

Smörgåsbord



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Power Farming photo

Revolutionary Combine "Shrouded In Secrecy"

Researchers at Britain's National Institute of Agricultural Engineering are working on a grain stripping header (pictured working in a barley field) that may well be the start of the demise of the combine as we know it, according to Power Farming magazine.

Technical details remain shrouded in secrecy, pending the securing of patents. Meanwhile, trial work to date indicates that, when compared to a conventional combine, grain output at a given loss level can be increased by 60% or more, and that under most normal crop and harvesting conditions there is only minimal straw detachment. In difficult or over-mature crops, straw intake can still be less than half, reports Power Farming.

Wilf Klinner, NIAE design team leader, cautions that further development is needed to improve the header's performance in specific conditions, and to extend the range of crops that can be harvested.

Farmers Form Machinery Co-Op

Canadian farmers who've banded together to form machinery co-ops to share farm machinery, may become role models for U.S. farmers who want to form similar groups. Thirty farmers got together recently in Hollandale, Wis. to explore shared ownership of equipment. Although no machinery co-op has yet been established by the group, they were encouraged by reports of machinery co-ops in Canada. There are 24 such co-ops in Saskatchewan and the oldest has been in operation for 19 years. Most have 4 or 5 members. According to Carol Ann Shearer of a government co-op advisory service who helps set up the machinery co-ops, the farmers all organized along the lines of a conventional co-op. Members are joint owners of machinery and the co-op acts as their agent. Decisions are made on the basis of one vote per-member and members are liable for the co-op's actions. Each takes their share of applicable tax deductions on their own individual tax returns.

For more information on the Canadian machinery co-ops, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Saskatchewan Co-operative Development, 2055 Albert St., Regina, Canada S4P 3V7 (ph 306 787-5258).

Three Minnesotans Charged With Fraud

A U.S. District Court grand jury has indicted three Minnesotans for mail fraud, alleging that they created companies that fraudulently sold grain processing equipment.

Charged with a total of 64 counts of mail fraud for alleged activities between January 1980 and December 1984 were: James Thornberg, of Osseo; his brother, Steven Thornberg, of Mound; and Steven Olson, of Litchfield.

According to the indictment, the trio did business as Grain King Corp., Rebel Industries Inc., Jim Thornberg Inc., Steven Lloyd Corp., Hogvon Co., JTI Inc., and JSX Corp.

The defendants recruited and employed sales personnel for the purpose of contacting customers by telephone and by mail, soliciting their purchase of grain-processing equipment and other equipment, according to the indictment.

Radial Tires Not Worth Extra Cost?

The high cost of radial tractor tires does not pay off in fuel savings due to increased traction, according to a recent report presented to the American Society of Agricultural Engineers by Wayne Coates, associate professor of ag engineering at the University of Arizona. Coates tested radial tires against bias ply tires under identical field conditions. He found that at the lowest field speeds radials reduced fuel consumption but that at higher speeds radial tires actually consumed more fuel. As a result, Coates concluded that "Since overall performance differences as shown by specific fuel consumption were small, tire choice should be based on other factors such as cost, availability, warranty and service rather than claims made by dealers or manufacturers regarding increased fuel savings."

What's Going On Here?



think it's for real. It's not. What looks like the President "in the flesh" is simply a life-size, standup photo caricature.

Kemin Industries, headquartered in Des Moines, Iowa, rented the photo and a Polaroid camera and tripod from Innovative Ideas, 3034 M St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20007. The firm has life-size photo caricatures of about 20 famous personalities which, along with a camera, can be rented for fairs, shows, fundraisers or whatever for right at \$150 per day. You supply your own film. Kemin Industries moved visitors through their "show stopping" exhibit at the rate of about 3 photos per minute.

"Personal" ad in Weekly World News: "Wyoming bachelor farmer wants wife. Must be interested in farming and own tractor. Please enclose picture of tractor."

Wind Generators Not Profitable?

Harnessing wind energy to produce electricity doesn't pay, according to a recent study released by the Nebraska Power Association which monitored 18 commercially-made windmills across the state for nearly a year. The report concluded that under current regulatory and economic conditions, the best generator system studied would have to operate 107 years to pay back the \$26,000 spent to buy and install it, even though most wind-generation systems have only a 20-year expected lifespan. Researchers found that most windmills provided an average of about 15% of the power used by their owners.

The association made the decision to study windmills because of a federal law which requires utilities to purchase excess power from customers. The study is used to advise customers interested in putting up windmills.

Minnesota Passes First Farm Tractor Lemon Law

This spring Minnesota became the first state in the nation to pass a farm tractor lemon law that's similar to laws in 39 states covering cars and trucks. The bill, which pertains to tractors sold after January, 1987, says that the buyer must give the dealer written notice of the problem. If the problem hasn't been fixed after four or more repair attempts, or if the vehicle is out of commission for 60 days or more, the buyer then has the option of receiving a replacement tractor or a refund of the total purchase price. Manufacturers are required to give buyers a written notice of their rights under the lemon law at the time of purchase. The protection applies only to new tractors and only covers warranty defects. The bill also covers other self-propelled farm equipment such as combines, forage harvesters and swathers. For such self-propelled equipment, however, lemon law coverage is limited to the engine and power train, according to assistant attorney general Bob Marcroft, who helped draft the bill. "It's similar to coverage of recreational vehicles under auto lemon laws. The laws don't cover the entire machine," he told FARM SHOW.

For more information, or a copy of the law, call the Minnesota Attorney General's office at 612 296-3353.

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