



In the early 1900's seed corn was sold right on the ear. Griffith Seed Company filled this crate with 100 ears to represent 1 bu. of seed corn and displayed it at a farm show.

SOLD BY THE EAR IN 1 BU. CRATES

“Old-Time” Seed Corn

Griffith Seed Co., McNabb, Ill., came up with a special display this year at the Farm Progress Show in Illinois to show how seed corn was sold at the turn of the century - right on the ear.

The company filled a crate with 100 ears of corn which, in the old days, represented 1 bu. of seed corn.

“During the early 1900's a lot of seed corn was sold by the ear,” says W. Lynn Griffith, owner. “My grandfather sold seed corn this way. There were no mechanical pickers so all of the corn had to be hand picked. Farmers wanted to know what the ear looked like before they shelled it and used it for seed. Well developed ears were felt more likely to produce a healthy crop. Several companies marketed ear corn seed in those days. They hand picked the best ears and then packed them in crates. One hundred ears was considered to be a bushel, and it weighed about 75 lbs. Customers removed the kernels from both ends of the ear and used the rest for seed so that all kernels would be fairly uniform in size.

“There was a lot of interest in corn improvement in those days, and people really paid attention to the type of ears they bought. County fairs sponsored contests where farmers entered 10-ear samples. The ears had to

have good uniformity and be of equal size.” Griffith Seed Co. has been in the seed corn business since 1900, although it wasn't officially a company until 1936 when Griffith's father began producing hybrid seed corn.

The ear corn crate is a replica based on a photograph that appeared in an advertisement that Griffith's grandfather placed in a farm magazine. Griffith found the advertisement in a packet full of letters that his grandfather had received in response to the advertisement. The letters were dated 1908. “Most ear corn seed crates were long and narrow, but the one in my grandfather's advertisement was square,” notes Griffith.

The crate reads “Griffith Early Dent, 1 Bu. Seed Corn”. “Reed's Yellow Dent was a very popular variety throughout the Midwest, and Griffith Early Dent was an earlier maturing variety derived from it,” says Griffith. “My grandfather developed Early Dent because there was a sizable tract of low-lying land in our area that never dried out until later in the spring. The early maturing variety was favored where later planting was a common practice.”

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Griffith Seed Co., McNabb, Ill. 61335 (ph 815 882-2161).

MAKES A GREAT CONVERSATION PIECE

“Stone-Age” Tractor Made Out Of Junk

By Nancy Lowe Lonsinger

Traffic slows down as it moves past Kenny Moore's farm near Dresden, Ohio. Moore says drivers are trying to identify the parts he used to build the “stone-age” tractor mounted on a concrete pedestal in his yard.

It all began when Moore and his wife, Jerry, were sprucing up the place for their daughter's wedding in 1987. They ended up with a pile of junk that included large wheels that once formed the base of a child's teeter-totter and large concrete building stones, as well as other odds and ends. As he looked at the stuff, he realized he had the makings of a “stone-age” tractor sculpture.

Instead of hauling the junk away, he arranged it on an old silo foundation near the road and searched for more discarded

parts until he had everything he needed.

The rear wheels on the tractor are from a threshing machine, a length of oil pipe casing forms the smokestack, a water pump from an old windmill became the whistle and piston, and the steering wheel and seat are from an old McCormick Deering tractor. After he thought he had finished his masterpiece, Moore found an old grindstone in a shed that became the flywheel.

Moore has other unusual home-built tractors, including a half-scale model of a 1919 2040 Rumeley tractor that he and his sons made from scratch. The model is so authentic-looking that when he exhibits it at the county fair some people think he's got a rare Rumeley model no one's ever seen before.



Sandy Deters used high-tech equipment to start her home-based computerized service bureau 2 1/2 years ago.

“GIVES ME MORE CONTROL OVER MY LIFE”

Farm Wife Started A Business At Home

Thanks to computers, faxes and telephone modems, more and more people are working out of their homes. Illinois farm wife Sandy Deters who made use of such high-tech equipment to start her own home-based business.

“It lets me be at home to care for our two daughters and help with the hog farm when needed. I love having more control over my life and spending time with my husband and daughters,” says Deters, who started her computerized service bureau 2 1/2 years ago.

“I had been working for several years for a computer services company and began a business plan for my own business while lying in a hospital bed awaiting the arrival of our second daughter. After she was born I took \$2,500 which was set aside in my profit-sharing plan and began “The Print-Out Shop”, my complete computerized service bureau.

“Services include computer consulting, record keeping, applications programming, desktop publishing, word processing and computer training. I started with a computer and printer we already had for farm use and then contacted the small business development centers and read a book about home-based businesses (“Home Made Money” by Barbara Brabec).

“I started out slowly, beginning with my past employer, and began to pick up cus-

tomers. Word of mouth advertising and just talking with people has created nearly all my customers.

“Business was getting slow. Just as I was ready to give up last February, I met a representative from a German agriculture software company at a Pork Producers show I attended with my husband. He was looking for a computer person with a hog background to work on a swine management software program they were translating. I jumped at the chance! They flew me to Germany to meet the programmers and company staff. This was exciting because I had never flown before. After returning home, prospective customers I had contacted 6 and 8 months prior were calling for services. Since then I've been very busy.

“I now have a fax machine, laser printer, modem, and a second computer. I live in a very rural area. Our town has a population of 350 (we have more hogs than people). Without the advanced technology offered by computers, faxes and modems, I would never have been able to work with a foreign company, or most of my other customers. Thanks to this equipment, it doesn't matter where I am. You can do the work and send it anywhere.”

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Sandy Deters, The Print-Out Shop, Rt. 1, Box 29A, Sigel, Ill. 62462 (ph 217 844-2414).



Moore used concrete building stones, as well as other odds and ends, to build tractor.