



Retailers Association Convention Expo Set

ST. LOUIS, Mo. — The Agricultural Retailers Association (ARA) will be celebrating its fifth anniversary at its Convention & Expo here Dec. 3-4.

Hundreds of retailers will attend to learn more about their industry and how to improve their business.

This year's theme is "Leading the Field." The convention's high impact programs are designed to keep ARA members the leaders in their industry as their business environment continues to evolve.

Michael Bergdahl, vice president of human resources for American Eagle Outfitters, will be the keynote speaker. This former Wal-Mart and PepsiCo executive will tell attendees the secrets to outperforming the pack.

Highlights of the convention include programs providing an economic outlook for the upcoming year, a briefing on environmental laws and information about increasing the added value of one's retail business. Current issues such as

spray drift and narrow-row corn will be discussed. A special spouses and guests program features women's health issues. There will also be programs for ARA's Food For Thought ambassadors about how to make a favorable impact for agriculture in your community.

In addition, multi-grammy nominee, Suzy Bogguss, will entertain the group following the banquet on Thursday night, Dec. 4.

"Our convention creates a forum for retailers to improve their knowledge of the industry," said Paul Kindinger, ARA president and CEO. "This allows them to better serve their customers, thereby improving their business. This year's program provides information critical for retailers to stay ahead and lead their field."

For more information or to make reservations to attend, call Kim Graves at (800) 844-4900 for registration and housing information.

Badger Introduces Liquid Manure Transports

ST. NAZIANZ, Wis. — Badger Farm Systems has introduced a new line of liquid manure transports including four models with 2,300-, 3,000-, 4,200-, or 5,200-gallon capacities.

The round tank design with domed ends provides extra capacity and maximum strength. Forward slope design maintains drawbar weight as tank is emptied.

The large square 30-inch x 30-inch fill opening is in the rear. The combination of rear fill, forward slope design and front unloader prevents settling in the dead end.

Front mounted pump allows over the top discharge and a short drive line, 540 or 1000 RPM. There is in-tank agitation, full pressure injection, and rear or side discharge. Over the top spreading prevents accidental dumping of loads. Front mounted level indicator, especially useful when injection units are being used. Hydraulic drive motor is optional.

The two larger models use semitrailer axles and brakes with up to 2½ times as much brake capability as disk brakes. They are hydraulically actuated from the cab, providing braking forward and reverse, uphill and downhill.



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The two smaller models have hydraulically actuated ag brakes, also cab controlled, with optional choice of the semitrailer brake and axle system. Adjustable axle setting allows adjusting of weight on drawbar, and rebalancing when injection units are added.

Fixed or floating injectors are available with shovels or sweeps for injection or incorporation. Tool bar allows selection of application method.

For long-lasting protection, tanks are sandblasted, primed with epoxy primer and top coated with polyurethane. A wide selection of tires is available, and transport lights are standard.

Hoffman Is Distributor of Novartis Seeds

LANDISVILLE (Lancaster Co.) — Hoffman Seeds, Inc. recently became the exclusive distributor, producer, and marketer of Novartis Seeds products in 13 northeastern states.

"It is Hoffman Seeds' thorough understanding of the needs of the eastern farmer that guaranteed its place as the exclusive distributor of Novartis Seeds products," said

Fred Lepley, president of Hoffman Seeds. "Novartis Seeds has a strong national and international presence and Hoffman Seeds is a powerful regional company. We'll be bringing elite products and technology into a region we've been specializing in for the past 100 years."

Hoffman Seeds' exclusive agreement with Novartis means

Variety Offers Leafhopper Resistance

TIPTON, Ind. — Pioneer introduced and sold the first alfalfa variety with true leafhopper resistance in the spring of 1997. Data from Pioneer and university tests showed this technology is very effective at increasing forage yield under leafhopper pressure.

A number of key events have impacted the perceived success of this product. One of the most significant was the widespread and extraordinary leafhopper pressures encountered in the summer of 1997.

The genetic advantage of leafhopper resistance has been proven even under extremely severe infestations encountered during the 1997 growing season. Under unsprayed conditions, forage yield advantages of one half ton per acre were obtained from 5347LH, compared to that from leafhopper susceptible varieties.

This clearly demonstrates the added value of the new technology. This advantage of growing 5347LH and gaining additional yield under leafhopper pressure gives, on average, a \$405 per bag increased value.

Early promotion and positioning of Pioneer® brand 5347LH alfalfa variety developed in the minds of many the idea of a product with a genetic suit of body armor against leafhoppers.

"Leafhopper Stopper®" conveys the understanding of stopping leafhopper problems, which it does within the population nature of alfalfa varieties. Perhaps the biggest misconception is that ratings for alfalfa mean the same as those used for corn and beans. An alfalfa variety is a population of similar but not identical plants that are characterized by the ex-

pression of different traits, which means there are no bags of alfalfa, including 5347LH, which have 100 percent expression of any trait.

There is a lack of understanding of the differences between hybrids, varieties, and population varieties and the varying levels of trait expression in each of these from one generation to the next. An alfalfa variety is a population of plants that is characterized by percent expression of pest resistant traits. There are no bags of any alfalfa variety that have seed with 100 percent resistance to any disease or pest, including leafhoppers. The industry standard for rating levels of pest resistance (which is also used by Pioneer) shows the number of plants proven to be resistant, based on standard tests.

Variety 5347LH was introduced to the Pioneer product lineup at the same time as corn with European corn borer resistance and soybeans with the Roundup Ready gene. Descriptions of pest resistance for these major products seemed to also bring similar expectations for the leafhopper resistant alfalfa. With Bt resistance in corn it is understood that no spraying is necessary for complete control. This is not the same in reference to the term "resistance" when used for alfalfa. The term tolerance used by other crops, would possibly be more fitting for understanding the standard terms used for describing alfalfa pest resistance levels. However, tolerance is not used as a standard term in the alfalfa industry.

Under the extremely heavy leafhopper infestation in 1997, dramatic visual differences were

seen between sprayed and non-sprayed research plots of 5347LH. The same was true of nonsprayed plots where 5347LH clearly was superior in green foliage and forage yield, compared to non-resistant varieties.

Variety 5347LH was initially tested and rated by Pioneer alfalfa researchers as having 57 percent resistant plants. Using the industry standards for rating varieties, this variety qualified as highly resistant (HR) to leafhoppers. With a refinement of the standard test for this trait, 5347LH is now rated as having approximately 40 percent resistant plants, placing it in the resistant (R) category. This is equal to or above any competitive varieties currently in the market place. In addition, there typically are many plants in this population with partial resistance that are not included for determination of the resistance rating.

Pioneer introduced the first leafhopper resistant variety into the marketplace. Conservative calculations were made over the life of the stand on the expected advantage of growing a resistant alfalfa, versus a non-resistant variety. Even under the severe leafhopper infestations of 1997, data is showing most places up to one half ton yield advantage from 5347LH over unsprayed non-resistant varieties: Assume \$90/ton hay, one half ton per acre yield advantage per year from a leafhopper resistant variety, one bag of seed plants three acres, and a stand life of three years. The calculation would be \$90 x 0.5 x 3 x 3 = \$405/bag advantage from a leafhopper resistant variety.

Novartis Seeds Sports New Look

GOLDEN VALLEY, Minn. — For almost 50 years, farmers planting hybrid corn have opened seed bags and poured red color-treated kernels into their planters. Seed suppliers used the red seed treatment to remind farmers that the kernels were treated with Captan, a fungicide.

Now that is all about to change. Next spring when farmers tear open corn seed bags from Novartis Seeds, Inc. Field Crops, they will find the kernels treated with a fashionable blue color.

The company is replacing Captan with Maxim® AP, a new fungicide. To distinguish NK® Brand seed and the new fungicide from the rest of the seed industry, the company is dyeing its seed

that it will provide the northeastern farmer with new corn hybrids and technology to increase production and profitability. This "Maximizer™ Technology" allows northeastern growers the choice of technologies that are best suited for their particular farming operation and weather conditions. Additionally, Hoffman Seeds will continue in its role as the farmer's source for top-performing products, including Funk's G® Brand and NK® Brand corn hybrids.

Hoffman Seeds will produce, distribute and market all Novartis Seeds NK Brand corn, soybeans, alfalfa, and grain and forage sorghum in the following states: Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, West Virginia, and part of Virginia.

corn blue.

According to Mark Wall, director of quality assurance for Novartis Seeds, the blue color reminds farmers that the kernels have received a fungicidal treatment and should not be fed to animals or humans.

The seed treatment change is more than a fashion statement. The new fungicide protects the seed from a broad spectrum of seed-borne and soil-borne diseases that can keep kernels from germinating.

"With Maxim AP, growers will notice less dust from the seed as compared to Captan," Wall said. "Fludioxonil, the active ingredient in Maxim, allows an application rate that's many times lower than Captan."

Gehl Announces Agreement To Acquire Mustang Manufacturing

WEST BEND, Wis. — Gehl Company (NASDAQ:GEHL) announced that it has signed a definitive agreement to acquire Mustang Manufacturing Company, Inc., a manufacturer of skid loaders.

The agreement specifies a purchase price of \$28 million and requires approval by the shareholders of Brunel Holdings, plc, the parent company of Mustang.

William D. Gehl, chairman, president and CEO of Gehl Company, commented, "Gehl's goal is to be a major competitor in the light construction equipment mar-

ket. The acquisition of Mustang gives Gehl an even stronger presence in one of the fastest growing segments of the construction equipment industry." U.S. sales of skid loaders increased from 22,000 units in 1991 to over 42,000 units in 1996.

The Mustang skid loader product will continue to be marketed under its brand name through its established distribution with manufacturing operations continuing at the Mustang facility in Owatonna, Minn. where approximately 290 people are employed.

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