

## Wisconsin Engine Experts Stock Hard-To-Find Parts

"We've got a good supply of hard-to-find new and used parts for Wisconsin engines," says Jeff Bobek, who works with his father Jim at EngineMasters in New Lenox, Ill. "My dad started this business about 30 years ago, and over time we've really increased our Wisconsin parts stock. We've bought inventory from dealers who were going out of business, we've salvaged parts from used engines, and we've gotten them from engines traded in for other models that we sell. About 90 percent of what we stock is new parts, and the others are slightly used, but still very functional."

EngineMasters is one of the few businesses that carries a good supply of Wisconsin parts like sleeves, pistons, bearings, gasket sets and carburetors. "Most people we sell to have older engines on industrial equipment like concrete saws, stump grinders, skidsteers, concrete screeds or heavy-duty air compressors," Bobek says. The company ships parts all over the U.S. on a daily basis and some even into Canada.

"The internet has made it easier to work with people from just about anywhere and get them exactly what they need," says Jeff. He's quick to point out that customers need to know the engine model number, the spec number and the serial number before ordering. Numbers from the distributor and magneto are needed to order tune up parts like the cap rotor and points.

Bobek says their business will also re-build older model Wisconsin engines or other engines that are still in use. "We're usually working on re-building 3 or 4 old Wisconsin engines a month," Jeff says. "A person could replace the engine with a different one, but that's not as easy as it seems and a newer engine can be fairly expensive. We can overhaul them generally for about half the price of a new one."

Bobek says their rebuilding service includes engine disassembly, parts inspection and cleaning. All critical components are checked to make sure they're within factory specifications. Crankshafts not within spec



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are re-ground to accept undersize bearings. Cylinders are honed and bored to the next size if necessary. Valves and seats are ground and then the old engine is re-assembled and painted.

During 30-plus years of business the company has built a strong reputation for

doing great work on more than 20 brands of industrial engines.

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## Wisconsin Motors Still Going Strong After 105 Years

"Wisconsin Motors has been in business since 1908 and we're still supplying parts for motors that are well over 50 years old," says Dale Ray, VP of Operations for the company. "Some of the components on those early motors are still around today, because a 3/8-in. bolt is still a 3/8-in. bolt, no matter how old it is." Ray says the company stocks parts for 60 to 70 models and supplies them to distributors and dealers throughout the country.

Ray has been with the company for more than 20 years and says he's amazed at stories he hears from distributors and dealers. "We've got people servicing engines that

were in old military equipment, engines that ran hay balers built in the 1950's, and even some that were used in boats."

These days Wisconsin Motors builds one single and 6 multi-cylinder gasoline engines from 9 to 65 hp. Three of their models carry EPA and CARB certifications and the others are going through certification. The company also builds Continental TM/TME model liquid-cooled engines from 33 to 72 hp. Those models are also offered in LPG, NG and CNG fuels.

"Both Continental and Wisconsin have been around since the early 1900's," Ray says. "Wisconsin originated on the west

side of Lake Michigan and Continental was on the Michigan side. Now they're part of the same company that builds engines used around the world. Continental engines are common in manlifts, front-end loaders, baggage equipment and even small trains."

Dyer says anyone who needs parts or service for Wisconsin or Continental engines can inquire through the company's website, www.wisconsinmotors.com. The Support section lists more than 70 product models with extensive documents, manuals and specification sheets, including piston, ignition and valve specs. The company's customer service department will provide the name

of a nearby dealer to contact for repair parts and more information. "We've got a great network of dealers out there, and many of them have a long history of working on our engines, no matter what age they are. Some dealers also do an excellent job at rebuilding," Ray says.

The company does business by mail or internet only.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Wisconsin Motors, 10 Industrial Dr., Dyer, Tenn. 38330 (www.wisconsinmotors.com).

## "Beehive" Forklift Built From Zero-Turn Riding Mower

Commercial forklifts designed to move beehives cost thousands of dollars. John Graf and his dad saved a lot of money by building their own out of an old Bobcat zero-turn riding mower.

"It works great and can easily move 2 beehives at a time. The best part is that I can move all my beehives by myself without any help," says Graf.

They cut away the front half of the Bobcat, keeping the engine, hydrostatic transmission, frame, seat and wheels. They flipped the seat around so they could drive the machine in reverse. They also used lengths of pipe to extend the front caster wheels.

"We tried mounting the forklift on front and running the machine as it was originally designed, but the forklift took too much weight off the rear wheels and they would spin without gaining any traction," says Graf. "Now all the weight is over the engine and rear drive wheels so traction is never a

problem. The forklift makes the machine a little front-heavy, so we mounted a concrete box on back to help balance the load."

They used schedule 40 pipe to build both the forklift and mast. The forklift carriage bolts to a metal bracket that's welded to the mower frame. The forklift is raised and lowered by an electric-operated ATV winch. The winch mounts on top of a steel cage that surrounds the driver, with cable extending down over a pulley at the bottom of the mast. The forklift is hinged at the bottom, allowing an electric actuator to tilt the forklift forward or backward. Switches mounted on the mower's control levers are used to raise and lower the mast and to tilt the forklift.

"Handling beehives that weigh from 150 to 200 lbs. when filled with honey is a tough job. Our forklift makes the job a lot easier," says Graf. "We bought the winch, electric actuator, and 4 new tires. Our total cost was about \$300. Commercial forklifts designed to



John Graf and his dad saved a lot of money by building this "Beehive" forklift out of an old Bobcat zero-turn riding mower. It can easily move 2 beehives at a time.

move beehives can move 4 hives at a time, but they cost thousands of dollars."

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## Collar Tracks How Much Grass Cattle Eat

Keith Betteridge is a senior agricultural research scientist in New Zealand who knows that one of the toughest things about managing a herd pasture is determining how much cattle eat. Recently he found a solution to that dilemma by inventing a cow collar that takes pasture readings as live-stock are grazing and sends the results to a central data center.

"Only 20 to 25 percent of farmers regularly measure pasture mass on their farms," Betteridge says. "The rest do it by eye, which can be very inaccurate."

Betteridge says his method will help a producer more effectively manage grazing, especially if cattle are being rotated from one paddock to another. "In the winter, animals are on a tight pasture ration that can be consumed in 2 or 3

hrs.," Betteridge says. "The cow collar will provide information so the cattle can be moved after a certain amount is consumed. If the animals remain too long, they could easily cause damage to the pasture."

Betteridge and associates have started a company called FarmSense to produce the cow collar.

A cell phone notification from the data center will be the main point of contact once the collars are on the grazing cattle. Betteridge and his partners are continuing development on the design, securing a patent and hope to have the product available within a year.

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