

# Massey to invest \$31.5 million in tractor production

DES MOINES, IA. — The downturn in tractor demand the past few years has presented a relentless challenge to improve tractor manufacturing efficiency and reduce costs.

To meet this challenge, Massey-Ferguson, the western world's largest producer of tractors, is investing over \$31.5 million in its plant for the MF 200 series tractors to improve utilization of plant capacity, streamline production, and increase efficiency.

The plant, located in Coventry, England, is the world's largest for tractors. In 1985 nearly 6,700 tractors made at this plant were sold through the Massey-Ferguson North American sales office in Des Moines, Iowa.

Scott Glover, MF's director of supply, said: "Since 1976, the industry has suffered from over-supply and lagging demand. We needed to match our tractor facilities to the lower sales volumes, while at the same time making better quality products at lower cost to compete effectively with the more than 50 other makers of tractors around the world. These were the key objectives of a strategic plan we put in place two years ago to secure the future of our tractor manufacturing base," Glover explained.

Due to be completed next year, the project includes:

- a major re-layout of machinery and assembly areas using the latest manufacturing technology.
- modernization of "goods

receiving" and component storage.

- a new generation of computerized systems for planning and monitoring production.

- relocation of the engineering center and consolidation of all machining operations into the main plant.

Two major contributions to the manufacturing innovation now in operation are a new installation for assembling transmissions using automated guided vehicles, and a robot paint-spraying facility.

### Automated Guided Vehicles

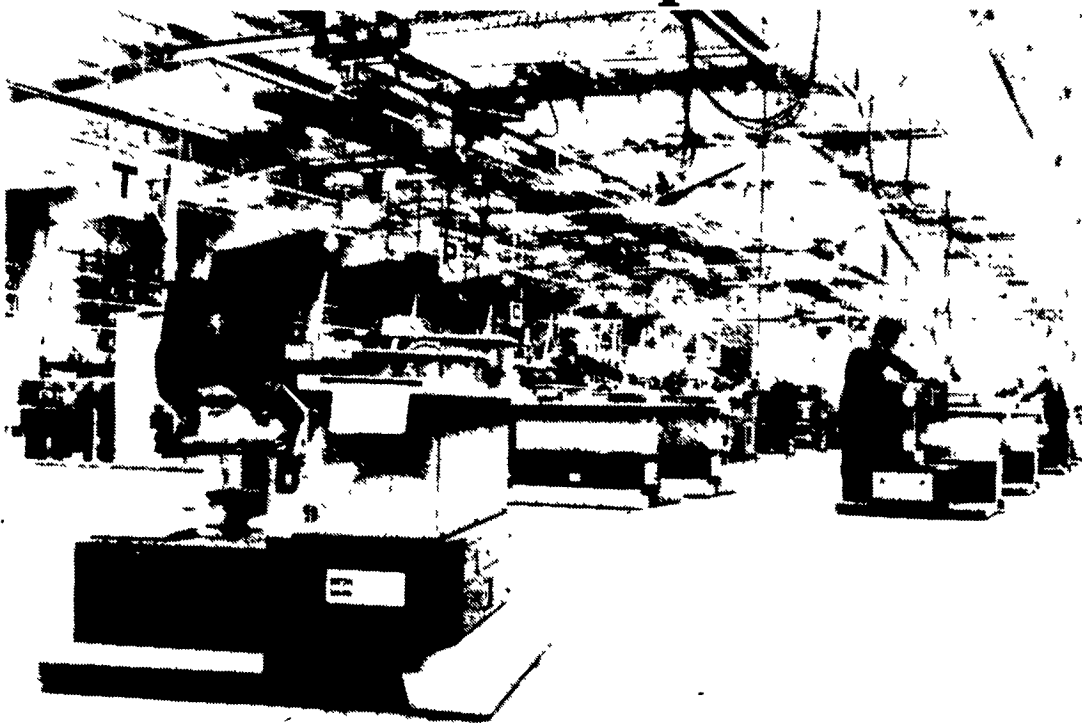
Under the command of a computer system, each driverless vehicle locates and carries all the parts needed to make a transmission, acts as a mobile work station for fitters to assemble the transmission, and delivers the completed unit to test rigs.

The vehicles are controlled by signals from a wire 'loop' buried beneath the floor. An electronic 'eye' and other safety devices on the vehicle ensure that if it should be about to run into anything or anyone, it will stop instantly.

### Robot Painters

The robot paint sprayers can see and recognize up to 100 different shapes and sizes of components, and can paint each one as accurately and expertly as a skilled human operator.

As components enter the paint booth, a line-scan camera identifies them and activates a computerized program to operate the robot arm.



Computer controlled automated guided vehicles handle much of the "leg work" at Massey-Ferguson's tractor plant located in Coventry, England.

Initially, the robots are "taught" how to paint each individual component by a skilled operator using the spray gun manually. Each precise move is repeated automatically by the robot every time the particular component is identified by the camera.

Components are accepted in any sequence, and the robots can make any change in color of the paint needed from component to component.

"All developments in-process or

completed are all part of a program of inter-related activities to help us achieve lower product costs and maintain competitive prices," said Glover.

"Equally important is the flexibility they give to our manufacturing, which will help improve our delivery performance by increasing the speed with which we can respond to changes in market demand and build tractors to the precise specifications wanted by customers."

### Production

Occupying an 83-acre site, the plant has more than 1.5 million square feet of floor space specializing in the production of MF's popular 200 series tractors—economic, medium specification machines in the power range most widely used by the world's farmers—approximately 35 to 90 h.p.

The plant accounts for over half of Massey-Ferguson's world-wide production of tractors, which last year totaled nearly 112,000 units.

## Farm Credit officials see ag problems 'leveling off'

HUNT VALLEY, Md. — While the portrait of gloom and doom is being painted for American agribusiness in today's world, nearly 700 participants at the annual district-wide meeting of the Farm Credit Banks of Baltimore listened to a different song.

During the three days of meetings from March 10 through 12, officials from the 26 affiliated Federal Land Bank/Production Credit Associations and the Baltimore Banks' board of directors heard panel discussions and speakers draw a hardworking picture of success for one of only two profitable districts of the Farm Credit System throughout the nation.

The nine Farm Credit Associations of Pennsylvania sent their own presidents and directors as representatives, while two Pennsylvanians appeared in one of the panel discussions giving their associations' viewpoint on handling and implementing new marketing strategies.

Jay Rush, president of the York Association, and William England, chairman of the board of directors of the West Central Association, participated with three other panelists from the Baltimore Farm Credit District. Rush and England both agreed that the needs of the borrowers must be met in a timely, economic fashion with marketing as a tool to reach borrowers.

"We try to view marketing as the total process of providing credit and related services to farmers and other eligible applicants in such a manner that both their

stated and unstated needs are met now and for the foreseeable future," said Rush, with England adding "We should help our borrowers make more money."

The Farm Credit Banks of Baltimore serve not only Pennsylvania but Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, Delaware and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. One of 12 nationwide districts of the Farm Credit System, the Baltimore Banks are comprised of three separate banking institutions. The Federal Land Bank (FLB) and the Federal Intermediate Credit Bank (FICB) offer long-term and short-term financing along with other financial services to individual farmers and rural home owners through 26 local Farm Credit Associations including the nine associations in Pennsylvania. The third bank within the organization, the Bank for Cooperatives (BC), serves only agricultural cooperatives.

Making his first public appearance as the new head of the Farm Credit Corporation of American (FCCA) at the meeting, H. Brent Beesley took the opportunity to pat the Baltimore District on the back for a job well-done. Chartered last year, the FCCA's purpose is that of strategic planning and central policy making for the entire Farm Credit System.

"Well-managed banks like Baltimore have a legitimate interest in how other districts price their loans," said Beesley referring to some of the ailing districts that the Baltimore Banks

helped by contributing in excess of \$13 million during the past year. "If one district's going to help pay another's bills, you want a voice in setting policy."

Cutting the 1985 yearly earnings in half, the Baltimore Banks were only one of two Farm Credit System districts that operated at a profit in 1985. With the amount contributed and additional operating cost, the Banks showed a \$12.6 million profit.

While the Baltimore District

cannot afford to function with blinders under current economic conditions, the District can enjoy one of the more secure positions, making future change a little less traumatic. Gene L. Swackhamer, President of the Baltimore Banks, reflected on the condition of the District.

"Adversity will not disappear from agriculture in 1986 and the Farm Credit System will not be exempt from its share of the stress," said Swackhamer, "but we are well positioned to adjust.

We have a strong capital base, a proven record of quality borrowers, and a lean and cost-effective operation."

Even though the Farm Credit Banks of Baltimore will continue to aid troubled districts should assistance be necessary, Swackhamer firmly believes the problems are leveling off. Midwest land prices are bottoming and the dawn of lower energy costs will help operating budgets.

## Lewisburg FmHA office announces promotions

LEWISBURG — Two recent promotions in the position of agricultural management specialist occurred in the Lewisburg County office of Farmers Home Administration. Mildred Turner was promoted to county supervisor.

Turner comes to Lewisburg with extensive training and experience in administering the rural housing and farmer programs in FmHA. Her recent past assignment was as an assistant county supervisor in

the Mifflintown County Office of Juniata/Mifflin Counties.

Turner is a graduate of Penn State University, where she earned a Masters degree in Animal Industry from the College of Agriculture. She received a Bachelor's Degree from Murray State University, Kentucky, and an Associate Degree from Alfred State College, Alfred, New York.

"Mille" as she is known, is a native of Elmira, New York, but now resides in Centre County. She is married and has one son.

Joining Turner as assistant county supervisor is William Massey. Massey was transferred from the Wellsboro County office in Tioga County. He is a graduate of the University of Delaware, where he was awarded a Masters degree in Plant Science. He has owned a wholesale nursery business as well as sold real estate.

Bill is a native of Williamsport, but now resides in Franklin County. He is married and has two sons, ages 16 and 13.

## Snell fence tape has high visibility

SAN ANTONIO, TX — Visibility is the key to the success of any kind of fence. With that in mind, the people at Snell Power Fence Systems have introduced a highly visible electric fence tape.

Constructed of heavy duty polypropylene, Snell's unique Polytape is bright orange in color, half an inch wide and hard to miss in any pasture situation. Five strands of stainless steel wire, woven into the Polytape, carry electric current down the fence. Once livestock associate the colorful tape with electric shock, they respect a single strand of Polytape by itself or attached to another fence.

Snell's new Polytape is used primarily for temporary electric fencing functions such as strip grazing and crop protection. However, Polytape's high

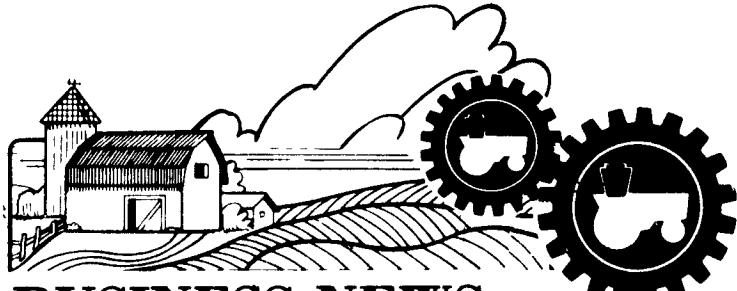
visibility makes it ideal for fencing horses. One or more strands of Polytape running along the top of a barbed or net wire make it easy for horses to see a fence and judge its distance.

Snell's Polytape is available in 655' rolls from Power Fence

dealers throughout the United States. For information on Polytape, and other fencing innovations, contact Snell Systems, Inc. at P.O. Box 1769, San Antonio, Texas 78211. The phone number is (512)494-5211. Outside of Texas call toll free: (800)531-5908.



Snell's bright orange Polytape is woven into five strands of stainless steel wire.



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