

# Congratulations On 50 Years!

I worked at FARM SHOW for 45 years, starting at age 23 in 1978, soon after graduating from college. Harold Johnson and his wife, Joan, had just started the publication the year before, and it already had more than 40,000 paid subscribers. They started the magazine in a closet-sized office with help from a couple of neighbor ladies. Harold had been an editor for 20 years at Farm Industry News and The Farmer Magazine, but he was frustrated that he often couldn't run stories that might annoy big advertisers. His answer: a first-of-its-kind no-advertising publication that wasn't beholden to the big ag companies. Right from the start, FARM SHOW's "Best & Worst Buys" section became extremely popular because farmers could "tell it like it is" when nominating best-buy products or lemons that failed because of manufacturing defects or poor customer service.

Within a few years, FARM SHOW had more than 175,000 paid subscribers from all over the USA, Canada and around the world. No other publication covered new farm inventions and equipment modifications the way we did. Our editors traveled across North America, Europe and Australia to farm equipment shows in search of the latest ideas and inventions.

Harold retired in 1994, when I took over the business. I ran it until 2019, when I sold it to Scott Geyer, who now serves as both editor and publisher. Over the years, we've had many outstanding writers, including Bill Gergen, Jim Ruen, Lorn Manthey, Dee Goerge, Lydia Noyes and Bruce Derksen.

The key to FARM SHOW's success over the past 50 years has been our readers, who send us a steady stream of "made it myself" ideas, "best buys," shop tips, farm business ideas, and more. We couldn't have kept going without that input from loyal readers.

Congratulations to all FARM SHOW staff, past and present, on reaching 50 years. I have no doubt the next 50 years will be just as successful!

*My most cherished FARM SHOW memories are of the many "world's first" inventions (and inventors) we covered over the years. Here are a few that stand out in my mind:*



**Mark Newhall**  
Editor Emeritus



## "Lemon Baler"

In 1997, Melroy Buhr sued John Deere over his 535 baler and won a judgment of \$28,992 in court. Buhr painted a bright yellow lemon on the side of the baler and took it to Deere's annual meeting, parking it right out front to bring attention to his case. The court agreed with the custom baler that the machine had not worked properly since the day he brought it home in 1993. (Vol. 21, No. 1)



## Folding 40-Ft. Grain Header

In the boom years of the early 1980s, as the size of farm equipment grew rapidly, some farmers solved the problem of transport themselves. A Kansas farmer with multiple fields spread over a wide area installed hinges on either side of his 40-ft. grain header to make transport down narrow country roads possible without dismantling the header. (Vol. 5, No. 4)



## ATV Land Roller

A New Zealand farmer who raises livestock in a very wet part of the country patented a method for mounting 55-gal. drums on his ATV to flatten damaged pastures. "It also lets me get out into wet fields during times when a conventional tractor would get bogged down," said Paul Rivers. (Vol. 28, No. 6)



## Vacuum Harvester Sucks Up Native Grass Seed

When a Montana farmer came up with this amazing vacuum harvester 19 years ago, there was a strong market for native grass seed. However, harvesting it was very difficult. The vacuum harvester solved the problem with rotating combs that dislodged ripe seeds so they could be sucked into a cyclone separator. The seed then dropped into bags at the back of the machine. (Vol. 31, No. 1)



## "Made It Myself" Grain Vacuum

In 1983, Iowa farmer Roger Datisman turned an old silage blower and a 200-bu. grain wagon into a giant vacuum for cleaning out bins and grain pits. A "nozzle" made from 8-in. flexible steel tubing quickly sucked high volumes of grain into the wagon. (Vol. 7, No. 6)



## World's Largest Street-Legal Pickup

When this CXT pickup went into production in 2004, it was built on the chassis of an

International 7300 dump truck but had the styling of a conventional pickup. Unlike most monster trucks, it was fully street-legal and designed to work. The cab topped out at 10 ft., 2 in., and the curb weight totaled 16,800 lbs., twice as much as a commercial Hummer. (Vol. 35, No. 5)



## FARM SHOW Met The Queen

In 1981, while covering the Royal Show in England, FARM SHOW had a close-up encounter with Queen Elizabeth. The Royal Show was just one of several international farm shows we covered over the years, but it was one of the most interesting because a member of the royal family visited every day it was open. (Vol. 5, No. 5)



## Kinze Copied Deere Planter Unit

In 1980, FARM SHOW was the only magazine in the country to write about a patent dispute between Kinze Mfg. and Deere when Kinze copied Deere's popular Max-Emerge planter row units. Deere had been selling Max-Emerge row units to Kinze for its big folding toolbars, but as they grew more popular, it refused to sell the company additional units. "It was either this or be forced out of the planter business entirely," said Kinze before winning the patent lawsuit in court. (Vol. 4, No. 2)



## Farmer Built His Own Articulated Combine

One of the most amazing inventors I met over the years was Wayne Vogel of Fremont, Mich., who built his own articulated combine from scratch in 1981. The only parts salvaged from other combines were the header, sieves, cab and discharge auger. In addition to the corn and bean harvester, Vogel also built vegetable harvesters unlike anything else on the market. (Vol. 7, No. 3)



## Crop Dryer Burned Shelled Corn

During the energy crisis in the 1970s, some farmers started burning their own corn to dry grain. A Midwest company claimed its corn-burning furnace operated competitively with propane and was even more cost-effective if you had damaged corn to burn, which would not otherwise be salable. (Vol. 3, No. 3)



## Combine-Mounted Grain Dryer

Canadian researchers built this on-the-go combine-mounted grain dryer in 1986. Mounted on a Deere 6600, the dryer's heat exchanger drew heat off the engine cooling fluid. It mounted directly over the grain tank, requiring minimal modification to the machine. (Vol. 10, No. 6)