

# JM Eagle's Plug-and-Play AgriLoc Irrigation System

**J**M Eagle makes plastic pipes for a variety of applications, including irrigation, at its 17 manufacturing facilities across the United States. Its new AgriLoc irrigation system was introduced in 2024 to address farmers' needs for a modular system that is easy to install and maintain. AgriLoc can be moved from field to field, saving farmers the expense of investing in multiple systems. In this interview, Walter Wang Jr., JM Eagle's executive vice president of sales, marketing, human resources, and information technology, talks with Irrigation Leader about AgriLoc's benefits and the company's commitment to irrigated farming.

**Irrigation Leader:** Please tell us about your background and how you came to be in your current position.

**Walter Wang Jr.:** I run sales, marketing, human resources, and information technology at JM Eagle. Before this, I did video game marketing and was the chief operating officer of an esports startup for 4 years. Then the family came calling and said that I had to come back to the family business. I started in sales, and my role has grown since then.

**Irrigation Leader:** Would you introduce JM Eagle?

**Walter Wang Jr.:** In the 1950s, my grandfather started a company called Formosa Plastics in Taiwan. In the 1980s, he decided to buy several plastic pipe manufacturing facilities in the United States. In 2007, my father acquired PW Eagle, which was our largest competitor at the time, and we formed JM Eagle. We are the leading plastic pipe manufacturer in the world. We have over 1,200 employees, and we make any type of plastic pipe you can think of—plumbing pipe, irrigation pipe, electrical conduit, high-density polyethylene (HDPE) pipe, landscaping pipe, waterworks pipe, and gas pipe. We are building the modern infrastructure of the United States.

**Irrigation Leader:** Who are your customers, and where are they primarily located?

**Walter Wang Jr.:** The short answer is that they are located everywhere. We have 17 manufacturing facilities and two distribution centers across the United States. Our customers are located throughout the United States. Our irrigation customers are primarily in Central California,



The AgriLoc system at Bolthouse Farms in California.

the Pacific Northwest, Texas, and the Southeast; we also do some business in the Midwest.

**Irrigation Leader:** As one of the world's largest manufacturers of plastic pipes, what do you think has been the key to your growth?

**Walter Wang Jr.:** I think the number 1 reason we have grown organically over the past many decades is the quality of the pipe that we make. We believe in our product and offer a 50-year warranty. People trust the quality of our product, which I think has set us apart and allowed us to grow. If they are using a JM Eagle pipe for a water main, for fiber optics, or another application, they don't have to worry about it. We don't cut corners. It is easy to say, "We are going to change our formula to make the product a little cheaper," but we don't do that. The JM Eagle standard exceeds all federal standards.

We also have a lot of experience at our company. That's a big reason we've been able to grow to this size and be successful. The average tenure of employees at our plants is 24 years.

**Irrigation Leader:** What inspired you to create the AgriLoc irrigation system?

**Walter Wang Jr.:** Farmers these days want to have a modular irrigation system. They rotate crops and need to move their pipe systems around, so they want to invest in infrastructure that isn't just stationary. Our system is modular, so users can lay it out and configure it however they want. When they're done with crops in one field, they can move to another one.

**Irrigation Leader:** How is the system installed, and what are its components?

**Walter Wang Jr.:** The AgriLoc mainline is connected to the water source, the valve, a pump, a well, and so on. It connects to the rest of the AgriLoc system. The couplers are laid above ground. It is easy to assemble and disassemble. Farmers like it because all they have to do is lay it down. You push the pipe into the coupler and then spline-lock it. After the pipe and the coupler are installed, you can screw in the threaded riser, then put the sprinkler on top.

**Irrigation Leader:** When a customer decides to implement your system into their operations, how does that process work?

**Walter Wang Jr.:** The ag dealer usually designs and installs the system. They buy our product, work with the farmer, and install it on the farmer's property. We usually work with the dealer. The dealer designs the system based on acreage. Every acre requires a certain amount of couplers, pipes, lines, and risers. Depending on the crop, you might need to change the number of feet of pipe or the number of coupler systems per acre.

**Irrigation Leader:** What are some of the long-term benefits of the AgriLoc irrigation system?

**Walter Wang Jr.:** First, it is a modular system, so the farmer does not have to make an investment multiple times when they are doing crop rotation. Our system can be easily assembled, put into the field, disassembled, and moved to another acre of crop. That equates to huge savings for the farmer.

Second, our product is heavy duty, doesn't leak, and lasts for a long time, so our system saves water. During rigorous testing, AgriLoc's UV rating exceeded other products on the market by 50 percent, and impact-resistance testing showed a 334 percent increase over all agricultural products currently on the market.

Third, our system is easy to repair. Sometimes, when irrigation systems break, it's hard to determine where the problem is, and you end up replacing a huge portion of the system. But with ours, you can make a repair in the field without the need for tools, or you can just buy a replacement part. Say the riser is broken because it got



AgriLoc is a modular, easy-to-repair system.



Another view of Agriloc at Bolthouse Farms.





AgriLoc is easily integrated into existing systems for row crop production.



Chuck Clark, the senior vice president of production and engineering at JM Eagle, took a hands-on approach in the design and development of the new AgriLoc product.

run over by a car or something. All you have to do is buy a replacement part; it is easy to repair.

**Irrigation Leader:** Are there any success stories from customers who have installed the system that you'd like to highlight?

**Walter Wang Jr.:** We have installed a system for Bolthouse Farms in Central California, which says that it's a great product. Our product seamlessly integrates with everything. It's plug and play. Bolthouse had no issues installing our system.

**Irrigation Leader:** Please tell us about JM Eagle's other irrigation products.

**Walter Wang Jr.:** We have been serving the irrigation and agricultural market for decades now. From our PVC irrigation pipe to our waterworks pipe, small-diameter-class pipe, and AgriLoc system, we offer a full suite of products.

We provide large-diameter PVC irrigation pipe systems, which can move lots of water from one place to another. Our agricultural and irrigation products help California farmers comply with the state's Sustainable Groundwater Management Act. Water is a precious and increasingly scarce resource. Part of why we do what we do is to provide sustainable products to help farmers save water.

**Irrigation Leader:** Are there any forthcoming products you'd like to mention?

**Walter Wang Jr.:** We have a new HDPE pipe for agriculture coming out. I can't say much about it yet, but it should save farmers a lot of money, especially in installation costs. It will be just as effective as all current products on the market and easier to install. Those are good value propositions that we are working on.


**Irrigation Leader:** For those who may be interested in seeing if JM Eagle's products are right for their operations, what is the best way for them to connect with you?


**Walter Wang Jr.:** The best way to connect with us is by e-mailing [agriloc@jmeagle.com](mailto:agriloc@jmeagle.com). You can contact our salespeople by calling (310) 693-8414 or visiting our website, [jmeagle.com](http://jmeagle.com), where you can learn more about our company and our products. We'd love to learn more about how we can help you.

We will also be at the World AG Expo in Tulare, California, in February. It is the largest agricultural exposition in the world. Farmers, ranchers, growers, and manufacturers come from everywhere. It's always a fantastic event.

**Irrigation Leader:** What is your vision for the future?

**Walter Wang Jr.:** Our vision for JM Eagle is to continue to run this family business for generations to come. Our business helps our more than 1,200 employees put food on the table, which is a huge responsibility. JM Eagle will always be evolving and innovating so that we can continue to do that.

Ag is having a tough time right now, and some other companies have pulled out. Because of the decline in exports caused by tariffs, farmers are having a tough time, so they are not spending money. But we are here to support the U.S. farmer, and we'll continue to support our agricultural business, as we have for more than 40 years. 



*Walter Wang Jr. is the executive vice president of sales, marketing, human resources, and information technology at JM Eagle. He can be contacted at (310) 693-8200.*

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