

Open-Pollinated Corn Market Growing

By C. F. Marley, Contributing Editor

Since the Borries family and their open-pollinated seed corn business first appeared in FARM SHOW 20 years ago, sales have doubled from 1,000 to 2,000 bushels/year. The Teutopolis, Ill., family business still grows the same four varieties, which they sell to a broad spectrum of customers. Though they don't have a website, articles about them have appeared on the internet, and they have sold seed to every state and around the world.

Gerald Borries, who runs the business with his brother, Leonard, and their 89-year-old father, Joseph, emphasizes that the varieties are most suitable for silage, fed as livestock grain or grown for wildlife. With their highest yield of 100 bushels/acre, open-pollinated varieties can't compete with hybrids for growers who raise cash crops. But palatability, nutrition (7.7 to 11.3 percent protein) and cost brings customers – especially dairy producers – back year after year.

The beauty of open-pollinated varieties is that corn can be saved from the harvest each year to plant the following year. While some customers do that, most don't take the time because the Borries only charge \$50/bushel plus shipping.

The Borries raise their seed corn on 50

to 60 acres (yellow varieties Henry Moore, Reid's Yellow Dent, and Krug; and one white variety, Boone County White). Boone County can grow up to 16 ft. tall and the others grow 12 ft. tall.

The Borries handpick the best ears for seed to sell. They use the same equipment they've used for years; Deere 60 and Farmall 400 tractors and two-row corn pickers. They run ears of corn through a motorized sheller, and size the kernels on a grader before sacking up the seed.

They plant 40 rows of buffer corn next to other farmers' cornfields to keep strains from crossing.

"No GMO traits have been found in testing," Borries says, adding they don't guarantee their seed is totally GMO free. Still, they have maintained the open-pollinated traits since the late 60's. At that time, Joseph purchased corn from an elderly gentleman who had received seed corn as a wedding gift around 1920 and saved seed to plant every year.

When corn blight hit hybrid varieties in 1970, farmers took a renewed interest in old-fashioned, open-pollinated varieties, which weren't affected by the blight.

"Cost of the seed is a big advantage. We



Gerald and Leonard Borries sort through last year's corn crop.

sell to dryland farmers out West who are prepared to take less yield for less input. We tell them that manure is enough," Borries says. "Wisconsin is one of our biggest states because it has lots of dairymen. We get lots of compliments on our silage, which has higher protein, lysine and trace elements."

The main disadvantage of open-pollinated

varieties is they don't have the same stalk strength as hybrids. That makes the stalk more digestible, but susceptible to going down faster in bad weather.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Borries Farm, 16293 E. 1400th Ave., Teutopolis, Ill. 62467 (ph 217 857-3377).



Boyce Equipment of Ogden, Utah buys and sells WWII and Korean War equipment as well as newer stuff. A manure spreader was added to this military truck.

Military Trucks And More

Mark Boyce will sell you a bobtail deuce and a half or sell you a kit, and you can bobtail it yourself, cutting it down from a 6-WD to 4-WD (sells for \$798). If you need a heavy-duty axle for tough conditions, he can sell you that, too. Boyce Equipment has been around for 40 years, and it's still a lot younger than some of the stuff they sell.

"We are still buying and selling WWII and Korean War equipment as well as stuff from 1998 or newer," says Boyce, who grew up in the business. "We often get big beautiful trucks that don't even have 10,000 miles on them."

While rebuilt military trucks is a big part of Boyce's business, so is selling parts, especially axles. The company puts military axles under stock trucks. They also modify the axles.

"We harden the shafts, build brakes to go with the pinion on top of the differential, and replace the drum-style brakes with disc brakes on the hub," says Boyce. "We can also set them up with rear steering, building our own hydraulics and customizing gear ratios for them."

Boyce reworks military trucks for just about any use. The company found a good market selling them to potato farmers in sandy soils of the Pacific Northwest. And they sell Korean vintage axles for use underground in coal mines.

"Miners like them because the front axle is a closed knuckle design, so coal dust doesn't get in," says Boyce. "They're also popular for



While rebuilt military trucks are a big part of Boyce's business, so are parts including axles (above) and bobber kits.



unusual equipment like walnut tree shakers."

"We'll give you an exact list of everything you get, down to the lug nut that holds the steering wheel in place," says Boyce. "We run into people who'll underprice us, but our customers know we'll be here and that we do what we say we'll do."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Boyce Equipment, 2893 S. American Way, Ogden, Utah 84401 (ph 801 393-0007; toll free 800 748-4269; www.boyceequipment.com).

Rolling Burn Barrel Cleans Up Yard Debris

"It's a lot safer and neater than having an open fire on the ground," says Aaron Smith, Big Stone City, S. Dak., about the portable burn barrel he built out of an old 200-gal. fuel barrel.

"I had some old steel wheels, which I put underneath so I could roll it around. The barrel is 5 ft. long and 27 in. wide. I cut a door in one end and attached two hinges with angle iron. I made a handle from a piece of heavy metal that I welded to the door.

"I use it to burn up tree branches and other yard and garden waste. I can take it right to the debris, load it in, and light it. Smoke goes out a couple pipes installed in the top," says Smith.



Smith's rolling portable burn barrel works great to burn tree branches and other yard waste.

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Cone-Shaped Auger Perfect For Tree Planting

Nursery owner Bryant Ferris was tired of using a straight-sided auger to plant trees. "We had to widen out the top of the hole by hand," he says. "Then we found a tapered auger in Canada."

It worked well at their Blue Grass, Iowa, business, and the Canadian company offered them the opportunity to manufacture and sell the auger in the U.S.

There are two-stage augers, Ferris notes, but they believe the one-piece tapered auger has advantages.

"Our fighting isn't steep so dirt sits on it and cleans off to the side of the hole," he says. Simply lift the auger out of the hole and spin the dirt off.

The auger is a hydraulic-drive unit that comes with a round head or hex head drive to fit on skidsteers or compact utility loaders that are popular with landscapers. Augers come in three diameters: 36-in. for \$1,300; 42-in. for \$1,600 and 48-in. for \$1,900.

The auger is designed with a 25-degree angle and one replaceable tooth per half revolution to make holes that handle most tree balls without additional hand digging. The cone shape also keeps dirt from going back into the hole. As a bonus, about a third less dirt is removed so it takes less time and



Cone-shaped auger makes holes that handle tree balls without additional hand digging.

is much easier to backfill holes.

For maintenance, replace the teeth as needed before they wear down too far, Ferris says. The auger shafts are made with schedule 160 pipe. Heavier pipe and extra brackets are available for customers working in rock or hard soil.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Ferris Tree Auger, 3977 Highway 61, Blue Grass, Iowa 52726 (ph 563 381-8733; www.treeauger.com).