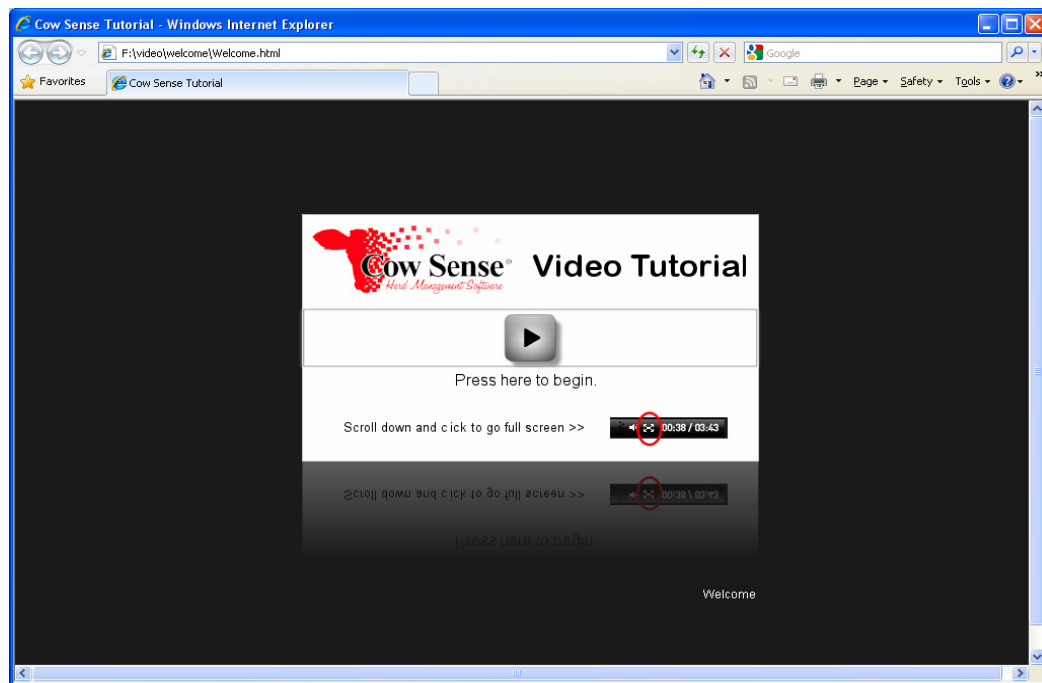
You can choose the Video Tutorials to get a self Guided tour on how to put Cow Sense to work for you.

### *The Cow Sense Video Tutorials*



Cow Sense comes with a series of video tutorials to guide you through basic operation of this powerful management tool. This approach gives you the opportunity to watch these instructional demonstrations and learn how to navigate, enter data and create reports from Cow Sense. We understand our customers and know some of you like hands-on guidance for using computers and software. Sometimes you may simply wish you could have someone show you how to do things.

*...The Cow Sense Video Tutorials provide that experience!*



*That's where the Cow Sense Tutorial enters the picture.* These videos contain the basics of running our software. Each video contains audio and visual instructions providing interactive learning experiences to help you get the very most from your Cow Sense investment. Pick and choose what interests you one video at a time as you need them, or view the whole video library for a complete overview.

*You watch as the instructor shows and tells you what functions they are demonstrating... and WHY.* Regardless if you are a novice user searching for help with basic Cow Sense functions or a long time user who wants a review of functions used infrequently, the **Tutorials provide a tool to see and learn how stuff works!** The Cow Sense Video Tutorials allow you to take control of your own learning experience at your own pace... play, pause, practice, rewind and replay as much as you like! And it's available to you 24-7, whenever you need it! If you would prefer to read through instructions and follow along as you work, the video script notes are available as well. Access the Video Tutorial and Tutorial Script Notes at any time from the Cow Sense Help Menu, or online at <http://www.midwestmicro.com/ng/tutorial.htm>.

### **Which Cow Sense Version is Right for You?**

Different versions of Cow Sense are tailored to different types of herd management needs. As cattlemen ourselves, we realize no two operations are alike. Therefore you can choose which program matches your operation and customize it to fit your management needs.

With Cow Sense NxGen we have consolidated the features available in previous Cow Sense products. The Cow Sense NxGen offering consists of just two core products EZ and PRO. Each offer features from which you can pick and choose based upon the level of detail you want your herd records to provide.

In addition, your herd size and the number of herds you wish to maintain will be a consideration. EZ-100 and PRO-100 are designed for operations that have 100 head or less

of active breeding cows in the herd. There is no restriction to herd size or number of herd files with either the standard EZ or PRO products.

**Cow Sense EZ** as the name implies is extremely easy to use and designed for the commercial cow-calf operation that has basic record keeping requirements for their cow herds. You design how you want the program to appear and how you wish to use it! It has standard fields for data entry and reporting. You choose which of these fields are relevant to your operation to use and display and which ones to turn off and hide.

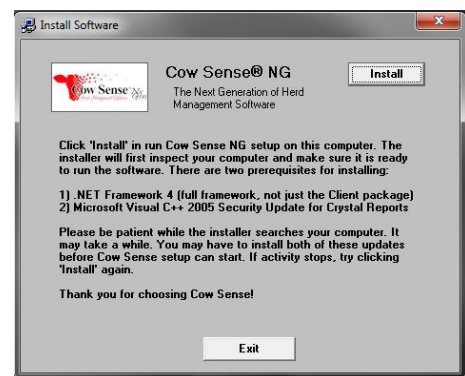
**Cow Sense PRO** is intended for seed stock as well as commercial cow herds that require more detailed features. This version offers extensive capability to create custom fields, dropdowns and validations. In addition it adds the ability to record historical animal performance measures as well as fields for feedlot, harvest (carcass), embryo transfer, full extended pedigree, as well as cow and calf EPDs to name but a few. Fields for recording bull EPDs are available in all modes. Pro also provides included tools for data exchange with industry partners and/or breed Associations.

## Cow Sense Installation

*For a faster trouble free install, it is advisable to temporarily disable your Anti-virus software.*

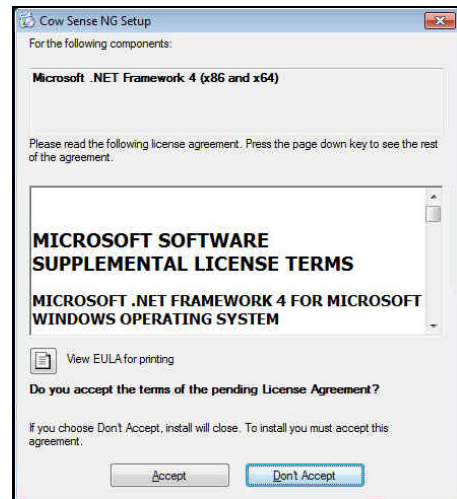
## Installation Instructions- CD Installation

1. Now **Choose Install Software** to demo the Cow Sense Program or to activate your Cow Sense Program from the Cow Sense setup panel display.
2. After choosing to Install Software, the **Install Software** window will appear. Select the **Install button**. Be patient as we check your computer to determine if it has all the most recent resources required to successfully run Cow Sense





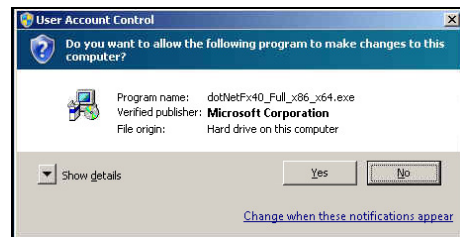
3. If your computer doesn't already have the Microsoft .NET Framework installed, you will see message to install Microsoft .NET framework. This must be installed for Cow Sense NG to work properly. Click the **Accept** button to continue.



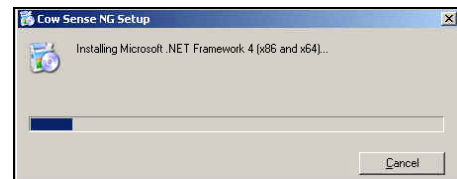
4. The required files will be copied to your computer.



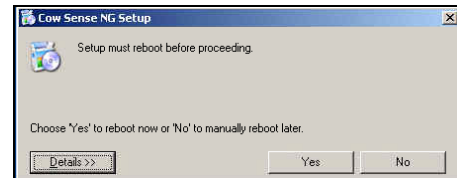
5. Allow your computer to install the program: dotNetFx40\_Full\_x86\_x64.exe file. Click **Yes** or **Allow** on any security prompts.



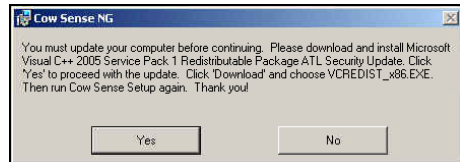
6. The Microsoft .NET Framework will begin installing.



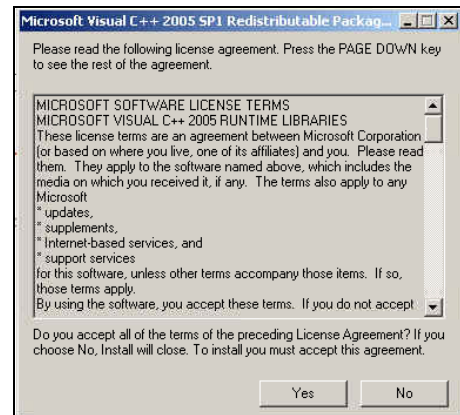
7. After the install has completed, you will be asked to reboot your computer. Click **Yes** to reboot your computer.



8. After your computer has restarted, you will see a message asking you to install Visual C++ if your computer does not already have this installed. **Take note of the file you are required to download (vcredist\_x86.exe).** Click **Yes** to continue.



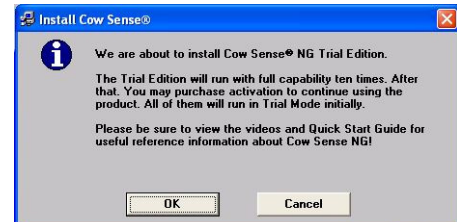
9. Click **Yes** on the Visual C++ Agreement window. **Allow** any security prompts.



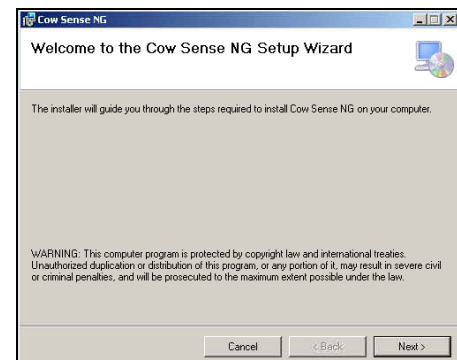
10. Go back to install screen and click 'Install' again.



11. The Install Cow Sense screen will appear. Choose "OK", and the Windows Installer will launch and bring up the NG Setup Wizard.

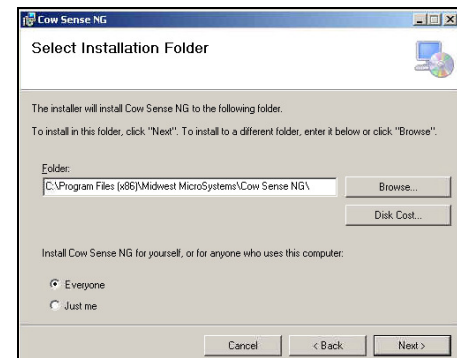


12. The "Welcome to the Cow Sense NG Setup Wizard" screen will open on your computer.



13. Click the **Next** button.

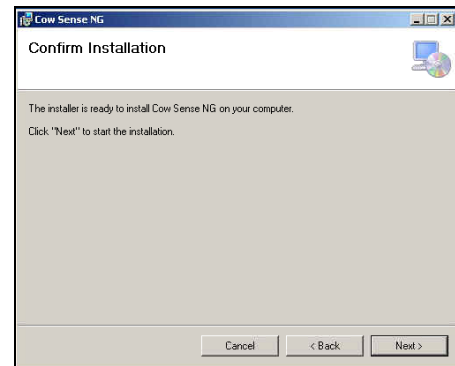
14. Next, the installer will ask where you want to install Cow Sense NG. Unless you are using a network, typically the default installation path works great. If you'd like to install Cow Sense NG to a different path or folder, click the **Browse** button.



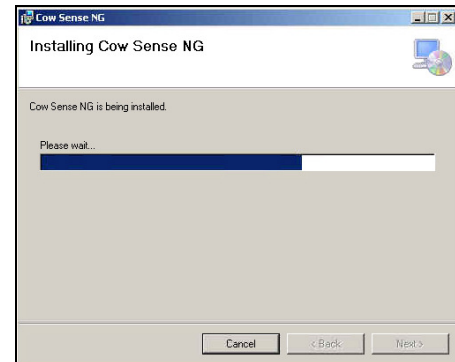
15. After the install path has been chosen, click the **Next** button.



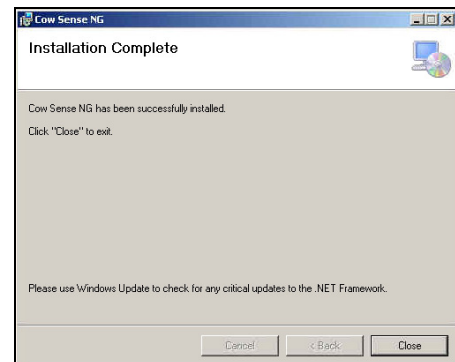
16. Click **Next** to begin installing Cow Sense NG.



17. As Cow Sense NG installs, you may receive security prompts or messages. **Allow** or **Accept** these messages.



18. After Cow Sense NG has been successfully installed, click the **Close** button



19. **Re-enable your Anti-Virus software!**

## **Starting Cow Sense** **Launching Cow Sense**

To launch Cow Sense, click on the **Cow Sense NG** shortcut icon on your desktop.

- If you do not have a shortcut on your desktop, click the **Start** button on your task bar. Next, click **All Programs** and scroll through your installed programs until you see the **Cow Sense NG** folder. Click on **Cow Sense NG**.

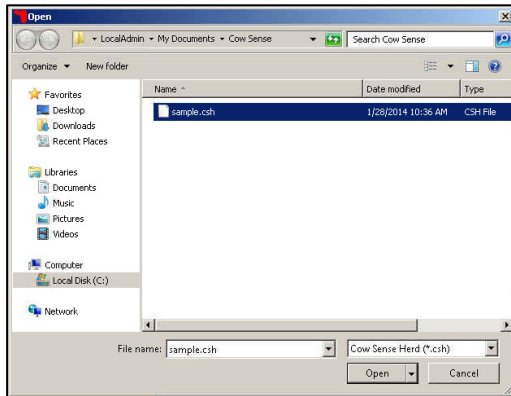
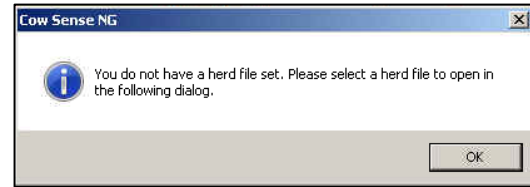


Once Cow Sense is launched, you will see the Cow Sense Herd Management Software **Title Screen**. To begin, click the **Continue** button.

On the very first launch of Cow Sense NG, you will receive a message that you do not have a herd file set. To select a herd file, click **OK**.



Cow Sense will automatically take you to the folder where the Sample Herd (sample.csh) is saved. This will be located under the C: Drive > My Documents > Cow Sense folder. The Cow Sense folder under My Documents is where all Cow Sense Herd files (\*.csh) will be

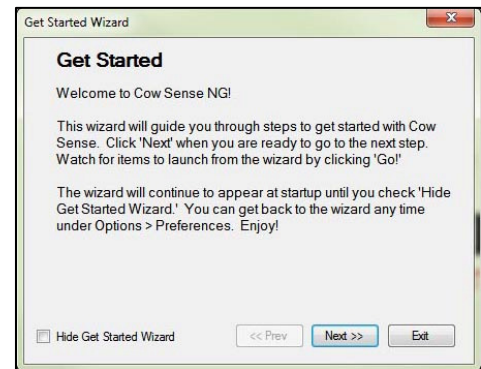


saved and stored.

Click on the **sample.csh** file so it is highlighted, and then click the **Open** button. **Sample.csh** is now your default herd file. The Sample Herd will remain your default herd until you create or open a different herd. For more information on creating a new herd, see the section on **Setting Up A Herd File**.

## Get Started Wizard

After the Sample Herd has been selected, you will now see the **Get Started Wizard** appear on your screen. This Wizard will guide you through the steps to get started with Cow Sense NG. Follow the Wizard's instruction to select the Cow Sense version, personalization of your screen as well as settings, and much more. We recommend you leave the Wizard on until you are familiar with all the new features of Cow Sense. For more information, check out the Getting Started Tutorial. Once you are comfortable, you can click the check box next to **Hide Get Started Wizard** to disable. The "Get Started Wizard" can be re-enabled at a later date if desired.



Click the **Next** button to continue through the Wizard.

When Cow Sense is installed for the very first time, it will be running in **Trial Mode**. This is designed for those who wish to evaluate Cow Sense NG for use in their operation. If you have already purchased the program, see the section on **Operation Mode and Licensing**.

- The **Trial Edition** is limited to ten uses.

In the **Trial Edition**, you have the option to view the EZ or PRO features of Cow Sense NG. Choose which version you'd like to view in Cow Sense.

- If you have already purchased Cow Sense, select the version you purchased when activating the program.

Cow Sense NG allows you to easily access all aspects of the program from the **Main Menu** located on the left hand side of the screen. Clicking on a **Main Task**, such as **Manage**, will open a list of **Sub Tasks**.

The next few screens of the **Get Started Wizard** allow you to instantly access areas of Cow Sense by clicking the **Go!** button at the bottom right of the window. You are able to customize:

- The **Appearance** of Cow Sense, such as the background image and color. These changes take place after Cow Sense has been restarted.
- Change the **Settings** by enabling or disabling the **Tool Tips** or the **Get Started Wizard**.
- **Herd Options**, including report titles, some calculation details, and breeding and calving season parameters.
- You have the option to select the **Standard Fields** that appear in the **Individual Animal Form**, **Animal List**, or **Reports**. In addition, PRO Edition users can set up the **Custom Fields** they wish to include.

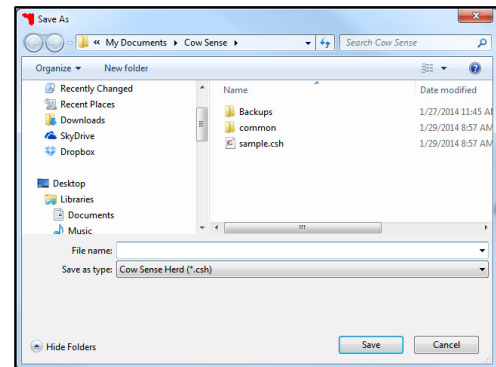
You also have the ability to access the **Individual Animal Form**, **Animal List**, and **Reports** from the Wizard. The final screens include a link to the **Tutorials**, as well as the NxGen Revision History.

## Setting Up A Herd File

### Creating a new herd

NOTE: If you are running Cow Sense NG in Trial Mode, you only have access to one herd file. If you create a new herd file, the current file you are working in will no longer be available.

To begin setting up a new herd file, start Cow Sense NG and click **File** from the menu bar. Then, click **New**. Give your new herd file a name in the **File name** text area, and click **Save**. After the new herd file has been created, it will be set as your default herd.



### Converting a Cow Sense version 4.8 (or higher) herd file

NOTE: In order to convert a herd file from a previous version, Cow Sense NG must be activated. See the section on **Operation Mode and Licensing**.

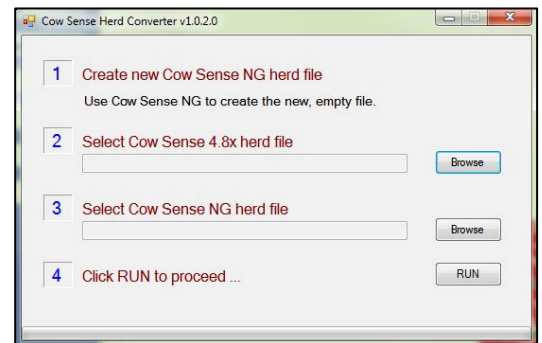
(For detailed instruction in the conversion process, see the

#### **NxGen Guide to Herd Conversion:**

[http://www.cowsense.com/ng/docs/guides/ngg\\_001.pdf](http://www.cowsense.com/ng/docs/guides/ngg_001.pdf)

To convert a Cow Sense version 4.8 herd file (\*.hrd) to a Cow Sense NG herd (\*.csh), select **File > Convert**.

- If the Cow Sense Herd Converter does not appear on the File menu after activating your Cow Sense program, Cow Sense may need to be closed and then re-opened.



**Step 1:** Create a new Cow Sense NG herd file by going to **File > New**. Give your new herd a name and click **Save**.

**Step 2:** Select your Cow Sense version 4.8 herd file by clicking the **Browse** button and navigating to the folder the file is saved in.

- If Cow Sense NG is being installed on a computer that did not have Cow Sense v4.8 installed previously, you will need to move a copy of the Cow Sense v4.8 herd to the computer running Cow Sense NG. Save the file somewhere convenient, such as the desktop.

**Step 3:** Select your newly created Cow Sense NG herd by clicking the **Browse** button.

- By default, your new Cow Sense NG herd should be saved under My Documents > Cow Sense.

**Step 4:** Click the **Run** button to convert your herd.

## Data Entry

### Manage Menu – Individual Summary

Animal entry in Cow Sense NG begins at the **Manage** menu in the **Main Menu** on the left side of your screen. Refer to the Enter Data Tutorial for further instructions on using the Individual Animal View. The **Individual** animal form is used to add an animal by clicking the **New** button, edit an animal and save the changes by clicking the **Save** button, review animal characteristics and performance, and delete an animal by clicking the **Delete** button.

To open the **Individual** animal form, click on **Manage** in the **Main Menu** on the left side of the screen. Then, click **Individual**.

The **Individual Animal** entry screen is comprised of three main parts:

**Pick List, Summary Pane, and Animal Details.**

#### Pick List

The **Pick List** allows you to select an animal to edit or view. By default, all **Active** animals in your Cow Sense herd are displayed. To narrow the Pick List, use the **Status, Type** and/or **Sex** filters by clicking on the drop down arrow. The number of records that fit the selection criteria appears in red, centered above the Clear button.

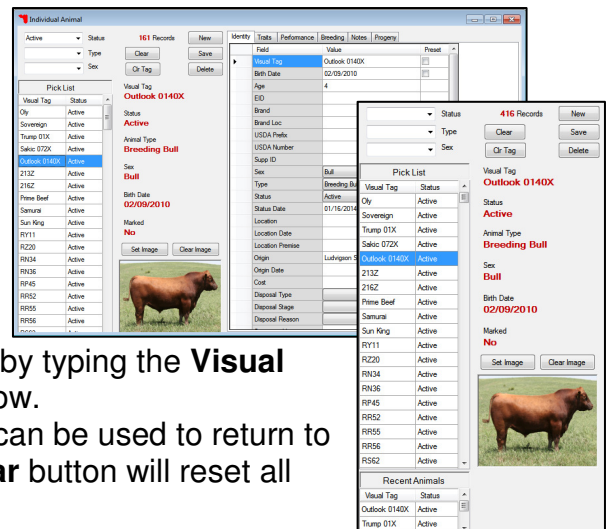
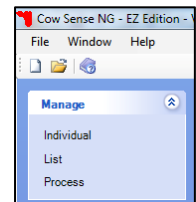
**Pick List** navigation can be done three ways:

using the scroll bar to the right of the list, using the up/down arrow on your keyboard, or by typing the **Visual Tag** anywhere on the **Individual Animal** window. When typing a Visual Tag, the **Clr Tag** button can be used to return to all records that meet the filter criteria. The **Clear** button will reset all filters and return all records.

#### Summary Pane

To view an animal's details in the **Summary Pane**, click on the **Visual Tag** from the **Pick List**.

The selected animal will appear highlighted in blue in the **Pick List** and the animal's Status, Animal Type, Sex, Birth Date, and Marked option appear in red text in the **Summary Pane**.



You have the option to load a photo of your animal to be displayed in the **Summary Pane**. To load a picture, click the **Set Image** button. Next, navigate to the folder your animal photo is stored in. Then, click on the picture file, and then click **Open**. The animal's photo will now appear on that animal's record. To view a larger version of the image, double click on the thumbnail in the **Summary Pane**. If you wish to remove the photo, click the **Clear Image** button.

## Animal Details

Detailed animal information will appear on the far right of the **Individual Animal** window. The Animal Details window contains **Category tabs** of:

- Identity – such as Visual Tag, Birth Date, Location, Sire and Dam ID
- Traits – such as Calving Ease, Color, and Breed
- Performance – such as Birth Weights and Ratios
- Custom (PRO Edition) - user designed fields
- Breeding – records of past and current AI and Natural Service matings.
  - Breedings can be entered individually in this tab, or can be entered using the **Breeding Wizard** (see the section on **Manage Menu – Process** for more info on the Breeding Wizard).
- Notes – a place to record any notes about an animal, for example: Kicks at calf.
- Pedigree – a list of the animal's ancestry (PRO Edition).
- Progeny – A list of the animal's progeny.
- Treatments – a list of the animal's treatment records.

When one of these categories is selected (clicked), data fields in this category appear and information can be entered or edited directly in this form.

The **Category tabs** that appear in the **Animal Details** window can be customized to your preferences. From the Main Menu choose **Options > Data Fields > Standard Fields** and either check the fields you wish to utilize, or un-check the fields that are not relevant to your herd.

- The **Individual Animal** form should be closed when making changes to the Standard Fields. When the **Individual Animal** form is opened after changes are made, those changes will be reflected.

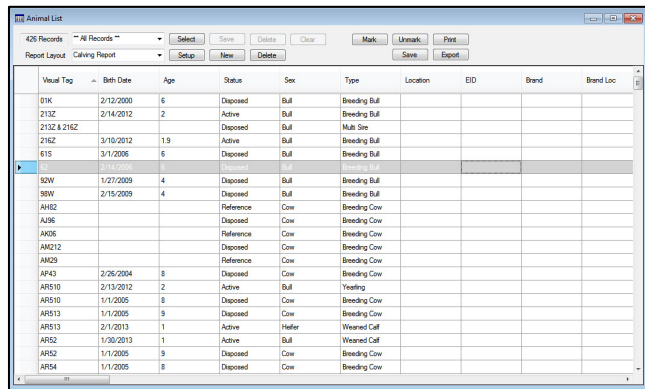
## Manage Menu – List

The **List** under the Manage Menu allows you to view your animals in a report-type layout. Refer to the Animal List Tutorial for more information on this feature. You can view All Records, Active Records, and Active Calves by clicking the drop down arrow. Or you can create your own selection by choosing (clicking) the **Select** button.



You also have to option to create Report Layouts by clicking the **Setup** button and selecting the fields you wish to view in the report.

Animals in this list can be edited by double-clicking on their **Visual Tag**. When their Visual Tag is double-clicked, the **Individual Animal** window is opened.



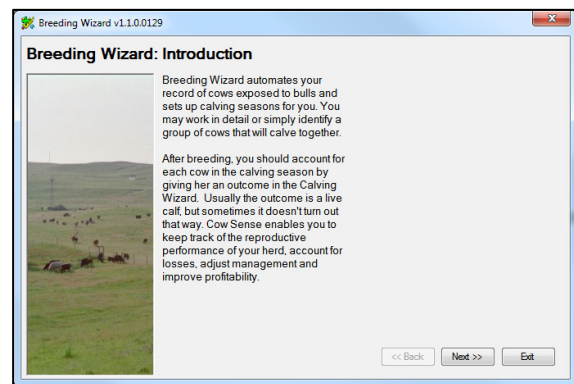
Visual Tag	Birth Date	Age	Status	Sex	Type	Location	EID	Brand	Brand Loc
01K	2/13/2000	6	Disposed	Bull	Breeding Bull				
213Z	2/14/2012	2	Active	Bull	Breeding Bull				
213Z & 216Z			Disposed	Bull	Multi Sex				
216Z	3/10/2012	1.9	Active	Bull	Breeding Bull				
619	3/1/2006	6	Disposed	Bull	Breeding Bull				
S2W	1/27/2009	4	Disposed	Bull	Breeding Bull				
S8W	2/15/2009	4	Disposed	Bull	Breeding Bull				
AH82			Reference	Cow	Breeding Cow				
AJ36			Disposed	Cow	Breeding Cow				
AK05			Reference	Cow	Breeding Cow				
AK012			Disposed	Cow	Breeding Cow				
AK029			Reference	Cow	Breeding Cow				
AP43	2/26/2004	8	Disposed	Cow	Breeding Cow				
AP510	2/13/2012	2	Active	Bull	Weaned Bull				
AP510	1/1/2005	8	Disposed	Cow	Breeding Cow				
AP513	1/1/2005	9	Disposed	Cow	Breeding Cow				
AP513	2/1/2013	1	Active	Heifer	Weaned Calf				
AP52	1/20/2013	1	Active	Bull	Weaned Calf				
AP52	1/1/2005	9	Disposed	Cow	Breeding Cow				
AP54	1/1/2005	8	Disposed	Cow	Breeding Cow				

## Manage Menu – Process

The **Process** menu contains convenient wizards to make speed data entry for Breeding, Calving, Weaning, Maintenance, Location, and Treatment events. Refer to the corresponding Tutorial for each Wizard. To launch a Wizard, select Manage>Process> (and choose the desired Wizard from the Cow Sense Main Menu. A Video Tutorial is available from the Top Menu > Help > Tutorial and choose the appropriate tutorial to guide you through each respective Wizard.

### Breeding Wizard

There are two ways to enter breeding records in Cow Sense NG. The first is to enter the breedings individually on the **Individual Animal form** in the **Breeding tab**, or by using the **Breeding Wizard**. The **Breeding Wizard** allows you to enter breeding data on a group of animals, and will reduce data entry time. It automates your record of cows exposed to bulls in a Natural Service or synchronized AI situation, and it will set up your Calving Seasons for you. You can work in detail, or identify a group of cows by **marking** them in the **Individual Animal form** or in the **List View**.



### Calving Wizard

The **Calving Wizard** automates entering outcomes of breeding and calving data. Records already created with the Breeding Wizard are grouped into a Calving Season (a collection of similarly aged and managed calves) so performance comparisons are meaningful.



## **Weaning Wizard**

The Weaning Wizard automates entering weaning weights with related weaning data. You will work with animal records already created with other wizards and grouped into Calving Seasons. The Calving Seasons group similarly aged and managed calves together so performance comparisons are meaningful.

## **Maintenance Wizard**

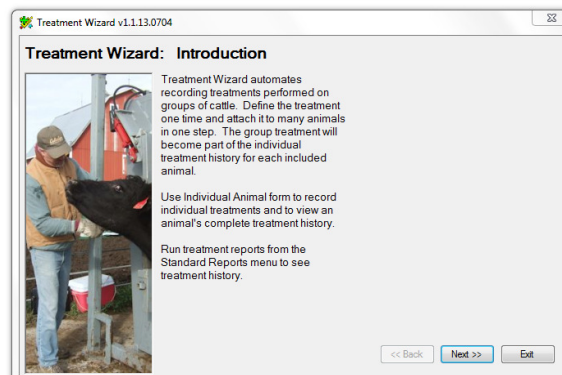
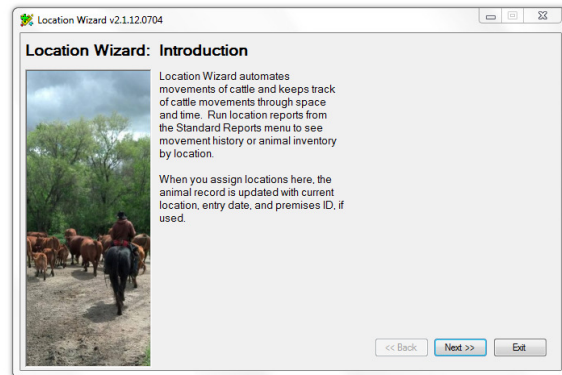
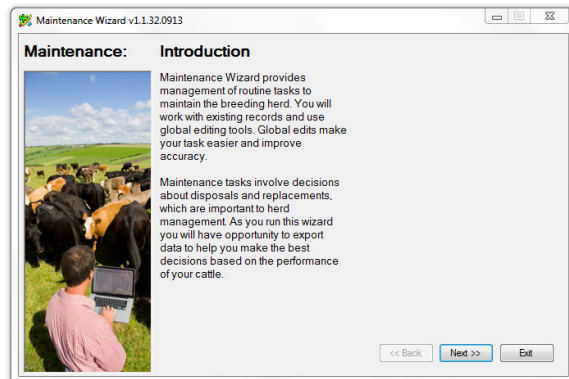
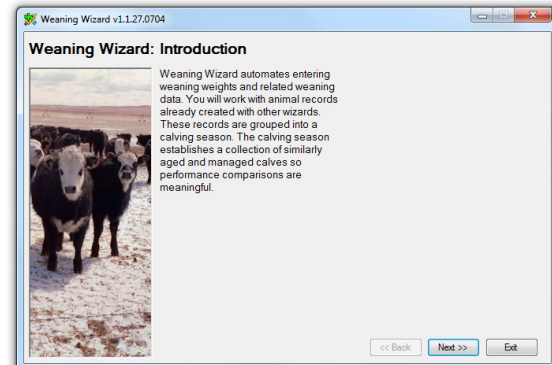
The Maintenance Wizard provides management of routine tasks to maintain the breeding herd. You will work with existing records and use global editing tools. Tasks included in the Maintenance Wizard include Preg Check, Replace Females, Replace Bulls, Dispose Females, Dispose Bulls, and Dispose Progeny.

## **Location Wizard**

The Location Wizard automates data entry related to location assignments of cattle and tracks their movements through space and time. Location reports may be created through the Standard Reports Menu to see movement history or animal inventory by location. When locations are assigned, the animal record is updated with current location, entry date, and Premises ID if used.

## **Treatments Wizard**

The Treatments Wizard automates recording processing treatments performed on groups of cattle. Define the treatment one time and attach it to many animals in one step. The group treatment will become part of the individual treatment history for each included animal.



## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Please review the *Cow Sense Video Tutorials* and this *Quick Start Guide* for assistance in running Cow Sense.

**On-line help** - available at the Cow Sense Corral: <http://www.cowsensecorral.com>.

**NxGen Guides** - These useful documents are targeted at specific Cow Sense features. As we are constantly updating the program these helpful bulletins allow us to issue updated documentation to assist you in advanced use of our products. These can be found at: <http://www.midwestmicro.com/documents.htm>

## Support Policy

We strive to make Cow Sense easy to use, yet capable of providing advanced analysis and management information. Documentation with Cow Sense explains program functions and capabilities. There may still be times when you will need help with technical issues regarding installation or use of the software. At the time of this printing, we include 30 days of support to ensure that you get started properly. After that time, we believe that users who need extra support should bear those costs, rather than inflating the price of Cow Sense for everyone.

Your included support period begins with the first contact following activation of your program. Following that complimentary period, support will be available on a fee-for-service basis, via reasonably priced packages to meet your individual needs. More information on our Customer Service Policy can be found here: <http://www.midwestmicro.com/docs/custservice.pdf>.

### To receive support:

1. First, check the included technical support available from the Help Menu, use the included Wizards and Tools Display when you move your mouse over button displays to navigate through Cow Sense, this *Quick Start Guide*, and *Video Tutorials*.
2. Point your Internet browser to <http://www.cowsensecorral.com> to access your account, past technical support questions as well as the respective support team's answers and the Cow Sense Knowledgebase.
3. Send e-mail to [support@midwestmicro.com](mailto:support@midwestmicro.com).
4. Call Midwest MicroSystems at (800) 584-0040.

Please have your Cow Sense Serial Number handy when you call for support. Your Serial Number is displayed under **Help > About Cow Sense**.

Following the 30-day included Support period, you have several support options. Pricing for support gives incentives to prepaid, **Value-Based Support** plans that make technical support services easier to manage and more convenient for you. Contact Midwest MicroSystems for any changes to this policy as well as current details on Customer Service Plans and pricing.

## Updates

Registered Cow Sense users are notified of program updates as they become available. Updates are portrayed by a change in the right portion of the version number, i.e. 5.1, 5.2 etc. These updates are primarily maintenance releases, and are freely available for download from our Internet site. Should you wish to have the update mailed to you on CD, we are happy to do so, however a fee (per update mailed) will be charged for shipping and handling.

## Upgrades

The Cow Sense Trial Edition expires after you access it 10 times, and you may activate it at any point. You may also upgrade any Cow Sense mode to a higher level simply by purchasing a new Activation Key. All registered Cow Sense users will be notified of future upgrades as they become available. **TO ORDER**, call Midwest MicroSystems at (800) 584-0040 or buy online at the Cow Sense store at: <http://www.shopcowsense.com>. You may also send e-mail inquiries to [sales@midwestmicro.com](mailto:sales@midwestmicro.com).

***THANK YOU FOR CHOOSING COW SENSE. ENJOY!***