

# New Idea: a lot more than 'good spreaders'

COLDWATER, OH — New Idea. If you ask a farmer what that name means, more than likely he'll say, "good spreaders". And there's a very good reason for that association. In 1899, a village schoolmaster named Joseph Oppenheim invented the first successful box-type manure spreader and founded the New Idea Spreader Works in Maria Stein, Ohio. Ever since, manure spreaders have been a very important product line for New Idea.

In the early years, the demand for spreaders was brisk and New Idea grew quickly to become an important manufacturer of spreaders and other farm implements, such as the first steel wagon with automotive-type steering, transplanter and a variety of corn harvesting and shelling equipment. In fact, in 1927, New Idea introduced the first corn picker ever developed for use with a tractor.

Other popular products of those early years included corn shellers, portable elevators, hay loaders, side delivery rakes and field mowers.

### THE AVCO YEARS

The 1940's were turbulent times. And many changes occurred at New Idea as well. Avco Corporation purchased the company in 1945. And the new influx of working capital facilitated many changes and new products.

The Coldwater manufacturing plant was expanded again to greatly improve its manufacturing capabilities. In addition, the increase in financial resources made a series of acquisitions and new product offerings possible. This had a major impact on sales and earnings growth for many years.

For example, in 1951, New Idea acquired the Horn Manufacturing Company of Fort Dodge, Iowa, and added several products to the New Idea line including a stalk shredder, hydraulic loader and a steel wagon.

Then in 1953, Ezee-Flow Corporation was acquired and its line of dry fertilizer spreaders was added to the New Idea family of farm equipment.

Through the '50s and into the 60s, the New Idea product line continued to grow. There were many new hay tools, new spreaders and new corn pickers. And then in 1963, New Idea acquired the manufacturing and marketing rights for the "Uni-tractor" line from Minneapolis Moline. And by 1965, New Idea had introduced the Uni-System...a line of self-propelled harvesting equipment with separate, interchangeable Power Units and processing units.

Through the late '60s and '70s, New Idea improved the Uni-System adding larger, higher horsepower Power Units and increased capacity processing units. And because farms were getting fewer and larger, the New Idea product line changed to include larger spreaders and yet more efficient hay harvesting equipment.

In 1977, a new round baler was introduced. And then again in the fall of 1978, a new generation of larger, 6-row, self-propelled Uni-System harvesters was introduced.

So by the late '70s, the New Idea line was (for a short-line company) extensive. With over 34 acres of manufacturing facility under roof on the 78 acre Colwater site, New Idea was positioned for expansion at a time when few could envision the economic calamity that was about to overtake the U.S. agricultural economy.

In the five years between 1979 and 1984, New Idea aggressively revised its marketing plans, eliminated unrequited burden and inventory, and conceived and executed a survival strategy which worked.

During those years, Avco Corporation decided to focus its resources to the nurturing of its core business of insurance, finance and defense. New Idea was for sale.

But even that didn't stop progress. In 1982, New Idea completed several years of product testing and development and introduced a new generation of conveyor manure spreaders.

In addition, the company introduced the Solids Plus spreader line, a new self-propelled forage harvester, and its 866 windrow pickup, the first pickup of its type to feature automatic header height control.

Then in the summer of 1982, New Idea purchased the hay tool assets from International Harvester. A joint agreement was also announced to manufacture hay tools for IH.

New Idea also introduced a new line of conservation and conventional planters in 1982. Made possible by a marketing agreement with Kinze Manufacturing, the new planter line boosted sales and attracted many new dealers.

### ALLIED BUYS NEW IDEAS

And then on July 20, 1984, the Chicago-based Allied Products Corporation announced its decision to purchase New Idea from Avco.

Allied Products Corporation is a diversified industrial manufacturer with core businesses which include agricultural equipment,

transportation products and materials technology.

Its current agricultural equipment manufacturing holdings include Bush Hog, Kewanee, Continental Gin and New Idea. And while the agricultural economy continues to receive downward pressure from low farm income, high inventories, low prices and weak international demand, Allied Products and New Idea remain profitable. In fact, Allied's 1984 sales grew 81%. And the 122% increase in its common stock book value made it the leading gainer on the New York Stock Exchange during 1984.

New Idea has completed a repositioning for growth. Inventories are trimmed. Facilities are updated. Processes are modernized. And the business is being managed in a lean, yet aggressive manner. New Idea has returned to profitability.

Evidence of their profitability can be seen in the introduction of new equipment. The company recently introduced a new line of very competitively priced manure spreaders which have accounted for a 30% spreader sales growth and significantly increased New Idea's spreader market share.

Other recent product announcements include new low-profile forage harvester heads, new forward fold planters, and new high horsepower Power Units.

All of the new products, as well as the other products currently

being offered to New Idea dealers, include the new company identity and color scheme recently announced. While retaining the well-known New Idea name, the new company logo and colors identify this 84-year old company as an organization that is up-to-date and aggressive.

### NEW IDEA TOMORROW

So what about tomorrow? New Idea management states they are strongly committed to supplying the highest quality products at competitive prices for North America's farmers and ranchers. As an example, the new spreader line now has a list price thousands

of dollars lower than previous models. And while reducing prices, they are improving their quality and making product improvements that offer the best dollar value available to the farmer today.

And in addition, New Idea has diversified its product line with the recent announcement of its new Ford Bronco II Plus for Applied Concepts, which is the first of several new automotive products that will better utilize their 78 acre facility.

If the new New Idea's performance is a sign of things to come, New Idea is once again, a company on the grow.

## York soil project deadline near

YORK — York County farmers in the Conewago and Codorus Creek Watersheds who have critical manure runoff and soil erosion problems may qualify for up to \$30,000.00 to correct potential pollution problems, under the Pennsylvania Chesapeake Bay Financial Assistance Program.

According to York County Conservation District Chairman, Keith Eisenhart, "Farmers in the Conewago and Codorus Creek Watersheds have from January 1-17 to apply for funding under the Bay Program." The locally administered Bay Program provides cost-sharing to farmers for the installation of soil and nutrient

conserving measures such as grass waterways, animal waste storage facilities, and contour stripcropping.

Applications are being taken at the York County Conservation District Office at 118 Pleasant Acres Road, York between the hours of 8:30 and 4:30 and also at the following locations: January 7 at the Dover Township Municipal Building (1 p.m.-8 p.m.); January 9 at the Springfield Township Municipal Building (1 p.m. - 8 p.m.); and January 14 at the Paradise Township Municipal Building (1 p.m. - 8 p.m.). Farmers can find out more about this program by calling the District office at 771-9430.



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