

# Producer: Get Hay Off Field, Wrapped Quickly

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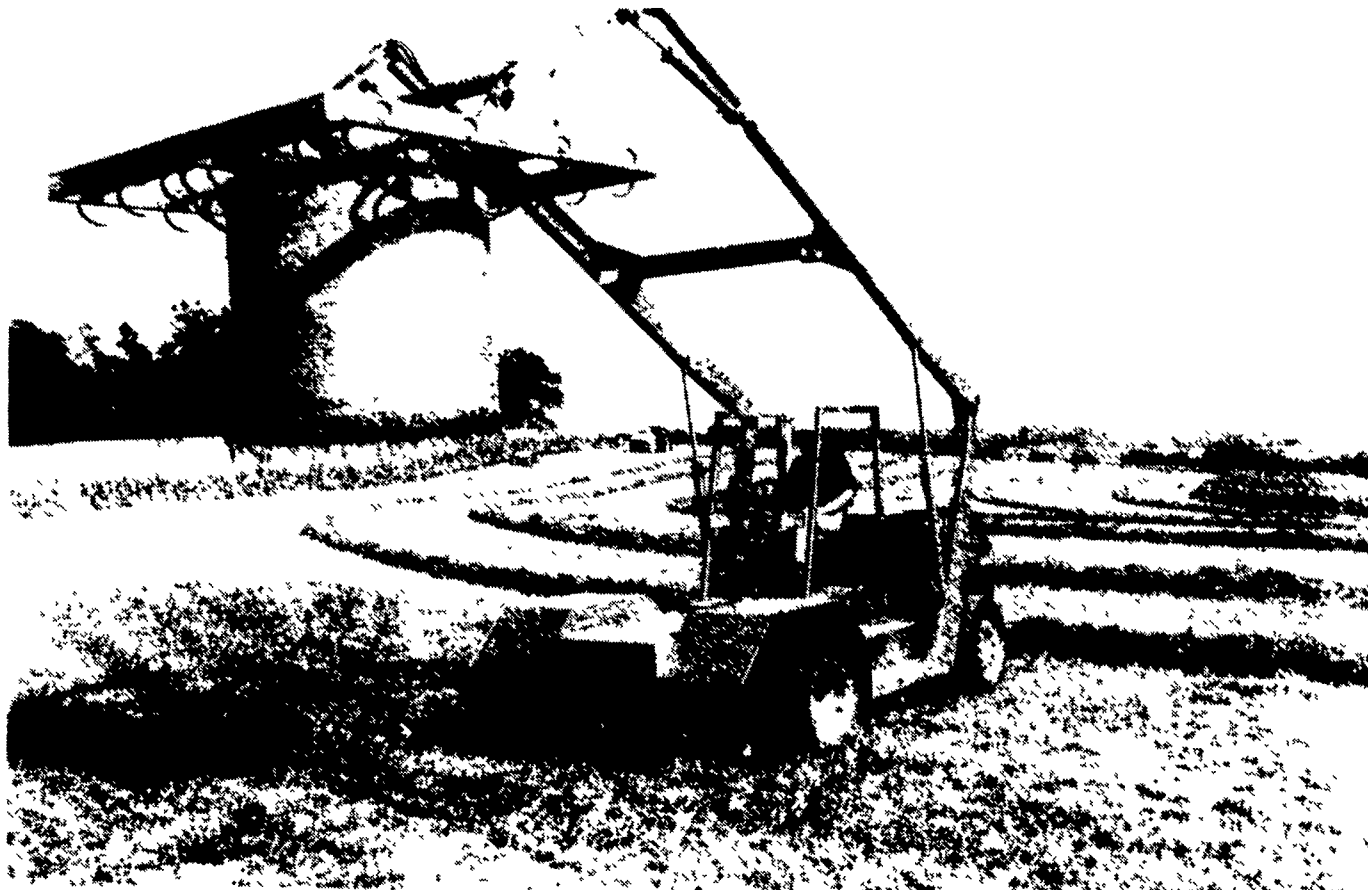
"We are one of the few producer-processor-marketers remaining in the country," Fink said.

Also, Heidel Hollow manages about 20 acres of vegetables, 17 of which are in sweet corn, managed by David's son, Mike. Mike also grows cabbage, beans, and about 1½ acres of plasticulture strawberries. Another son, Travis, helps bale the hay. There are 10 full-time workers in all on the farm.

David Fink, along with wife Sonia, manager of the poultry operation, purchased the farm about two years ago from David's father, Orrin. They bale different types of hay, but so far, "no big square bales," he indicated. About 60 percent are small square bales and 40 percent are round. All baleage is plastic-wrapped. They also double-compress small square bales.

Of particular importance to the farm is the use of drying techniques crucial to bringing the moisture of the square bales down to 15 percent to prevent mold growth, Fink noted. After cutting, the hay is placed in windrows, baled, and palletized.

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conveyed to three drying stations — two of which are fuel-oil fired and one uses forced ambient air.

Depending on the moisture of the hay, outside temperatures, and other conditions, drying can take from 48 hours to seven days, he noted. However, using heating oil can be very expen-

farm uses preservatives "on almost all hay," said Fink. Those preservatives include buffered propionic acid and a drying agent, potassium carbonate, sprayed on at cutting.

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Drier capacity stands at 75 tons per cycle, or about 2,500 bales.

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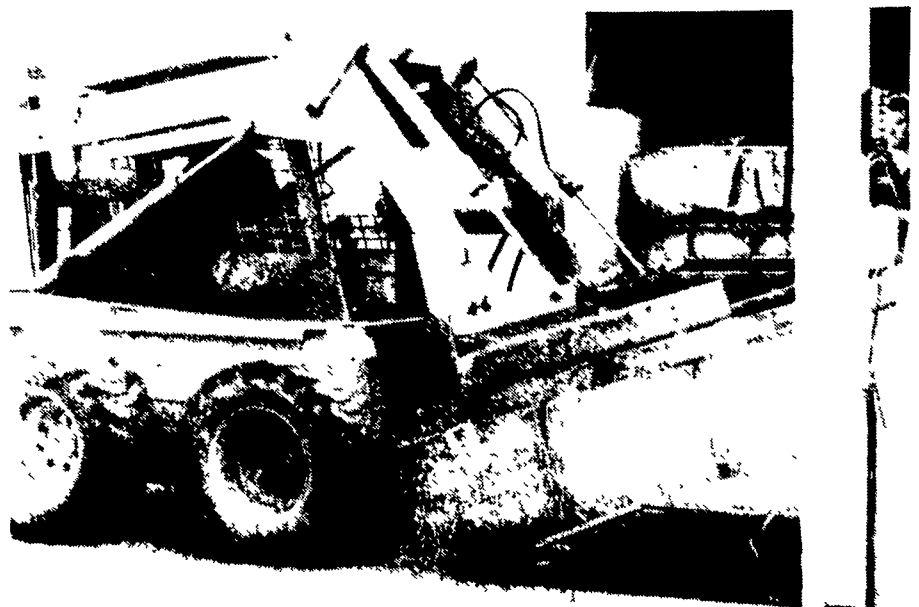


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Recently, David's son Travis, using a skid-steer loader equipped with a bale rack, was loading an eight and a half ton partial load of compressed bales for an overseas market.