



U.S. Spray Drone Industry Advancement Initiative

Industry Operator Program

Purpose & Role of Industry Operators

The Industry Operator Program is a core pillar of the Spray Drone Industry Advancement Initiative (SDIAI). Industry operators serve as the **real-world validation engine** of the program—deploying provided J150 spray drones in commercial and applied settings to generate practical, field-ready insights that complement academic research.

Operators are selected not only for their operational capacity, but for their willingness to contribute data, content, and learnings that advance responsible adoption of spray drone technology across the U.S.

Program Objectives

Industry operator participation is designed to:

- Validate spray drone efficacy across **diverse crops, geographies, and use cases**
- Expand the national dataset for **best-practice application methods**
- Demonstrate real-world economics, logistics, and operational realities
- Generate credible, operator-led education for growers, regulators, and peers
- Strengthen collaboration between **commercial applicators and academic partners**

This program directly supports ASD's mission to empower rural America through access to innovative, profitable, and scalable technologies.



Program Structure & Selection

Cohort Size

- 10 industry operators selected

Selection Process

- All applicants apply through a structured application process
- **Seven operators** are hand-selected based on strategic criteria (e.g., specialty crops, high-value systems, unique geographies)
- **Three operators** are selected at random from the vetted applicant pool to ensure inclusivity

Announcement

- All industry operator recipients are announced during a live awards ceremony at SDEUC
- Industry operator applicants must be registered for and attend SDEUC in person to be eligible

What Operators Receive

Selected industry operators will receive:

- A **J150 spray drone** provided by EAV
- Access to ASD-led onboarding and J150 training (if required)
- Ongoing technical and operational support from ASD
- Visibility through ASD, EAV, and initiative-level marketing and PR
- Potential opportunities to collaborate with academic partners on trials or field validation

Operator Expectations & Commitments

Participation is a contribution to industry advancement – drone may not be sold or dispersed during the first 12 months following receipt. See terms and conditions for disbursement requirements.



Operational Commitments

- Operate the J150 in compliant, real-world commercial or applied environments
- Demonstrate use across multiple crops, conditions, or use cases
- Maintain all required certifications and exemptions

Content & Knowledge Sharing Operators must commit to:

- Minimum **1 educational or field-use post per month** (photo or short-form video)
- Minimum **4 deep-dive posts per year** (e.g., efficacy results, comparisons, lessons learned)
- At least **2 in-season operational posts** showing real work on real acres
- At least **1 training recap post (if applicable)**

Content must be educational, compliant, and aligned with safety best practices.

Collaboration

- Willingness to collaborate with academic partners when applicable
- May include providing field access, sharing data, or co-designing trials

Data & Documentation

Operators are expected to:

- Maintain application and operational records
- Share non-confidential performance data when requested
- Submit raw photo or video assets upon request for educational or PR use

All shared data is used to strengthen industry understanding—not to evaluate individual business performance.

Compliance Requirements

Before taking possession of the drone, operators must:



- Hold a valid **Part 107 Remote Pilot Certificate**
 - Obtain a **44807 exemption by July 1, 2026**
 - Meet all state-level age and commercial operation requirements
 - Complete J150 training at ASD HQ (unless waived)
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Prohibited Content & Conduct

To protect the integrity of the initiative:

- No unsafe or non-compliant flight demonstrations
 - No unapproved payloads or configurations
 - No disclosure of confidential customer data or private property without consent
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Why This Matters

Industry operators are the bridge between theory and practice.

By participating, operators help:

- Shape the future of spray drone adoption in the U.S.
- Influence best practices and regulatory confidence
- Provide credible, operator-led education to the broader ag community

This program is designed to elevate the entire industry—not just individual participants.

Next Steps

Interested industry operators should:

1. Confirm eligibility and commitment requirements
2. [Submit an application before the stated deadline](#)
3. Attend SDEUC (including awards ceremony) for final selection announcements

This Industry Operator Program operates in parallel with the Academic Partner Program and together form the foundation of the Spray Drone Industry Advancement Initiative.



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EMPOWERING RURAL AMERICA WITH NEW OPPORTUNITIES