



# ILLINOIS INNOVATION PRIZE

## **I** ILLINOIS

Technology Entrepreneur Center  
COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

Benjamin Thompson is the CEO of Earth-Sense, a startup which makes TerraSentia, an autonomous robot that can operate under crop canopies. TerraSentia is lightweight, low-cost, and will transform data collection and field scouting for agronomists, seed companies, and farmers. By using low-cost sensors and 3D printing technologies, they have been able to design and produce an affordable robot that can autonomously navigate between rows and collect objective data that will allow for crop breeders and growers to make educated decisions in their fields. The cloud-based analytics provide customers with the data needed to identify the genotypes associated with higher yielding or more resilient crops.

Ben is also developing instrumentation that allows for precision animal healthcare such as breeding performance and reproductive health. In addition, Ben helped design a device that has significantly increased the throughput of a novel soil nitrogen test by analyzing the soil's inherent ability to produce nitrogen.

**#IIP2018**

2018 FINALIST

# BENJAMIN THOMPSON

Senior, Technical Systems Management