

## Short Season Open Pollinated Corn

“Most open pollinated (OP) corn is grown in southern areas with longer growing seasons. Beneficial varieties for growers with a short season have not been widely available. We’re changing that with faster finishing OP corn varieties that will let growers with a short season profit from open pollinated corn,” says Vaughn Emo of Green Haven.

Located in western N.Y., Green Haven works with seedsmen from throughout the U.S. They are focusing on improving OP varieties for silage, grain, craft distilling and wildlife plots. Early varieties include 75-day VK Early or NY Bloody Butcher,

85-day Wapsie Valley, 88-day Dublin, and 87-day MN 13 with some available organic.

Open pollinated corn is said to be higher in protein and sugar compared to regular hybrids thereby giving livestock farmers higher feed value. Of course, the biggest advantage is that farmers can select their own seed from this year’s crop to plant next year.

Green Haven offers over 25 types of OP seed including 16 different field corn varieties ranging in day length from early 75-day to full season 120-day; 3 types of sweet corn; popcorn; pumpkin seed, small grains including Danko Rye, Hullless Oats,



and Einkorn Wheat; and grasses including red clover and timothy.

For a free brochure Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Green Haven, 8225 Wessels Rd, Avoca N.Y. 14809 (ph 607-566-9253; [www.openpollinated.com](http://www.openpollinated.com))

**Reader Inquiry No. 60**

## Rural Rescue Trailer Fitted With Grain Vac

A Gibbon, Minn., fireman’s quick and creative thinking helped save the life of a farmer who’d been trapped up to his neck in corn in a grain bin for hours. As firemen and EMTs worked to put rescue tubes in place and start patient care, Assistant Chief Jason Rettig recalled seeing a grain vacuum at a neighboring farm. He made a call, and a tractor with the vacuum showed up shortly and moved a lot of corn very quickly.

That was 2019. In 2023, the Gibbon Fire and Rescue Department not only has a grain vac but also has a Rural Rescue Response Trailer that they designed. With the recent launch of R3 Rescue LLC, their goal is to provide trailers with vacs and necessary training for all interested rural fire departments.

“We’ve received calls from over 40 departments,” says Nate Firle, a firefighter who manages the LLC. “I think these trailers are the next innovation for rural departments. What the trailer allows us to do is be strategic.”

About 30 to 40 percent of rural calls in the Gibbon area are for fire or rescue, and if a call comes in for a farm rescue, the trailer is automatically hooked up to the fire truck. In addition to the grain vac, it has other entrapment tools such as 2-ft. by 6-ft. entrapment panels to place around the victim to take the pressure of the grain off the victim. Also onboard are airbags that are inflated to lift up to 60 tons, ropes and rigging, and stabilization equipment - important for potential rollovers with big trucks and farm equipment.

Typically, fire departments put extra equipment in any compartment that’s open on the truck. The trailer has specifically designed cabinet space to contain everything where firefighters can access it quickly.

Gibbon raised \$75,000 to purchase the Alum-Line trailer and mounted skid vac system with 4-in. tubing from Handlair.



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Support came from companies and organizations such as Beck’s Hybrids, where Firle works as the Northern Regional Business Manager. For its innovation, the Gibbon department was honored as the 2023 Minnesota Fire Department of the Year.

Though the trailer hasn’t been used for an entrapment yet, the vac came in handy at a grain bin fire where it was used to extract smoldering grain.

Firle knows of three other fire departments that have added grain vacs to their equipment. One of them is in Iowa and provided mutual aid to another fire department this past August. Unfortunately, they were called in too late, and the victim died. The vac was used to remove grain to help extract the body, and it was someone Firle knew.

“That reinvigorated the fire in me,” he said, to raise awareness of the R3 Trailer. Firle is the contact for fire departments interested in adding safety equipment.

Recognizing the immense cost of fire equipment, the Ag Revival Rural Rescue Foundation that Firle started in 2023 provides funding to fire departments to defray costs. Companies such as Beck’s

contribute to the foundation, and fire departments can apply for financial help.

“Everything is so expensive in the fire industry. I don’t want these extra (tax) burdens on farmers that it would benefit,” Firle says.

As an agronomist, firefighter, and farmer he offers one final observation.

“In wet or dry years when the grain condition at harvest is variable, history shows there are more entrapments the following year,” he says. If the grain isn’t in proper condition during storage, bridging and spoiled spots occur, and farmers can get in trouble trying to deal with it.

Farmers need to be aware of that, he says. And, he says, fire departments can do their part by networking, training, and adding equipment that fits rural needs.

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