

Crop Production

Biodiesel takes another step forward



By TOM J. BECHMAN

CUMMINS Inc., the Columbus, Ind.-based engine manufacturer, didn't get to be a worldwide leader by taking chances. That's why the company's announcement that it

now approves B20 biodiesel in many of its engines speaks volumes.

Previously, Cummins approved B5 blends. The engine giant was reluctant to go further until it was assured that consistent, high-quality B20 blends were available.

Deere tests planter controls

Get used to hearing the name Swath Control Pro. John Deere expects it to be commercially available in 2008.

The ability to turn sprayer boom sections on and off automatically has grabbed headlines during the past 12 months. Now Deere says this new system will automatically turn planter units on and off. Partnering with Tru Count Inc., Deere says up to 16 sections on a planter can be controlled.

Swath Control Pro works with the StarFire iTC position receiver and GreenStar 2 display. The system can be adapted to Deere, Kinze and Deere-

Bauer-built planters.

Check out the Web site www.johndeere.com for more information about Swath Control Pro.

Command your seed

Ag Leader, Ames, Iowa, also has an entry in the planter-control market. SeedCommand is a new feature for Insight displays and allows AutoSwath to work with planters, automatically turning individual sections on and off.

SeedCommand also has a steering controller and universal control unit. It can map variety and hybrid locations, and record split-planter operations. One farmer used the unit on 3,000 acres in '06 and claims it saved more than \$5,000 in seed costs alone.

Learn more about Ag Leader products on the Internet at www.agleader.com.

Ethanol edge

Look for more companies to promote hybrids better suited for ethanol production. Garst Seed Co., Slater, Iowa, touts 18 of its hybrids as ExtraEdge DGE hybrids. They were tested for performance in dry-grind ethanol plants using methods established by the University of Illinois. Researchers there are among the leaders in determining how much ethanol can be produced from a specific dry-grind sample.

Note that no extra premiums are tied to producing these hybrids.

New steering entry

Reichardt, a company with German ties, introduces Ultra Guidance PSR as a complete system to steer tractors and self-propelled machines.

In one interesting twist, Reichardt uses three antennas feeding a dual-frequency real-time kinematic receiver to account for tilt compensation and to track the implement. This technology prevents implement draft when working across side slopes.

Autosteer bobble

Autosteering isn't perfect. One farmer tried it on a self-propelled mower-conditioner only to find the rear "crazy wheels" drove him crazy.

Until someone resolves it, he says he's reverting to manual guidance.

Keeps on ticking

Anyone older than 35 should remember actors dousing Timex watches in the ocean or hitting them with a hammer. The watches still ticked. An announcer then would say: "Timex. Takes a licking and keeps on ticking."

Onset Computer Corp., located in Bourne, Mass., makes similar claims about its TidbiT data loggers. Through bizarre circumstances, the loggers were mistaken for pipe bombs and "water-blasted" by the Minneapolis-St. Paul airport bomb squad.

The loggers contained data from an important five-month underwater research study. The researcher recovered data from several units, even after detonation, and then sent the rest to Onset. Engineers there were able to recover more data.

Visit the Web site www.onsetcomp.com for more information about the data loggers.

ADVANCED GRAIN HANDLING TECHNOLOGY THAT DOESN'T NEED GPS

Load-carrying tapered roller bearing assembly

Built with heavy-gauge steel and cables

Square tubing adds strength

Wide stance improves stability

Exclusive lift system requires less PSI to raise / lower

Square flighting couplers eliminate broken shear pins

Swing-away auger can be used on either side of the main auger

Self-leveling hopper available with hydraulic drive wheels

Buhler Farm King has been building augers for almost three decades. The Backsaver Auger, with a swing-away auger and self-leveling hopper, represents the pinnacle of auger technology after years of on-farm testing and refinement. In addition to innovative features, Buhler augers include a two-year parts warranty and are available in various lengths with 10" and 13" tube sizes.

Visit your Buhler dealer or www.buhler.com.

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