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MacDon®

PERFORMANCE

GETTING THE MOST FROM YOUR MACDON MACHINE

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MACDON DEALERS GO TO SCHOOL IN THE DESERT.

If you've been a regular reader of Performance Magazine, you're likely familiar with the significant investment that MacDon makes in dealer training to ensure that their personnel are fully familiar with the MacDon products they sell. Many methods are employed including regular dealer technician schools held at various locations around the world, our Cut Across America Tour (designed to help educate dealers, as much as customers) and numerous one-on-one dealer visits by MacDon product specialists throughout the year.

The most recent of these training events was held near Casa Grande, located between Phoenix and Tucson, March 21 through April 1, 2011. Over 160 individuals were in attendance with over 100 U.S. dealership sales personnel represented. They came to see some of MacDon's latest hay equipment in action including the all-new M205 and R85 Self-Propelled Rotary Disc Windrower package, the new R85 Pull-Type and MacDon's Double Windrow Attachment for M Series Windrowers. Also in the field were MacDon's current model M Series Windrowers, D Series Draper Windrowers and A Series Mower Conditioners (both SP and PT).

The typical training session was a two day event comprised of a blend of both classroom instruction and in-field training, which gave all participants "stick time" with all of the machines being demonstrated.

"These training sessions are extremely important to MacDon, as they give our front line sales people face-to-face time with our product managers, engineers and key marketing and sales staff who can answer their questions and go over some of the finer points of each piece of equipment," said Nathan Mitchell, Marketing Coordinator. "Most sales people that go through the program leave with more knowledge of our products, giving them more confidence when assisting their customers."

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MacDon attended the AgConnect Expo in full force with no less than 25 employees in attendance representing several key departments including Engineering, Product Development, Product Support and Marketing.

COLD HANDS, WARM HEARTS IN ATLANTA.

SPECIAL REPORT FROM:

AG CONNECT 2011 EXPO

The weather outside was frightful for January in Atlanta, thanks to the unfortunate occurrence of the area's worst winter storm in 50 years which would dump up to nine inches (228.6 mm) of snow on the southern city and keep temperatures hovering near freezing. However, none of that mattered to those that braved the elements to attend the second edition of the Ag Connect Expo, held in the Georgia World Congress Center, January 8-10. Those who successfully made their way to Atlanta found a warm reception inside the event's main exhibition hall where 382 leading agricultural exhibitors from around the world were waiting to greet them.

Continued

"Given that this was only the second time the event was held, we were quite pleased with how well it was attended and received," said Gary MacDonald, Executive Vice President of MacDon Industries Ltd. and Board Member of the Association of Equipment Manufacturers (AEM), one of the founding organizations behind Ag Connect. "Our goal with Ag Connect is to not only make it North America's largest and most important agricultural show, but to also provide North America with an event truly international in scope; an event where producers have access to the best ideas and products from around the world."

International scope is something that Ag Connect delivered in spades this year. With registrants from more than 60 countries outside the US, in addition to all 50 American states and nine out of 10 Canadian provinces, attendees had access to a range of suppliers not available at any other North American agricultural show. Supporting this global perspective is Ag Connect's partnership with Agritechnica, Europe's largest and longest running farm equipment show. MacDonald says that it is planned to run Ag Connect on alternating years to Agritechnica, with the next Agritechnica show occurring in 2012 and Ag Connect occurring the following year in 2013. This alternating arrangement will allow the world's leading agricultural manufacturers and suppliers to commit fully to both shows.

"IT IS THE LARGER PRODUCERS WITH AN EYE TO IMPROVING PRODUCTIVITY AND ECONOMY WHO SHOULD GET THE MOST FROM THE SHOW."

But having a global perspective does not mean North American manufacturers are neglected. With both AEM and the Farm Equipment Manufacturers Association involved in organizing the event, all of the usual names familiar to North American farmers were present, including a full slate of short line manufacturers and affiliated vendors to the manufacturers. But quality and range of exhibitors isn't the only way Ag Connect is seeking to differentiate itself from competitive shows according to MacDonald, it is also grooming itself to become the "must attend" show for the nations' leading growers.

"While there will always be something for all sizes of producers at Ag Connect, it is the larger producers with an eye to improving productivity and economy who should get the most from the show," said MacDonald. "That's because we're working to provide attendees with much more than a superficial kick-the-tires kind of experience. Rather, the intent is to provide producers with the opportunity to have quality conversations with exhibitors to determine the best solutions for their unique situations."

Ag Connect's focus on attracting larger producers seems to be working, as born out by results of a survey of this year's attendees. According to the survey, Ag Connect attracted

MacDon's "Owners Circle": (back row left to right) Greg Bigham, Keevin Lemenager, Matt Martin, Vaughn Clark, David Masse, Dan Lamb, Murray Taks, David Hermesch, Tim McGrady, Michael Waldner, Don Boles; (front row left to right) Darryl Heide, Henry Rumpf, Denver Pugh, David Sharp, Chris Carey.

MacDon's entire product line was on display at AgConnect in Atlanta, including the all new M205 R85 Rotary Disc Windrower.

primarily larger farmers in 2011 with 65 percent reporting farms of more than 5,000 acres (2,023.4 hectares), and none with less than 1,000 acres (404.7 hectares). Included in this year's attendees were 20 producers who should be familiar to Performance readers, as all of them have been featured in a story in Performance magazine. They had been invited by MacDon both as a special thank you for their participation in Performance and as an opportunity to gain further feedback concerning their use of MacDon machines through a series of round table discussions. One of the growers was Greg Bigham of Vergennes, Illinois, who appeared in a story regarding his FD70s.

"I really enjoyed the show," said Bigham. "We don't get an opportunity to goof-off like that too often, but I can easily go for days at a show like that, meeting new people and learning new things. It was time well spent.

Concurring with that sentiment was another MacDon invitee, David Sharp from Roll, Arizona, who said that the feeling at Ag Connect was quite different from other shows he had attended.

"I was impressed with how personal Ag Connect was. The minute you walked into that building the atmosphere was extremely welcoming and friendly. The attitude was we're going to have a one-on-one conversation with you and help you find what's right for you. Everyone was very professional and knowledgeable about their products."

> "THE ATTITUDE WAS WE'RE GOING TO HAVE A ONE-ON-ONE CONVERSATION WITH YOU AND HELP YOU FIND WHAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU."

"One of the big differences at Ag Connect was that not only did you have the manufacturers, you also had the vendors that supported the manufacturers. So you got to talk to the people who were supplying the products for the machines that you are wanting to buy. I came home with some new thoughts and ideas about things. Stuff that could make our farm more economical and perform better for us."

Both Sharp and Bigham said that they got a lot out of MacDon's "Owners Circle" discussions, which brought all 20 invitees together to share thoughts and impressions regarding not just their MacDon equipment, but also current practices that they are employing.

"Any time that you get a chance to sit down with growers from different areas, you find out how different you are, but yet how similar you are," said Sharp. "You gain a greater appreciation of what your friends and neighbors from around the world are doing. It's a great way to pick up tips from other growers, stuff that you never thought of trying yourself, but is working for them."

Readers interested in finding out more about AgConnect are encouraged to visit the AgConnect website at agconnect.com.

LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT.

NEW ZEALAND'S DONALD LOVE IS PASSIONATE ABOUT HIS M SERIES WINDROWERS.

When you operate one of New Zealand's top contract windrowing companies and you're looking for a competitive edge, one of the best places to start is with technology. Thus it was a search for the best windrowers on the market that brought Donald Love, owner of Donald Love Windrowing, to first become enamored with MacDon M Series Windrowers.

"In our business productivity is the key," said Love from his home near Mayfield, Mid-Canterbury, New Zealand. "We wanted to have the latest and greatest of any brand to stay ahead of the field, and that meant MacDon."

Love started his business as a hedge cutter 17 years ago. About 12 years ago he added windrowing and has, just recently, started taking on direct drilling contracts. Today, he runs his company with his wife Kay, son Robert and at least two hired employees during the busy season when they can be running 24 hours a day. Total cutting for the year can range between 3,500 and 3,900 hectares (8,648.7 and 9,637.1 acres) in a wide variety of crops including brassica (similar to canola), grass seed, peas, lentils, beans, clover, wheat straw and cereal silage (wheat, barley and oats) for dairy feed. As such, he reports that versatility is a prized feature in his harvesting machines, something that MacDon windrowers have always been known for.

> "WE WANTED TO HAVE THE LATEST AND GREATEST OF ANY BRAND TO STAY AHEAD OF THE FIELD."

"I was impressed with the ability to interchange auger and draper headers on the same machines. That's important for us because we tend to do a lot of transporting and

The Love operation (left to right): Donald Love, Kay Love and Robert Love.

changing of headers on any given day moving from fields that can range from one to 50 hectares (2.5 to 123.6 acres) in size. I was also very impressed with the fast transport speed of the M Series machines. Being able to run on the highway up to 37 km/h (23 MPH) can save us a lot of time."

For his initial MacDon purchase he settled on adding two M150 Windrowers to his three windrower operation. Up front he purchased one 14' (4.3 m) A40D Auger Header to handle his grass seed harvesting, and two 15' (4.6 m) D60 Draper Headers to handle just about everything else. In fact, Love refers to his D60 Headers as "the backbone" of his operation. Since that first purchase he has added both a 20' (6.1 m) and a 25' (7.6 m) D60 to boost his productivity in brassica and wheat.

"Those D60s can do absolutely any crop, unlike our previous machines which would struggle with certain crops. For example, we've been able to do such a good job in peas for some farmers that they've gone out to investigate buying D60s or FD70s for their combines."

But the biggest selling feature on the D60 has been the productivity boost they've added to his operation.

"They're unbelievable! We've never seen anything like them. We used to think that harvesting brassica at 2.5 ha./h (6.2 ac./h) was pretty good and we did our budgets on that. Now if we're not doing 4 ha./h (9.9 ac./h) then we're not satisfied. With the 25' (7.6 m) in canola we can do 6 to 7 ha./h (14.8 to 17.3 ac./h) without too much trouble, but we are not speed oriented. Our focus is always on the quality of the job and what suits the crop."

As for the M Series Windrowers, Love says that there is a lot to admire there as well, especially the computerized real-time monitoring of cutting performance and lower servicing requirements.

"OUR BUSINESS HAS GROWN A LOT BECAUSE MACDON MACHINES HAVE ALLOWED US TO TAKE ON MORE WORK."

"Fantastic! Compared to what we used to have there is very little to do to service them – the amount of downtime required to grease them is nothing. We also love the sliding platform that gives you easy access to the engine and all important service points. These machines are very well thought out and perfectly suited for the commercial contractor."

Love admits that moving up to MacDon came at a premium in price, but that the extra he paid has been more than justified in terms of increased revenues for his business.

"Our business has grown a lot because MacDon machines have allowed us to take on more work. The running costs have also been reasonably low thanks to the fact that they are built so well. I tell people if you want to be serious about contract windrowing, then you need to be using MacDons. The MacDon Windrowers are the commercial application units for contractors."

THE LEGEND OF BIGFOOT.

Bigfoot sighting: Jim Deibert next to his over-sized header back in '89.

The year is 1988. Ronald Reagan is entering his last year in the White House and the first Die Hard movie is filling the theaters. Every custom cutter in America is also taking on the year's harvesting work with auger platforms mounted on their combines, just like they have for the last several decades; that is, every custom cutter except one.

Jim Deibert, based out of Colby, Kansas, is trying something different this year as he joins the convoy of custom cutters who will follow the wheat harvest from the Texas panhandle to the Dakotas. He has agreed to help MacDon "put some time" on one of their draper headers. It seems that MacDon has come up with the radical idea of providing farmers with a header that can be used for both swathing and direct cutting with their combines, an idea that will save them the capital cost of a second header. They've already proven that the concept works – they just need some extensive field testing of their latest prototype unit before putting it into full production. Jim Deibert, who usually cuts 30,000 acres (12,140.6 hectares) of wheat a year along with 15,000 acres (6,070.3 hectares) of corn and 2,500 acres (1,011.7 hectares) of soybeans, is just the man for the job.

But as willing as Deibert was to try something new, his first glimpse of the 36' (11 m) draper header that MacDon brought down didn't fill him with confidence.

"When they arrived with the header I was skeptical that something that big could work. It looked like a man among boys when they sat it in line with my other machines, like having a guy who's eight foot tall and everybody else is five. It was a real crowd stopper when we would park our combines along the road – people would just stop and gape, it was just so darn big."

ALMOST A QUARTER CENTURY AGO CUSTOM CUTTER JIM DEIBERT HELPED USHER IN THE DRAPER REVOLUTION.

"Back then we were running John Deere 8820s with 30' (9.1 m) auger platforms," recalls Deibert who said that he was more than ready to try something different at the time. "It wasn't like we were replacing something that was working great. I wasn't happy with my auger platforms; I fought them all the time."

So big in fact that it didn't take long for people to start nicknaming it.

"I think it was one of the kids that worked for me who came up with the name Bigfoot, but we also called it Big Bite. It was called lots of things."

Deibert says that his initial skepticism of the header quickly turned to delight once he saw it in action.

"A lot of people said that it would never work, yet we put it right beside our other combines and it was doing as good or better job than our augers. One of the first things that impressed us was the smooth, heads first flow of material into the feeder house. We found that we could cut just as fast with that 36' (11 m) draper as our 30' (9.1 m) auger platforms in heavy crop, so we were gaining about 25% in productivity. In light crop we could go even faster. We also found less grain behind the combines with the 36' (11 m) draper than we did our 30's (9.1 m), because our augers weren't feeding as smoothly as the draper did."

He also says that his operators preferred to run his draper machine over those with augers, as the "set it down and forget it" capability of the draper made it much less fatiguing to operate.

Despite his and his crew's growing confidence in the machine, Deibert reports that they faced skepticism just about everywhere they went that first summer.

"When we showed up with it, our customers thought we were nuts. They would say 'kid what are you thinking?' A lot of people would come out to my field and ask 'can I ride that thing, I'd just like to ride on it and watch it work?' After they did they were just like 'wow!' They could understand where I was coming from."

Continued

"Here's the kicker old men – I mean guys who had farmed back in the 40s – would come up to me and say, 'kid, we have now gone full circle'."

We used to have canvas platforms on our old Masseys, but got away from the canvases because of all of the headaches we had having to take them off every time it rained. MacDon solved that problem, of course, with rubber drapers."

As well as that first draper worked, however, Deibert reports that it wasn't without its hiccups.

"That unit, the first year held up reasonably well, but like any piece of experimental machinery it wasn't perfect. When the temperatures got to a hundred degrees, the hydraulic oil would heat up and we couldn't run. After about three days we figured out that we could cool the hoses using an automatic transmission cooler off of a pickup, and then our heating problems were over."

So was Deibert's affiliation with auger headers. Over the next two seasons he converted all four of his combines to drapers.

"I would say it took only four or five years for most custom cutters to start using the draper as well. I was the only one running them in '89, but then in '90, '91' and '92 a lot of people began buying them. Today, when you sit along a road and watch the harvest convoys go by you'll see a lot of drapers, and a lot of them MacDon. Now I would say that drapers are 90% of the custom cutter market. There are very few auger platforms left."

Deibert figures that he has purchased more than 50 MacDon Drapers over the years. Most recently those have been FlexDrapers, which he calls the "Cadillac" of headers.

"The first year the FlexDraper® came out I bought one. The next year I bought two, and the third year I bought four. They just made a lot of sense for us financially, because we can cut both soybeans and wheat with just one header. We also like their tradability, because there is always someone wanting to buy them. We do the math and figure out the cost of ownership on a per acre basis, and the FlexDraper® comes out way ahead."

"WHEN WE SHOWED UP WITH IT, OUR CUSTOMERS THOUGHT WE WERE NUTS. THEY WOULD SAY 'KID WHAT ARE YOU THINKING?' "

"I really like MacDon as a whole. They've been excellent to me and they've always been open to my suggestions. I can show you all kinds of things through the years that we've asked for and they've incorporated those changes to their product. They show they're listening, and that is good. I end up with a better product for me, and they end up with a happier customer and less warranty issues."

SMART INVESTMENT.

MACDON'S DOUBLE WINDROW ATTACHMENT PAYS BIG DIVIDENDS FOR HAY PRODUCERS.

If you regularly use a forage harvester as part of hay and forage harvesting, then installing MacDon's Double Windrow Attachment (DWA) on your M Series Windrower will likely pay big dividends for your operation. Available for use on all M150, M200 and M205 windrowers when combined with MacDon Auger, Draper or Disc headers. MacDon's DWA can be used to lay two – or even three – passes in a single windrow (depending upon header widths), saving the need to rake. As a result, your forage harvester's productivity (tons/gallons) can be significantly increased while reducing wear and tear on all machines (forage harvesters/trucks) by up to 50%, not to mention a reduction in labor costs.

"This is one of those options where the payback is usually quite significant for most operators compared to the initial cash outlay," said MacDon Product Manager Richard Kirkby. "We've even had feedback from some producers that their hay is less dirty compared to when they used to have to rake."

According to Kirkby, the DWA can be installed or retrofitted to most M Series Windrowers, although it is advised that a dealer perform the installation as the job involves adding two hydraulic valve blocks to the SP windrower. While operation of the DWA is controlled from the cab, it is a little different depending upon the width of the header being used. For headers up to 20' (6.1 m) the first pass is made with the DWA lifted up into storage position and the resulting windrow is placed under the center of the tractor. To merge the second pass the DWA is lowered into the working position and crop flows from the conditioner onto the DWA belt and conveyed across to the first pass windrow. For 25' (7.6 m) and 30' (9.1 m) headers, the DWA is used during both passes, laying the windrow to the right of the windrower's tires.

For more information on the DWA, see your MacDon dealer.

The Burns recovery crew (left to right): Doug Reeve, John and Dustin Burns

RESURRECTION.

"I WAS READY TO USE A MATCH IN THE SPRING."

That's what John Burns remembers thinking looking out at his crops sitting under almost two feet of snow in the fall of 2009. At the time, the Kandahar, Saskatchewan, farmer had been fortunate to get about two-thirds of their 14,500 acres (5,867.9 hectares) of crops (wheat, canola, peas, pulses and oats) harvested by the end of September, but then near disaster struck in October with back to back heavy snow falls. First they were hit by eight inches (203.2 mm) of heavy wet snow and that was followed by another 12 inches (304.8 mm) of lighter snow that flattened everything that was left. Worst hit was a 300 acre (121.4 hectare) field of oats, which completely disappeared under the snow layer. Also 3,000 acres (1,214.1 hectares) of hard red spring wheat were layed flat.

"I've had standing crops snowed on before, but never so bad that I could not see that there was any crop there. There were two weeks that you couldn't even see any oats in that field at all. We thought that we were done."

However, an unlikely thaw in mid November allowed Burns to think about going back into the field, even though he had low expectations of the outcome due to his experience in previous years harvesting severely downed crop in wet, muddy conditions. But this time he had some allies on his side in the form of two recently purchased MacDon FD70 FlexDrapers mounted on two of his four 9895 Massey Ferguson combines. Burns says that he originally bought the 40' (12.2 m) FlexDrapers primarily because of his peas, but now they were about to prove their value in an unexpected way, by picking up crops that he just would not be able to harvest with his regular combine headers. Because the FD70s are designed for cutting close to the ground – shaving it in fact – they were the perfect tool for the job.

"The oats were flat to the ground just like peas. The fact that we were able to harvest them was entirely due to the FD70s – in fact those FD70s were picking up flattened oats that had taller stubble behind the combine than they were in front. If we didn't have them, I'm sure that we couldn't have done it. We had neighbors shaking their heads wondering how we did it. They would drive by slowly and say they could not believe that we got that crop off."

Burns believes that some of his neighbors that year were unable to get back in to harvest their oats like he was able to – a difference that no doubt proved costly for some of them based on what Burns was able to recover of his own crop.

"We thought our oats would be toast and that crop insurance will be taking care of them, but in the end we got 115 bushels to the acre and they graded number-two. For us, to get marketable grain after conditions like that, well that's simply amazing."

Now, as pleased as he was with his MacDon equipment for saving a crop that was thought lost, Burns reports that he was just as amazed the following year with the performance of his new MacDon M150 swather under similar difficult conditions.

"We got back to back difficult harvests, by far the worst I have ever seen in my years of farming. It was so wet last year that with virtually every operation, whether it was seeding, combining, spraying or swathing, we had to have a tow tractor sitting within a mile to get ourselves out of trouble if we got stuck."

"For example, there were some days our combines were dropping in two dozen times, and our combines are dueled with 42 inch (1066.8 mm) radial tires on the front and 600 metrics on the back. But we were still dropping. As bad as those conditions were, we only had to pull our MacDon M150 swather out twice, and that was in a field that was a third water, if not bog. It was just amazing how that swather was able to float, even with its 40' (12.2 m) D60 up front."

"WE HAD NEIGHBORS SHAKING THEIR HEADS WONDERING HOW WE DID IT."

Burns credits the performance of the M150 to the swather's tires, plus its power to ground ratio, which gave it the ability to "just hang in there and pull itself through" when conditions got dicey. In contrast, their non-MacDon swather didn't perform so well.

"We probably got our other swather stuck 10 times more. It got to the point that we wouldn't even try to put it into some fields, and would only put it into situations that we felt comfortable with."

Beyond the ability to get into places his other swather couldn't, Burns says that his MacDon was much more user friendly and less stressful to operate, thanks to features like their automatic "return to cut", and the much more durable performance of their cutterbars, which experienced significantly less breakage of guards and knives than the competitive machine, even though they were given more challenging assignments. He says that even autosteer seemed to work better on the MacDon.

JOHN BURNS SAYS SOME OF HIS HARVEST WAS SAVED THANKS TO MACDON.

Continued

"In canola and wheat we were able to cut between 25% and 50% more with our MacDon last year than we were able to do with our other machine. This was partly due to them having slightly bigger headers, but mostly because they have much bigger windrow openings that can accommodate more material."

"MACDON HAS THE BEST REEL IN THE BUSINESS, AND FROM MY POINT OF VIEW HARVEST IS ALL ABOUT THE REEL."

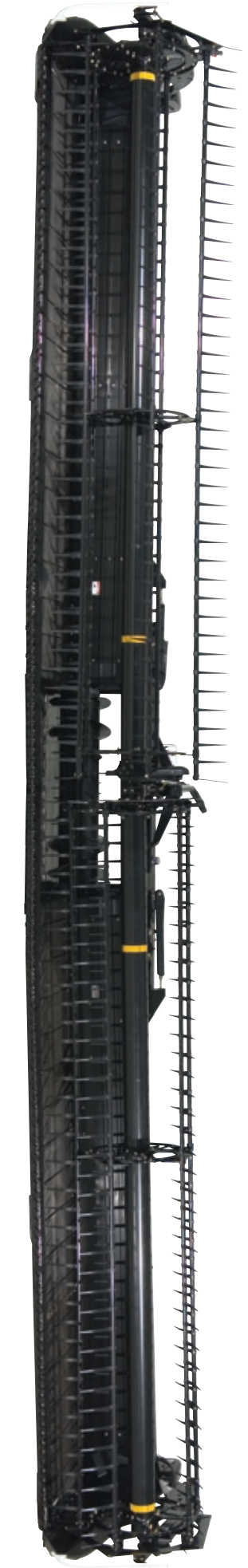
Burns says that MacDon's reel, both on the D60 and the FD70, made a big difference.

"MacDon has the best reel in the business, and from my point of view harvest is all about the reel. The ability to adjust angle seems to me so precise."

"Their ability to follow the ground, especially the FD70s, is also simply amazing. In wet ground like we were in, you would normally worry about pushing dirt, but the FD70s have polly pads underneath that help prevent that."

Of the many attributes he admires about his MacDon equipment, Burns says that what he appreciates most is their ability to make tough harvesting conditions bearable.

"In my younger years when I faced conditions like we have over the last two years, I would just grit my teeth and try to get the job done. But now, having equipment like my FD70s and MacDon swather makes harvesting in such conditions remarkably better, fun even. That's important, because at my age operator comfort is important. If I'm not having fun, then I don't really want to be doing it."



WE INVITE YOU TO WALK IN OUR FOOTSTEPS.

TAKE THE MACDON TOUR IN WINNIPEG.

Have you ever wondered about the people behind your MacDon machine, or about the state-of-the-art manufacturing processes that go into making it? Then we want you to know that the welcome mat is always out for you at the MacDon factory in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, where you are invited to take our extremely popular MacDon Factory Tour. The tour encompasses much of our more than 600,000 sq. ft. (55,741.8 m^2) of manufacturing facilities spread out over more than 65 acres (26.3 hectares) of land, and takes you through the many stages of the building of a MacDon machine, everything from fabrication, machining, welding and painting through final assembly. Along the way you'll see many of the people responsible for building your MacDon machine and, perhaps, even see your next MacDon machine being built.

"Hundreds of farmers, dealer personnel and industry representatives from around the world take the tour every year," said Nathan Mitchell, Marketing Coordinator, who is responsible for conducting most of the tours. "For MacDon, their visit is as much a learning experience for us as it is for them, as we usually don't miss the opportunity to ask our guests a few questions ourselves."

> "THEIR VISIT IS AS MUCH A LEARNING EXPERIENCE FOR US AS IT IS FOR THEM."

If you are planning a visit to Winnipeg and would like to find out more about taking one of our tours, please feel free to email Nathan directly at nmitchell@macdon.com. Also, see us online at macdon.com.

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THE ULTIMATE ROTARY DISC

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INTERMEDIATE SPEED CONTROL

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