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Stalk Market

For Bruce Furrer his experience with MacDon made buying the C Series a chance he was willing to take. Two seasons in, he couldn't be happier!

Making Hay!

Joe Van Newkirk's family has been raising cattle since the 19th century, so he can appreciate the efficiency MacDon brings to his operation.

Congrats Karl!

If you've been on the run, chances are you know Karl Brooks, so it's no surprise that he's been inducted into the U.S. Custom Harvesters Hall of Fame!

Performance Minute

Helping you get the most Harvesting Performance from your MacDon!

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LINAMAR
Power to Perform





Stalk Market

For Bruce Furrer his experience with MacDon made buying the C Series a chance he was willing to take. Two seasons in, he couldn't be happier!

Bruce Furrer

No farmer needs a lesson about the impact plant science has had on world food production, but a quick look at the year 1937 is none-the-less interesting. That year, U.S. corn farmers would enjoy their best harvest since 1925, producing 2.3 billion bushels on about 97 million acres planted for an average yield of 28.9 bu/ac (USDA statistics). This bumper crop, one of the last before hybrid corn became dominant, was within a bushel of the county's record average yield and about the best farmers could hope for using the open-pollinated varieties of the day.

Now fast forward 80 years to 2017 when U.S farmers achieved an average yield of 176.6 bu/ac, producing 14.6 billion bushels of corn on 90 million acres planted. Let that sink in; *that's more than six times the corn on 7 million fewer acres*, and almost all of it due to farmers taking advantage of ever-better varieties and crop management practices.

But such advances have also brought new challenges for corn farmers. In practical terms alone, a 600% increase in production means both more plants, and much bigger plants, on every acre planted. In response producers have not only been forced to invest in ever larger, more productive equipment, but also find better ways of dealing with the increasing amounts of trash, or plant residue, left in their fields.

Which brings us to Bruce Furrer of Wolcott, Indiana, who manages a farm of about 3,000 acres with his son Caleb and son-in-law Trent Bahler. Together, the trio have been running a new MacDon C Series corn head for the last two years, their first chopping head ever. Furrer says that before getting their C Series they had been looking for quite a while for a better way to deal with their corn residue, especially the stalks which have seemed to get thicker by the year.



"The seed companies have done a very good job in breeding healthier stalks into their hybrids," said Furrer. "Thicker stalks make it harder for our residue to break down and decompose quickly. Also, if you are going to do spring tillage at all, there is always the potential with these healthy stalks of having your field cultivator drag up on shanks, which can then cause ridging or other problems. So our whole objective for quite a while had been to find something to manage our residue better, something that could break it down faster without also having to do more tillage."

Despite the residue in their fields becoming a growing nuisance, Furrer says they had held off getting a chopping head for quite a few years because they weren't completely satisfied with the options available to them.

"There are a lot of rotary chop heads around here so we've seen what they can do. I actually demoed a roto-disc head about four or five years ago and just didn't feel like it was giving us enough residue breakdown. I wanted more."

Then in 2019 they had a chance to see MacDon's new C Series in action side by side with other chopping heads.

"That first season running the C Series it was just a night and day difference for us with the residue"

"We followed the combines at the Farm Progress Show and saw the MacDon head perform side by side with the roto-heads. We were really impressed with MacDon's chopping blade concept, which wasn't available on the other ones. It just looked like it was doing a much better job of sizing the residue than the roto-discs and could give us more stalk exposure and better processing for improved microbial breakdown."

Even though they liked what they saw, Furrer says what really convinced them to purchase the C Series header was the confidence they had already developed in the brand thanks to running two MacDon FlexDrapers.

"Our experience with MacDon equipment started with a strong recommendation from our dealer Bane-Welker, which was pushing MacDon drapers for our soybeans and wheat. Once we ran the first one, we quickly understood how it increases your productivity because of the even feed of the head. Now I don't have experience with competitive drapers, but our dealer says that they've got guys who've bought the other ones, then traded them off to come back to MacDon."

According to Furrer, their previous experience with the MacDon brand was instrumental in helping them shelve any concern they might have had about the C Series being developed initially in Europe.

"We had heard that the C Series wasn't an original concept to MacDon, but our experience running MacDon draper heads just gave us confidence in MacDon as a company. Our thinking was that MacDon wouldn't be selling the head if they didn't have a lot of confidence in it because they wouldn't want to ruin their reputation."

And that's how the Furrer's farm became the first in their part of Indiana to run a MacDon corn head. It was a leap of faith that brought immediate rewards.

"That first season running the C Series it was just a night and day difference for us with the residue. We were actually able to run a Case IH 2500 inline ripper right behind our combine, something we've never been able to do before. In the past if we wanted to decompact a field we would have had to use something with disc blades in the front because you've got to deal with all that residue first."

But Furrer says that he wasn't the only one impressed with what the head was allowing them to do.

"Our MacDon rep Bruce Wyatt was out that day we were making our first run and he couldn't believe that we could do that, but once your residue is sized you can do anything that you want."

Now after running the C Series for the last two harvests, Furrer says that header has given them a few other things to be impressed about. High on the list is that the header requires much less horsepower than he expected.

"We typically harvest our corn at about 24% moisture and that was probably the reason that we didn't purchase a chopping head sooner because we had heard about how much extra horsepower chopping heads require. But now I can say that if this head is using more

horsepower I honestly don't notice as an operator. In fact, this year we actually started harvesting at 32% moisture with green stalks and was still able to run the combine at 3.5 to 4 mph, which is pretty much the same as we would have with a non-chopping head. Even with all that moisture we still had all the power we needed for our separating capacity."

Furrer believes the reason the header has had negligible impact on power consumption is because of how efficient the header's knives are in pulling residue to the ground. It's something MacDon's engineers will be happy to hear, because that's precisely the idea behind their OctiRoll™ Residue Management System which is designed to not only deliver more thorough stalk cutting, crimping and chopping, but also significantly reduce the combine's overall trash intake.

"I think we're not seeing a need for more horsepower because the header does a better job cleaning up the crop before going into the combine compared to other heads. The serrations on the knives even put little holes in the stalks, which also helps with enhancing their decomposition. That has become a big plus for us."

Another important benefit Furrer has received from the header is how easy it is to clean in the field.

"Because I grow both GMO and non-GMO corn the cleaning ability of a head is very important. With the C-Series the snouts aren't open so there are no places underneath where crop can collect. Its simpler overall design also helps because there's just not as many places for crop residue to get caught as with other brands. I can't say exactly how much time it has saved us, but there has definitely been a reduction in clean-up time compared to my previous head."


Furrer has even been impressed with the header's overall durability and reduced maintenance requirements.

"We were really impressed with MacDon's chopping blade concept, which wasn't available on the other ones. It just looked like it was doing a much better job of improved microbial breakdown."

"Before buying the header we had some concern about breaking the chopper blades on rocks, but because the blades are made with a softer steel we have found that they tend to bend instead of breaking. If we hit anything we can just bend them back into shape right on the machine. As a result we have never had to throw a blade away, so we are more than satisfied as far as the durability of the blades goes."

"Overall maintenance of the head has also been very good; in fact it has exceeded our expectations. We especially like the tensioner on the gathering chains which does a really good job keeping the chains tight. That means less wear and longer life."

Overall, Furrer says that their investment in the C Series has been a good one for their operation, as it has not only improved their residue management, it has also reduced the number of passes they have to make in their fields tilling.

"By being able to chop with this new MacDon head we are saving a lot of horsepower and also saving on equipment. Without it we would still have to disc ahead of time, and still wouldn't get the quality of tillage that we are now getting following the combine." 





Making Hay!

Joe Van Newkirk's family has been raising cattle since the 19th century, so he can appreciate the efficiency MacDon brings to his operation.

To say cattle farming runs in Joe Van Newkirk's blood would be a bit of an understatement. The family-owned ranch he currently owns and operates was founded in 1892 by Van Newkirk's grandfather, Lorenzo Van Newkirk, when he began mating Hereford bulls with Longhorn cows. Bringing those two together created a cross-breed that resulted in improved performance and growth.

Sixty years later, A.J. (Bud) Van Newkirk, Joe's father, started the registered herd of Herefords with the purchase of five females that were the beginnings of what is now Van Newkirk Herefords.

The herd has grown substantially through three generations of Van Newkirk ownership and now includes 600 cow-calf pairs, 125 yearling heifers and 165 yearling bulls. It remains a family venture, with Joe and his wife, Cyndi, now at the helm and their three adult children also staying involved in the ranch's operations.

A few grandchildren are also in on the action, amping up the cuteness factor in some of the ranch's Instagram posts for their 16,000 followers; you can find them @vannewkirkhereford. The social media feed also provides information on specific bulls and cows for potential customers and showcases the day-to-day care involved in not only breeding the Herefords but doing it in a Midwest climate that can be unpredictable and extreme.

"Our horned Herefords, they're a very hardy. We have extreme temperatures, from 30-below, 40-below to 110 F, and non-stop winds. They have treated us very well, so we take very good care of them," says Joe, 66.

Joe is a humble guy despite his ranch's success; when asked if it is accurate to label Van Newkirk Herefords as one of the top breeders of Herefords in the United States, he lets out a sigh followed by a laugh.



Joe Van Newkirk

"Oh gosh, I don't know if you can say that. We sell quite a few bulls, so I'd like to think so, but that's a pretty lofty statement," he says. "You know, there's probably a couple of hundred bull sales a year in the United States, and we have one of the largest ones."

It might indeed be a lofty statement, but, given the ranch's reputation and repeat customer base, it also might very well be true.

"He is not the type of guy to brag about anything... but Joe's is a pretty impressive facility to start with; when you see all his cattle out along the highway, I mean, every one of them is exactly just perfect. Like, hundreds of them," says Wayne Ostermeyer, Joe's MacDon dealer and owner of Ostermeyer Equipment Inc. in central Nebraska.

"It just about cuts your swathing time in half, you know, because you can probably run seven to 10 miles an hour through alfalfa."



"When he has his auction every year, his private treaty sale, he gets top dollar for a lot of his stuff, he really does. So I'm going to say he's one of the top breeders and producers."

Ostermeyer has worked with Joe for around 10 years, and speaks highly of not only the ranch and cattle but the Van Newkirk family themselves as loyal customers. And that admiration is reciprocated fully by Joe.

"We've always dealt with Wayne... he's always been very, very honest and straightforward. He's been very good," says Joe. "We love the MacDon's design and their features, and the dealer makes a lot of difference."

"Wayne has just bent over backwards to help us, to keep us running, and he understands our window to hay is not that big in this part of the world."

Consistency has been top of mind for Van Newkirk Herefords for generations, and Joe knows that's what makes their cattle stand out amongst the rest.

To accomplish this, the Van Newkirks try to select specific traits, such as moderate birth weight, efficient fleshing, and thick, high-performance cattle that gain. They also utilize modern and innovative technologies such as ultrasound data to ensure their cattle produce as they should.

And their attention to detail has not gone unnoticed; in 2018, Van Newkirk Herefords was presented with the Beef Improvement Federation Seedstock Producer of the Year award.

It makes sense, then, that consistency has become an important quality across all of the ranch's operations and is one of the reasons why Joe has relied on MacDon machinery for more than 20 years.

"We run quite a few cows, and we sell quite a few bulls and we're the place you can go and buy the first bull in the ring, which a lot of people thinks the best, or the last bull in the ring at the end of the sale, and there's not going to be that much difference in quality," says Joe.

"And I kind of think that would work into MacDon because, I mean, every MacDon machine we owned just made sense, you know, in how they designed it and how they build it, and they're so easy to operate."

Joe's early experiences with MacDon came as a small light during a dark time — a good friend and mentor to Joe had purchased a MacDon windrower, and just six months later, he passed away. Joe bought that windrower at the farm sale and began using it on his own land.

The simplicity and effectiveness of the machine stood out immediately.

"The simplicity and effectiveness of the machine stood out immediately."



R2 Series Rotary Disc Header


"It was a single sickle machine, and you had one big auger that moved the hay toward the center. And it was very heavy made... we really liked everything about it," Joe says.

"After that, a good friend of mine ran it for a season; he was sold on it, so I was too, and that's why we bought it. We really paid more than we should have for it, but it was a good buy," he laughs.

Since then, Joe has added another MacDon machine to his fleet; an M1-series windrower and R216 disc header. They use machines to cut 300 acres of irrigated alfalfa harvested three or four times a year, about 100 acres of rye grass they harvest once a year, and more than 400 acres of native grass hay.

For Joe, the biggest advantage of running a MacDon is the time he saves that he can reallocate to other ranch tasks, which helps keep his never-ending to-do list under control.

"It just about cuts your swathing time in half, you know, because you can probably run seven to 10 miles an hour through alfalfa. And that just cuts your cutting time in half. You got other things to do! On a cattle ranch, there's always something else to do," Joe laughs.

"You can get your windrowing done and get on to something else. Just the time savings is amazing." 

"You can get your windrowing done and get on to something else. Just the time savings is amazing."



Congrats Karl!

If you've been on the run, chances are you know Karl Brooks, so it's no surprise that he's been inducted into the U.S. Custom Harvesters Hall of Fame!

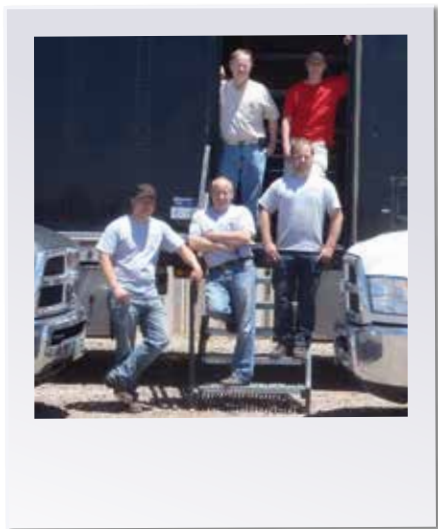
At their annual convention last January in Des Moines, Iowa, our own U.S. Parts Manager Karl Brooks was inducted into the U.S. Custom Harvesters Hall of Fame! The U.S. Custom Harvesters follow the harvest each year, beginning in south Texas, moving throughout the Midwest and up into the Canadian prairies, harvesting crops of all kinds as they move north. MacDon has always been supportive of this organization, and the many MacDon header owners in the group.

From our humble beginnings with a rented truck and trailer, to today's version with a semi-trailer stocked with parts, along with well-equipped and trained technicians, Karl has always been an influential and tireless advocate for the program. Attending the annual conventions on behalf of MacDon is only part of Karl's commitment – he has also dedicated many hours in the parts van, in the dealerships that host our temporary locations across the county, and in the field – building and strengthening our relationship with this vital group of customers. Just as importantly, Karl has trained, mentored and encouraged many new employees and summer students over the years, providing much needed and appreciated support.

Many thanks to all the MacDon people who secretly participated in the nomination process and provided written or video testimonials for use at the celebration – Karl was caught completely by surprise!

From all of us at MacDon congratulations, Karl – well done and well deserved! **M**







Residue, Let's Break it Down!

As grain yields continue to improve, stalk strength continues to increase, and tillage practises change; it has become more important than ever to properly size and distribute residue across the field. When residue is uniformly spread across the ground and the stalk is opened, microbes are more readily exposed to all parts of the stalk, accelerating the decomposition process and improving nutrient availability for next years crop.

MacDon offers two solutions on the C Series Corn Headers to manage your residue.

If you want your stalks to remain anchored to the ground during the offseason winds, our non-chopping option with the standard OctiRoll snapping rolls are your best choice.

Our OctiRoll snapping rolls have four knives and four serrated edges per roll giving 8 pinch points per revolution (*Figure 1*). This results in an alternating cut and crimp roughly every 7.5 cm (3 inches).

Opening the stalk in this manner increases the decomposition process by two times as compared to competitive four knife point systems (*Figure 2*).

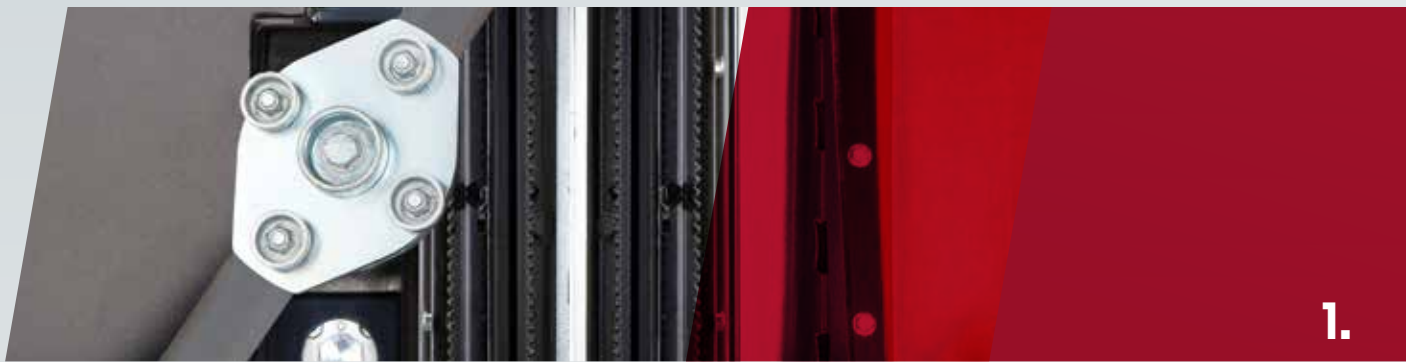
The crimp provided by the serrated knife not only provides an additional entry point for bacteria, but also ensures the stalk stays engaged in the snapping rolls, reducing the amount of MOG (material other than grain) ingested by the combine harvester.

If you would like to maximize decomposition, MacDon offers an optional two-knife swing blade chopping system that gives you the ability to turn on or turn off the chopping action at any time, row by row.

This chopping system will maximize decomposition by chopping the stalk into 5 to 7.5 cm (2-3 inch) individual pieces (*Figure 3*). The blades are positioned forward and tight relative to the snapping rolls for consistently short stalk pieces.

The chopper then proceeds to evenly distribute the chopped material across the width of the header with minimal windrowing on the trailing side as compared to competitive headers. This is accomplished by spinning the choppers at 2800 rpm, angling the chopper forward to throw the crop into the ground sooner, and strategically designed crop residue deflectors underneath the header for pattern control.





1.



2.



3.



Keep your MacDon at peak performance with MacDon Performance Parts.

Parts Showcase:

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 latest offerings from MacDon Performance Parts...



Be Prepared for Performance!

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.

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, M155E4, M205, M1170, M1240, & M1170NT model windrowers.



Draper Header Kit

Order one convenient parts kit containing high wear draper header replacement parts that are required by your MacDon header. Sickles 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.



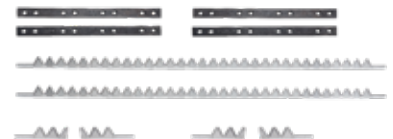
Crop Lifter

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.



Draper Knife Kit

MacDon Performance Parts Draper Knife Kits include all knife segments and splice kits required to replace the complete knife on a header. Single Knife available in sizes from 7.6 to 12.2 m (25 to 40 foot), and Double Knife available in sizes from 9.1 to 13.7 m (30 to 45 foot) configurations for a wide range of MacDon Draper models.



Guard Kit

MacDon Performance Parts Guard Kits include all guards required to do a complete cutterbar replacement. Single Knife available in sizes from 9.1 to 12.2 m (30 to 40 foot), and Double Knife available in sizes from 9.1 to 13.7 m (30 to 45 foot) configurations for a wide range of MacDon Draper models.



Rotary Disc Service Kit

Order Rotary Disc Service Kits from MacDon for one convenient package that contains all the high wear rotary disc replacement parts required for your machine. Available for R80, R85, R1, and R2 Rotary Disc Headers.



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