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Travelling Man

Mac

Demaray Harvesting brings workers from all over the globe to Custom Harvest and they are spreading the word about MacDon FlexDrapers.

Big City Sprawl

Despite increased urban sprawl from New York City, Clucas Farms continues to make hay in the area.

Dealer's Pride

Vitamech's Dudley Fourie gives the story of how the South African firm became a distributor of MacDon equipment.

Supporting Rural Rescues

MacDon supports STARS for much needed facility enhancements.

Fall 2018 Issue: 25

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MacDon Industries Ltd.

680 Moray Street Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R3J 3S3 t. (204) 885 5590 f. (204) 832 7749

MacDon, Inc. 10708 N. Pomona Avenue Kansas City, Missouri, United States 64153-1924 t. (816) 891 7313 f. (816) 891 7323

MacDon Enterprises, Inc. Suite 140 - 5315 Wall Street Madison, Wisconsin, United States 53718 t. (608) 286 1420

MacDon Brasil Agribusiness Ltda. Rua Grã Nicco, 113, sala 202, B. 02 Mossunguê, Curitiba, Paraná CEP 81200-200 Brasil t. +55 41 2101 1713 f. +55 41 2101 1699

MacDon Australia Pty. Ltd.

A.C.N. 079 393 721 P.O. Box 103 Somerton, Victoria, Australia 3062 54 National Boulevard, Campbellfield, Victoria, Australia 3061 t. +61 3 8301 1911 f. +61 3 8301 1912

MacDon Europe GmbH Hagenauer Strasse 59 65203 Wiesbaden Germany

LLC MacDon Russia Ltd.

123317 Moscow, Russia 10 Presnenskaya nab, Block C Floor 5, Office No. 534, Regus Business Centre t. +7 495 775 6971 f. +7 495 967 7600



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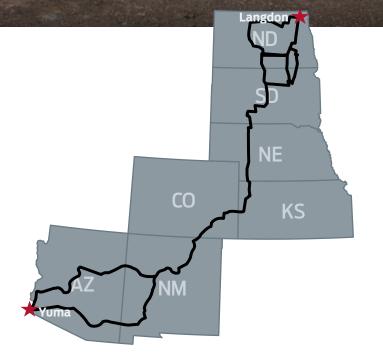


Left to right; Billy Kelly, Jonathan Browne, Micky Kane, Tim Demaray, John Cullinan, Trevor Beavais, David Forkan



Travelling Man

Demaray Harvesting brings workers from all over the globe to Custom Harvest and they are spreading the word about MacDon FlexDrapers.



n a bygone era, young Irishmen like Billy Kelly - those who are eager for adventure and foreign travel - might have joined the navy or merchant marines. But in 2018, they have another kind of fleet they can join; the armada of custom cutting combines that starts out every spring in southern states like Texas or Arizona to follow the ripening grain northwards.

"The way I see it, I'm getting paid to see the world," said Kelly who hails from the county of Kerry in Ireland's southwest. "To me it's a holiday. Where else could you start in Arizona and finish up 10 miles inside the Canadian border. You get to see the country from one end to the other, not just the cities. It's a way to see the real America that not many people from my part of the world can say that they have seen."

Kelly is just one of hundreds – if not thousands – of workers employed by America's custom grain harvesters every year under the US Government's



H-2A Program which permits agricultural employers to hire foreign workers for seasonal work. This year alone, according to statistics published by the US Department of Labor, approximately 200,000 foreign workers were issued Visas under the program for employment on everything from dairies to tobacco farms across the US.

"If the government didn't allow this H-2A program we would be out of business, it's just that simple," said Tim Demaray, owner of Demaray Harvesting, the company for which Kelly works. "It is impossible to hire enough American workers to operate this equipment seasonally. It is absolutely impossible."

While opting to hire foreign workers has become a necessity for many custom cutters, Demaray says that the solution is not without its complications.

"We have to go through a lot of red tape to get them here.

The process for the visa application can take three months alone. Once the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) has approved our application and the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) issues the visas, the selected personnel have to go to their respective consulates for an interview, which can take quite a while to schedule. Then they have to wait for their visas to arrive and arrange for their flight over here. Once over they then have to apply for a social security number, which takes another week, and then they have to get a Department of Transportation physical so that they can apply for a commercial drivers licence. After that they have to take a written test and then wait another two weeks before they can take the practical test. It's all very time consuming."

Demaray says that he has to get his foreign workers to his base in Arizona by the third week of April, so that they can complete this process in time for the beginning of his harvest run in mid-May.



"I try to hire people who have experience related to what we are doing, either driving trucks or who have worked on farms doing work like silage harvesting. I have found that European drivers, especially if they have experience driving on both sides of the road with right hand steering, tend to be pretty skilled drivers. We also tend to get a lot of hires through referrals from people who have worked for us before."

He also needs people willing to put in long days of hard work, sometimes for weeks on end without much break.

It's a profile that fits Billy Kelly to a tee.

"Back home I come from a farming background and normally work construction where I run an excavator. I knew a guy who worked for Tim a few years ago and now I am here. Back in Ireland it is all forage harvesting, because it is all dairy. I have driven lots of forage harvesters, but never grain combines." Because many of his foreign employees have limited experience with combines, Demaray says that it is important that the equipment he uses is both easy to handle and maintain.

"Ten of my eleven Case combines are currently running FDI FlexDrapers, and the last one an FD75. I really like the FlexDraper's reliability and the job it does. We also don't have any trouble with chopping the reel fingers off, which is easy to do with other headers. It's just a really nice operating head for us and not much cost to maintain."

Kelly, still in his first year custom cutting, confirms that Demaray's FlexDrapers make his job easier.

"The FlexDraper's simplicity is amazing. Because there is nothing that can go wrong you can go hours and hours without stoppage," said Kelly. "There's nothing difficult to do on that header and maintenance is so easy anyone can do it." "Down in Arizona we ran these MacDon headers in downed wheat alongside some guys who didn't have MacDon's and, to be honest, those poor guys had an awful time of it. But we didn't have any trouble with crop feeding then or after. Sometimes, when we were in standing canola that was quite green, the combine would plug but not the header – it always worked flawlessly. Having a header like the FlexDraper® makes our jobs easier, without a doubt."

Micky Kane, another foreign worker on Demaray's crew, concurs.

"In terms of reliability this year our FlexDrapers have been fantastic. We really haven't had any major breakdowns, or needed to do any major work on them" said Kane who calls Leicestershire, England, home.

"Having a header like the FlexDraper[®] makes our jobs easier, without a doubt."

Kane, who is in his fifth year custom cutting and seventh "consecutive summer" harvesting, says that he has also spent time cutting in Australia and New Zealand, all to get more experience on combines. Working for Demaray that experience has included time in wheat, barley, canola, soybeans and specialty crops like chickpeas, pinto beans, navy beans and edible beans.

"I first became interested in combines working for a small grower in England, who had a small combine to cut his crops. Back home I never saw a draper front running; everyone told me that they weren't suitable for the heavier European crops. But now that I've seen these FlexDrapers perform in heavy, tough green straw similar to what conditions would be like at home, I think they would work brilliantly on our farms."

"In fact, if the grower I used to work for asked my opinion, I'd say that these FlexDrapers would definitely be an improvement over what he is using now, especially in things like beans. I remember using a rigid header to cut his beans, and we experienced lots of header loss. These FlexDrapers would help with that."

When Performance Magazine caught up with Demaray's crew for this interview, they were working on a job in northern North Dakota, not far from MacDon's headquarters in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The proximity afforded everyone the opportunity to visit MacDon's plant and see how the headers that they have been using all summer are made.

"The whole process of making a FlexDraper is amazing. Seeing how a flat piece of steel can go in one end of the shop and a finished header comes out the other is really something," recalled Kelly. "The simplicity of MacDon's operation is also impressive, because when you look at a header it is very complex, but it seems that MacDon has the process fine-tuned so everything is done very efficiently."



Touring MacDon's plant was equally revealing for Kane.

"MacDon's factory did surprise me in that it was a lot more high-tech than I imagined. I would have thought that a smaller company like MacDon might be a little behind factories like Case or John Deere, which I have also visited. But some of the technologies that I saw MacDon using are on par - or better - than those I saw at larger manufacturers."



Kane says that one of the real takeaway benefits from the tour for him was seeing the FlexDraper in all its stages of manufacture.

"It was nice for us guys who run the headers to see the actual skeleton of the header and how it is put together, especially where it is welded and where it is bolted. That will be helpful should we ever need to do any work on the headers, because we will have a good memory of all that." Demaray confirms that the opportunity to see behind the scenes at MacDon was appreciated by everyone on his crew, because so many of them are here to drive the latest harvesting equipment.

"Everyone made comments to me that it was one of the highlights of their trip over here."

MacDon[®] Performance Parts

Keep your MacDon at peak performance with MacDon Performance Parts.

New Parts Showcase:

All new MacDon Performance Parts are designed to meet MacDon's demanding performance standards. They have been tested in the toughest real-world conditions, ensuring the worry-free harvest you've come to rely on with MacDon. They offer the added benefit of convenience and are engineered to be of the highest quality. Our genuine parts have been created with our customers in mind.

Check out the 5 latest offerings from MacDon Performance Parts...



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MacDon Performance Parts Kits are designed for convenience. Choose from a variety of kits packed with common high wear items for your MacDon Drapers and Windrowers. Keep them on hand and ensure a smooth running harvest, every time.

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Order one convenient parts kit containing high wear draper header replacement parts that are required by your MacDon header. Sickle sections, guards, wearplates, fingers and hardware are all included in this user-friendly kit. Draper header kits are available for MacDon FD1/D1/FD75 and D1XL/D1X/D65 machines.

Annual Filter Kit

MacDon has your filter requirements covered with this convenience kit containing all of the filters you need for your first round of Windrower maintenance. Kits include air, hydraulic, fuel, and oil filters. Have these filters by your side and ready to go when it's time to do maintenance on your Windrower. Available for M105, M155, M155*E*4, M205, M1170 and M1240 model windrowers.

Split Finger Holders

Tired of having to completely dis-assemble your combine adapters and drums just to replace fingers? The new Split Finger Holders from MacDon allows farmers to save time and frustration by simply splitting apart their finger holders on their combine adapter/drum. It's as easy as removing hardware and installing new fingers to get you up and running again.

Crop Lifters

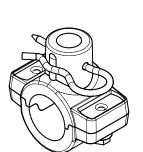
Designed by MacDon, for your MacDon, genuine Crop Lifters lift lodged crop off the ground when crop has been flattened. MacDon crop lifters offer a custom fit specifically designed for MacDon headers, offering optimal performance through all header tilt angles.

Hollow RTD Finger (available only for FM100 float modules)

Redesigned and re-engineered FM100 Hollow RTD Fingers were developed with MacDon equipment owners in mind. These fingers undergo a special heat treating process that provide maximum strength, while still allowing the finger to break versus bending, preventing potential damage to combine drums.

Learn more and find your local MacDon Dealer at MacDonPerformanceParts.com











Big City Sprawl

MacDon R116 PT

Despite increased urban sprawl from New York City, Clucas Farms continues to make hay in the area.



ncreasingly unpredictable weather patterns, fickle commodity pricing and ever rising labor and input costs; to be a farmer today is to wake up to challenge every morning. But when your farm lies alongside Donald Trump's Bedminster Golf Club, the et of challenges you face are perhaps a bit more eccentric than your typical farmer.

"When Trump stays here over the weekend we've got people coming up and down the roads to watch the military helicopters fly over the farm to bring him in," says Scott Clucas, a third generation farmer who manages a 4,600 acre (1862 ha) grain and hay farm near Califon, New jersey, about 50 minutes due west of New York City.

"Some of our land is right up against the golf course and we have to talk to the secret service just to get onto it. They'll follow us in and will watch us begin mowing for a little bit and then drive away. I guess that would be something that most farmers don't have to deal with."

"Our big challenge is that it's hard to get down our roads with machinery now. New Jersey was founded back in the 1600 or 1700s, and a lot of our roads remain tiny horse and buggy tracks."

Beyond the added excitement of the President's visits, Clucas says that being one of the closest grain farms to New York City (the Manhattan skyline can be seen from a hill behind his yard), has meant that the city's expansion is placing increasing pressure on the viability of his operation.

"Population wise, our county is about 15 times the size it was when I was a kid. It has gone from being a one horse rural town to a very wealthy community that knows little about agriculture. Everything you think of when you think of urban sprawl, we're in it."

One of the bigger pressures he faces comes from both the town as well as some of the "urban" landlords he rents land from. Both factions are requesting that he change his farming practices to better protect the environment. "A huge topic with a lot of the new landlords is that they really want to see me adopt organic farming. Now I pretty much refuse, because the added cost is unwarranted. There's not too many farmers here so there is not a lot of opportunities for them to have their ground farmed."

Another impact of the urban sprawl is the significantly increased road traffic it has brought to the area.



"For me as a farmer the faster I get it down and get it drying, the faster I can get off the mower and onto other things."

"Our big challenge is that it's hard to get down our roads with machinery now. New Jersey was founded back in the 1600 or 1700s, and a lot of our roads remain tiny horse and buggy tracks. New York and New Jersey drivers are all the same, the roads may be narrow but they still do 100 miles per hour (160 km/h). If we need to transport at rush hour, and go around these blind turns pulling a 13 foot (3.96 m) or wider mower, it's just too risky now to attempt."

It was exactly that which first brought Clucas to the MacDon product line. MacDon's R1 Rotary Disc mower, with its optional Road Friendly Transport option, allows an operator to reduce the width of a 13' (3.96 m) or 16' (4.88 m) mower to just nine feet, making it safer to transport.

"The R1's transport was key for us. With our old mowers if it got to a certain time of day we couldn't move to the next field because traffic would pile up too much. As such, I had to run two mowers, parked in different fields, to keep working. But now with the R1, I can get all my work done with just one."

The primary customer for Clucas's 900 acres (964 ha) of timothy hay, orchard grass and brome grass is the many horse farms in the area.

"I think we compete with Kentucky for as many horses per square mile. Our farms are smaller, but there are a lot of places with 30 or 40 horses on just 20 acres (8 ha). Many of these aren't serious breeders - the horses are primarily for trail riding and showing."

Despite all the challenges of farming in this community, Clucas still takes great pride in delivering a quality product.

"I'm not in this farming business to make a fortune, but I do like to grow a good crop. It doesn't always happen, but I always go in with full intentions of doing the best I can."

Beyond the transportation benefits of the R1, Clucas says that he and his nine employees have been more than satisfied with the in-field performance of his two units (he keeps his older second R1 parked for 'just in case' situations).

"For me as a farmer the faster I get it down and get it drying, the faster I can get off the mower and onto other things. Our labor costs are very high here and any time I can cut down on that in any sort of way or have someone doing something other than cutting, is a big help."

"We run four small square balers so I have to cut 100 acres (40.5 ha) or better at a clip to keep those things rolling. We also try to get three cuts a year and it's safe to say that we put as many acres on our mower as many of the bigger farmers out west. I used to have to run two other disc mowers to stay ahead, but now I can do that with a single R1."

Clucas reports that he has also been impressed with the level of support that he has received from his MacDon dealer and the company itself.



"MacDon's people have been really good to work with. They have come out with engineers to look at the mower without even asking – just to check up on the wear and tear of the unit and see if they can do anything for us. However, anything that has gone wrong so far has been self-inflicted, and there hasn't been anything that they haven't been able to take care of."

But Clucas's experience with MacDon isn't limited to mowing hay. He also owns a 30' (9.1 m) FDI as well as an older FD75 35' (10.7 m) model. He bought both a few years back to replace a couple of flex augers that he hadn't been happy with after seeing a FlexDraper® demoed in some soybeans under extremely challenging conditions.

"The beans they demoed in were about 8" (20.3 cm) tall and it was practically snowing; you know muddy conditions that usually give you trouble. But that FlexDraper just handled those beans perfectly."

Like other FlexDraper customers, Clucas has been very pleased with their performance in his wheat and his soybeans, but especially his wheat where he has enjoyed a couple of unexpected benefits.

"I've always run two combines to cut my wheat, but this year we only needed one because the FlexDraper handled it just great. We were even dealing with downed wheat, but it didn't matter because the header just sucked it right in."

"We also sell our straw for bedding and have found that the FlexDraper makes it easier to sell because we have zero wheat heads in the straw. People get concerned if there are any heads in the straw because the horses will eat it, but since we've gone to the FlexDrapers we've noticed that our market for straw has been up. it's not because I changed my combine, It's all because the head is feeding the material right which lets the combine do its job better."

And it is that kind of added benefit that keeps Clucas singing the praises of his MacDon machines.

"I work hard for my money and give everyone a fair handshake, so when I buy a piece of equipment I expect the same in return. MacDon hasn't disappointed."

Dealer's Pride

Vitamech's Dudley Fourie gives the story of how the South African firm became a distributor of MacDon equipment.

acDon's history is loaded with examples of personal relationships growing into strong business partnerships. In the case of Dudley Fourie, owner of South Africa's Vitamech, it was his relationship with MacDon's Scott MacDonald that gave his company the upper hand in 2001 when MacDon was searching for a new representative in the South African market.

"My connection to Scott goes back to 1991 when the company that I worked for, Boeresake, started importing MacDon equipment into South Africa," said Fourie from his company's offices in Cape Town. "Boeresake was a central purchasing cooperative that purchased for all of the cooperatives in South Africa. Back then Boeresake handled brands like Claas and Massey Ferguson, as well as some shortline manufacturers like MacDon."

But then when Boeresake went bankrupt in 2001 Fourie was left looking for a Plan B for his future.

"When Boeresake was liquidated I was able to negotiate the purchase of its inventory and selling that inventory became the start of Vitamech. Then, when Scott came over looking for a new distributor, I was able to negotiate with him to handle MacDon products for South Africa."

Fourie believes that knowing Scott MacDonald "very well" probably gave him an edge over other distribution companies that were also in the running. The new partnership proved to be the right decision for both parties as Vitamech has been able to successfully grow MacDon's product offering in South Africa from only pull-type Windrowers in 2001 to its full equipment line-up today.

Beyond MacDon draper headers, mowers and windrowers, Vitamech also distributes forage harvesters, grass seeders, cultivators and seed drills to its many dealers across South Africa, plus in the neighboring countries of Botswana, Namibia and Zambia. In addition to its wholegoods business, Vitamech also manages a thriving parts operation selling name brand parts for the products they distribute, as well as alternative parts for competitive brands. In total, Vitamech employs 22 people, all based out of Cape Town, located at the southwest tip of the country.



Left to Right; Bruce Nesbit, Louis Van Der Merwe, Chris Cauchi, Nadia Fourie, Shaun Fourie, Connie Campher and Jurie Swart. Not pictured Morne Fourie.

"We are a family business and all three of my children are in the company. Shaun, my oldest son, is the managing director, Morne, my other son, handles the finance side and my daughter Nadia is our purchasing manager."

Another person integral to the operation, marketing manager Louis Van Der Merwe, says that Vitamech's are used only by South Africa's commercial farmers (in South Africa the term "commercial" refers to larger, independent farmers, not corporately owned farms).

"It is our larger commercial farmers that produce the crops to feed the population and for export," said Van Der Merwe. Of course there are a lot of smaller family farmers, but they mainly grow only for their own consumption. The interesting part is that of our 34,000 commercial farmers, only around 5,000 of them produce about 80% of the crops grown in the country."

Major crops grown in South Africa include corn, wheat, cane sugar, edible beans, soybeans, canola, sunflowers and Lucerne (alfalfa).

"MacDon products have an excellent reputation in this country. There is a lot of pride amongst the dealers in South Africa to be associated with a company like MacDon."

"A normal farm would be plus minus a thousand hectares (2471 acres)" said Van Der Merwe. "However, in the south of the country where we sell most of our MacDon equipment, the farms tend to be smaller, between 800 to 1000 hectares (1977 to 2471 acres)."

Of MacDon's current product line, Fourie says that it is the FlexDraper® that is making the biggest impact in the country, both because of the increased productivity it offers farmers and because of its ability to handle South Africa's tougher land and harvesting conditions.

"The testing that we've done shows you can put more material through your combine with a FlexDraper; about 20% to 50% more than a normal auger header. Farmers also really like how MacDon's flex system allows it to avoid most damage other headers get. Wear and "The market here for the FDI is getting better. Today you have combines that have massive capacity, so farmers are getting to the point where they will have to decide whether or not they will continue to windrow or direct cut."

"The changes that MacDon made to the new FDI draper header is really perfect for these larger combines. On John Deere combines we've measured the performance to be 25% better than the FD75. We also really like how the FDI custom fits to each specific make of combine. We've done a few demos with the

"We have a lot of young farmers that go to America to custom cut. When they get back they tell everybody, as loud as you know a young man can, that MacDon makes the best combining headers."

tear on a MacDon header is much lower than on a normal auger header, or competitive draper headers. When we take the time to show differences like that, farmers acknowledge the fact that the FlexDraper is a better header."

And being demonstrably better is critical to making the sale.

"You know the farmer has to pay more for a FlexDraper compared to a normal header, but because he gets a better yield with the FlexDraper it more than pays for itself.

Surprisingly, some of the best promoters of the FlexDraper in South Africa aren't Vitamech employees or dealers.

"We have a lot of young farmers that go to America to custom cut. When they get back they tell everybody, as loud as you know a young man can, that MacDon makes the best combining headers. They are the best advertisement that we can have for MacDon."

To date, most of the FlexDrapers sold into South Africa have been FD75s, but Fourie says that MacDon's newer FD1 holds even greater promise for his business. FDI and we were impressed by the ability of the FDI to perfectly match itself to the combine. Quite a few of the people who saw the demos were also very happy to see that."

Another MacDon product that is doing well in the market is the M series self-propelled windrower.

"We sell MacDon mower conditioners primarily to farmers who cut high quality Lucerne (alfalfa) in irrigation areas up north. While some of the Lucerne is sold to South Africa's dairy farmers, most of it is exported to places like Estonia, Arabia and so forth."

"We had one customer that had owned a competitive windrower for just one season, before trading it in for three MacDon swathers. He told me that other self-propelled brands just can't compare to MacDon."

As positive as comments like that are, Fourie says that running a business like his today in South Africa is not without its challenges.

"I was at a big agricultural conference for commercial farmers. At the conference they forecasted that of the 34,000 commercial farmers that we have in South Africa today, there will only be about 20,000 farmers left by 2050."

While some of the reduction will be due to larger farmers buying out smaller neighbors to stay viable, Fourie says that South African political issues will also play a part.

"There is a lot of uncertainty about what is going to happen here in South Africa regarding land reform, uncertainty that is causing a lot of the younger farmers to move away for other African countries like Zambia, or even places like Canada or Australia."

"Our commercial farmers are saying that until we know what is really going to happen we are not going to invest in new machinery. That is a bit of a challenge at the moment."

Another big challenge brought on by the political situation is the volatility it has brought to the South African Rand.

"When we purchased our last shipment of MacDon's in July the exchange was around 12 Rand to the American Dollar. This morning, just three months later, it is close to 15 Rand. That is a tremendous challenge for us because we have to cover forward to protect ourselves against such huge exchange fluctuations. Now, I don't like to talk about politics, but the sooner the government comes out and says what they are going to do, the better it will be for us."

Despite these issues, Fourie says that there is still much to look forward to for his business. One thing that he is particularly excited about is MacDon's new C Series Corn Header considering that corn is South Africa's largest crop.

"Maize comprises about 70% of the crops grown in South Africa, so that corn header will be a big opportunity for us."

And because that header will carry the MacDon name, uptake by South Africa's farmers should be strong.

"MacDon products have an excellent reputation in this country. There is a lot of pride amongst the dealers in South Africa to be associated with a company like MacDon."





Supporting Rural Rescues

MacDon supports STARS for much needed facility enhancements.











TARS' helicopter in Manitoba is sporting a new logo these days, thanks to a generous gift from a Winnipeg-based business.

MacDon Industries Ltd.'s gift will fund much needed enhancements of our local base facilities, including a crew education centre with a medical simulation lab, classroom, and improved training areas, as well as a permanent structure to house STARS' daily operational crew, educators, and foundation team.

Officials with MacDon — a manufacturer of specialty agricultural harvesting equipment — and STARS unveiled the logo on the iconic red helicopter in March at the STARS Winnipeg base. The event marked a new milestone in MacDon's belief in our mission, having already been a strong supporter for many years.

"We are committed to the safety and well-being of our dealers, our customers, and our employees, and we are proud to support an organization that is making a meaningful difference to their lives," said Gene Fraser, vice president. "This investment will help to continue providing an important health-care service to people in the hundreds of communities we serve around the province and across Western Canada."

Indeed, the need for our service continues to grow in Manitoba every year, with the Winnipeg base carrying out 619 missions in the 2016-17 fiscal year and 720 missions in the 2017-18 fiscal, said STARS president and CEO, Andrea Robertson.

"Your support is an investment in the health, safety and longevity of rural Manitoba and beyond," said Robertson. "You are helping to keep families and communities together."

"We are committed to the safety and well-being of our dealers, our customers, and our employees, and we are proud to support an organization that is making a meaningful difference to their lives,"

In announcing the gift, Fraser encouraged other businesses to support the non-profit helicopter air ambulance service. "STARS is there for all of us —those living and working in rural and remote areas, but also urban folks travelling on our many roads and highways for work or pleasure. They also provide emergency medical training to rural emergency health care professionals and outreach to other partners in the chain of survival," he said.

Manitoba's Minister of Agriculture, Ralph Eichler commended MacDon for its leadership.

"I encourage all Manitobans to continue to support STARS. Their commitment to providing excellent emergency health care and transportation is so important to all of us in rural Manitoba," said Eichler.

We Appreciate You!

Thank You for 70 years of Harvesting Performance! To celebrate this milestone, MacDon is launching our Customer Appreciation Event! Visit your local MacDon dealer for special pricing on select New MacDon branded equipment. **See these machines in action and find your local MacDon Dealer at MacDon.com/70th**

* This offer is available in North America from November 1, 2018 until December 31, 2018. Orders must be paid in full by December 31, 2018 to qualify. Products may be subject to availability.



MacDon

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