New Holland enters ag computer business

NEW HOLLAND — Sperry New Holland is entering the ag computer business. according to H.G. McCarty, president of Sperry New Holland. The company's decision to enter the market with a personal computer system–sporting the name AG-COMMAND–apparently makes Sperry New Holland the first major agricultural equipment company to officially enter the agricultural computer arena.

Dave Wolf, head of the Computer Products Group of Sperry New Holland, has had his sights set on the company's diversification into computers since 1976. Wolf says he felt that a move into agricultural computing would be a natural one for Sperry New Holland.

"Our parent company is Sperry, and they started the computer business. Sperry New Holland knows agriculture. The combination is unbeatable. But, we wanted to make sure that farmers were ready to use computers in their operations."

Sperry New Holland has been monitoring the attitudes out in the farm communities for several years, according to Wolf. "We are finding the interest level is high and many farmers are ready to buy. However, they're looking to buy from a source they can depend on, and one that knows agriculture and computers inside and out."

"That's where we see our AG-COMMAND dealers filling the gap," Wolf says. "Obviously, our dealers already understand the needs of the farmers and other business people in their communities. And, when they decide to set up an AG-COMMAND center within their dealership, they are put through intensive training."

"We know it's going to be a big job to support our AG-COMMAND centers, especially since our plans are to enroll several hundred dealers in training within the next six months."

Market Entry Teams, consisting of ag computing veterans, are being used to travel to various locations around the U.S. and Canada to accomplish this task. "We realize we can't anticipate everything that happens after the AG-COMMAND manager leaves training. That's why our Market Entry Teams are there to help managers in the transition period. Once established, the dealers communicate with technical personnel devoted to the computer group at Sperry New Holland."

A glimpse of some of the products Sperry New Holland dealers currently offer include AG-COMMANDER, an enhanced version of Sperry's top-of-the-line personal computers with 256K, and the AG-COMMAND software series for dairy, swine and crops, plus, a fully integrated accounting package and financial planning worksheets.

Customers who purchase a system from an AG-COMMAND computer center receive service and support through their local dealer and access to a full line of peripherals, including printers, disks, ribbons and paper. The Sperry computer also runs most IBM software, according to Wolf.

Sperry New Holland's new ag computer system features the AG-COMMANDER computer from Sperry, shown here with an optional printer.

Preservative rules given

HARRISBURG — The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, following an order issued by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, is now preparing to enforce regulations to restrict the use of three pesticides as wood preservatives, according to state Agriculture Secretary Penrose Hallowell.

"With the EPA decision rendered in early July, the use of products containing creosote, pentachlorophenol and inorganic arsenicals, will be classified as restricted and for use only by certified applicators beginning February 1, 1985," said Hallowell. EPA has determined that the agents could pose potential health risks if not used with adequate protection.

The EPA decision also requires users to label equipment (tanks, etc.) used to apply the materials and provide protective clothing for the applicator effective November 1, 1984, he noted.

Both EPA and the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, which will monitor compliance with the order through field inspections by its Bureau of Plant Industry. require that the commercial wood pressure treatment industry participate in a consumer awareness program to inform users to pressure-treated wood or treated wood products of potential hazards. Until now, anyone could purchase and use the preservatives around the home or farm.

According to EPA estimates, these pesticides account for over 97 percent of the wood preservatives used in this country and one-third of all agricultural and industrial pesticides. Approximately 2.7 billion pounds are produced in the United States each year.

Questions concerning the new regulations should be directed to the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Plant Industry, Pesticide Division, 2301 North Cameron Street, Harrisburg, PA 17110-9408, or phone (717) 787-4843.

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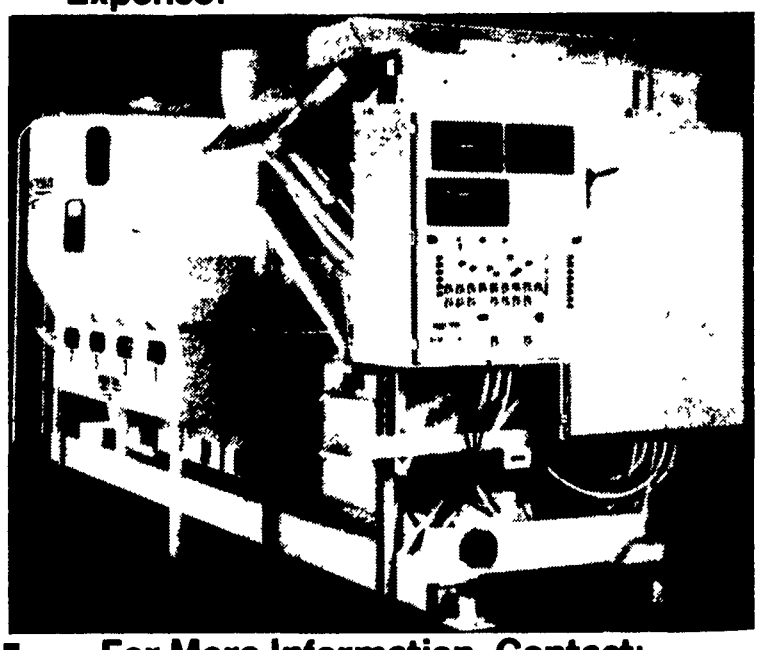

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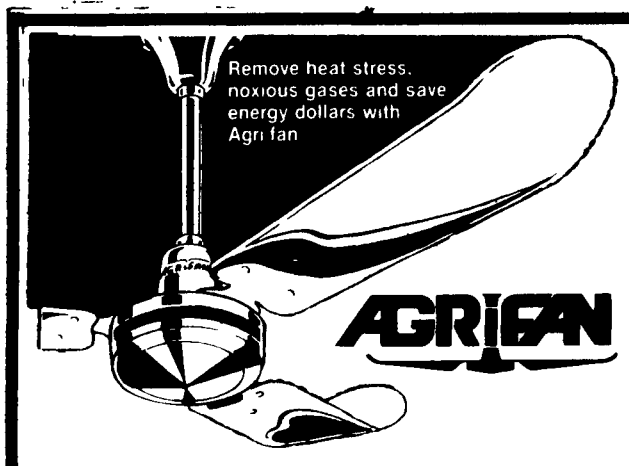

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