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"High Tunnel" Farming Units Now On Market

"After reading your story on high tunnel farming (Vol. 25, No. 5) I thought your readers would like to know about the new Haygrove tunnels we recently began importing from England," says Ralph Cramer, Elizabethtown, Pa.

"High tunnel farming" extends the growing season for fresh market vegetable crops. Unlike greenhouses, they're not heated. But, they're big enough to drive tractors and implements inside and are intended to be permanent structures in the field.

The Haygrove tunnels have metal frames covered by plastic that can be rolled up on the sides. The units come in widths from 18 to 27 ft. and can be built to any length. Galvanized steel "Y" posts on each side allow you to connect as many bays together as you want.

Cramer discovered the tunnels on a recent trip to England. He bought one for his own flower farm and then became the first North American distributor.

"It's suitable for a wide variety of crops including strawberries, raspberries, cut flowers, nursery stock, herbs, specialty

vegetables, cherries, tomatoes, pick-your-own operations, and more.

"Haygrove Farms introduced field-scale units to the United Kingdom in 1993 and now supplies 75 percent of all the high tunnels used there. They're England's largest strawberry producer and grow more than 300 acres of strawberries and raspberries in tunnels.

"The units they make are reasonably priced, assemble quickly, and don't require a level site. They cost less than 50 cents per sq. ft. The price includes Visqueen 2-year poly, which usually lasts about three years,

and delivery to the farm. With the Y posts you can put up a second tunnel using half as many anchor posts. The bottom of each post has an auger welded onto it. On our own farm we use a small gas engine and an adapter to screw the posts into the ground. If we want to move the tunnels, we put a nylon strap on the posts and use a front-end loader to yank them out of the ground."

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AirJet™ Chaffer Creates New Kind Of Air Flow

"Our new AirJet™ Chaffer eliminates the hassle of setting your combine. You just leave the lower sieve wide open, set the fan on high, and go," says Marvin Gorden, inventor and manufacturer of the revolutionary new AirJet Chaffer which directs the flow of air in an entirely new way.

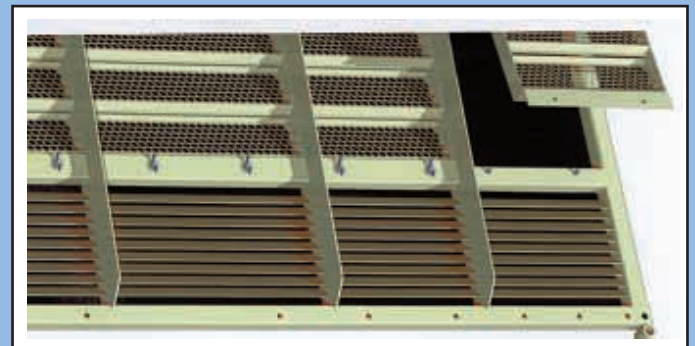
The patent-pending chaffer sends a thin layer of high velocity air out across the chaffer, moving chaff rearward. Grain falls through the streaming air. The screens face toward oncoming grain for faster separation.

"Setting a combine to produce a clean sample is a constant challenge and frustration. You're always walking a thin line between getting all the chaff out but blowing too much grain out the back, or not blowing grain out the back but getting too much chaff in the sample," says Gorden, who is also inventor of the popular Gorden Rotor Bars for Axial Flow combine specialty rotors. "We decided to find a way to eliminate the hassle so the combine operator can concentrate on running the combine."

Gorden states that the "air foil" chaffers which many farmers have used to update their combines in the past are an improvement over factory chaffers but don't go far enough. "They're good in corn but they still don't solve the problem in wheat and other small grains because the air flow is still wrong."

The AirJet simply bolts in place of existing factory chaffers. But that's where the similarity ends. To change between crops, you simply loosen wing nuts and slip in new inserts designed for specific crops. You don't have to change the entire chaffer.

"This system is very crop specific but it's quick and easy to switch between crops, with three types of inserts for different crops. Once you have the correct inserts installed, you



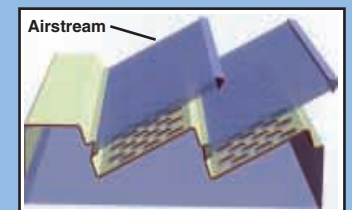
Screens face toward oncoming grain for faster separation. Screen hole size is selected to match specific crops. Inserts pop out easily when changing crops.

spend almost no time adjusting the machine. You just open the lower sieve wide open and go. There's no combine on the market that will let you do that," says Gorden.

In tests on a pair of Axial Flow combines last summer, one machine was fitted with an AirJet while a conventionally-equipped combine was set at an optimum setting. Gorden says the AirJet-equipped machine was able to travel 30 percent faster while producing a much cleaner grain sample. "There's much less stress on the operator because you no longer have to worry about how much grain you're blowing out the back," he says.

The AirJet currently fits models 1440 to 2388 Axial-Flow combines but Gorden plans to fit all other machines once field tests are completed this year. He hopes to get about 100 units out for the 2002 harvest and then go into full production in 2003.

Gorden says the AirJet will sell for less than the cost of two factory chaffers because you



Thin layer of high-velocity air streaming from AirJet above screen blows chaff rearward. Heavier grain penetrates the streaming air and falls to the screen.

just buy the one main unit and then the inserts to go into it for different crops.

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