

Spraying Efficiency

Equipment Technologies Introduce 2009 Apache Series Sprayers

BETTY VALLE GEGG
MidAmerica Farmer Grower

MOORESVILLE, IND.

Equipment Technologies (ET) rolled out their new and improved, full line of 2009 Apache Series sprayers at a press event hosted at their Mooresville plant recently. The launch prompted the strongest response from their dealer network and growers in the company's 12-year history.

The overwhelmingly positive response is credited to the company's commitment to understanding the grower, according to Paul Nielsen, sales manager, located in Martin, Tenn.

"Many companies have a philosophy of continuous improvement, but most get caught up in the wrong details and lose sight of the goal," he said. "Our goal is simple: Know the grower and respond by building what they demand. ET has always been able to do this better than anyone else. It may sound simple but, trust me, it's not. A lot of listening, planning and careful execution is required to bring to market a sprayer that fits well in so many diverse areas – whether across North America, Ukraine or Russia."

ET's CEO Matt Hays added that having good supply partners that provide high quality, durable components also adds to efficiency. The assembly plant in Mooresville utilizes 100 suppliers that provide 500 parts to manufacture the sprayers. A handful of those suppliers are lo-

power brakes provide easier response and stopping power.

Two other sprayers that round out the line are the AS1010 which has an 850 or 1,000 gallon tank and the AS1210 with a 1,200 gallon stainless steel tank. All are powered by Cummins Tier III engines, ranging from 160 hp, 215 hp, to 275 hp respectively.

Kevin Covey, service manager, explained how



Paul Nielsen, Sales Manager with Equipment Technologies located in Martin, Tenn. Photo by John LaRose, Jr.

the Apache promotes trends in precision agriculture.

All have Raven AutoBoom, AutoSteer and AccuSpray, which allows variable rate applications on 10-foot spans of the 80-, 90- or 100-foot booms.

Double pane glass on each cab with small di-



Kevin Covey, service manager for Equipment Technologies explained how Apache promotes trends in precision agriculture. Photos by John LaRose, Jr.

cated outside the United States.

"The selling point is simplicity – simple engineering, simple sprayer," Hays said. "The direct drive concept means more power to the ground and no hydrostatic wheel motors to fail."

Two sprayers a day come off the assembly line at the 110,000 square foot facility. Nine work on assembly, five are full-time welders and four are material handlers. Engineers are focused on continuous improvement with an eye to delivering more value to the farmer.

The No. 1 mechanical drive sprayer can pull out of tough spots in two-wheel drive as the Cummins engine provides more torque if the machine starts to slip. Proper distribution ensures that the right amount of weight is on the rear axles for reliable traction. The torque converted transmissions can multiply engine torque up to two times and the limited slip differentials provide positive traction to both rear wheels in slippage conditions.

The machines are lightweight, so they don't contribute to compaction. A sturdy rear axle is the main component. The three models provide a crop clearance of 31" to 48". Being mechanical drive as opposed to hydrostatic, there are less hoses to cause breakdowns.

"We are all about passing value on to the customer," said Hays.

The 2009 models are led by the enhancements of the AS715, which carries a 750 gallon poly

viding supports allows a 360-degree birdseye view from the cab.

ET's commitment to provide a quality product is evidenced by its investment on each machine for quality control. Employees spend a full day double checking and subjecting the machine to 64 separate ordeals. Every component is checked for fit, finish and functionality. Even the cast and camber of the front tires are checked with a digital protractor.

Over 2,000 units are now in service, with another 450 added this year. Customer satisfaction is well documented by farmers and custom operators in states throughout the Midwest. One third of the company's business is in Canada.

"We are close to our customers," he added. "We know what they need."

ET's philosophy includes an employee-first culture.

"If you take care of your employees they will take care of your customer," Hays said. "That's the most important thing. It can provide significant advantages. Customers love the machine and our dealers are happy."

Because the Apache is so simply constructed and economical, it maintains its value. On average, a five-year-old Apache is still worth 76 percent of its original cost.

The parts department has provided same day shipping 98.5 percent of the time, and is striv-



Equipt Technology's CEO Matt Hays explains the selling point is simplicity – simple engineering, simple sprayer.

tank and includes increased fuel economy, horsepower and torque as well as improved operator comfort and easy-to-understand controls. Compared to its predecessor, the AS710, the brand new AS715 boasts a peak increase of 26 hp and an impressive 32 percent increase in torque, all while increasing fuel efficiency by 6 percent. The 48" crop clearance option will support dual and float tires. The machine has a heavy duty front axle with adjustable axle width up to 144" for stability on hills. Full hydraulic

ing for even better service. Machines now being produced are sold out until the middle of July 2009.

The company was founded in Mooresville by a farmer and businessman when they realized there was a niche for a mechanical drive sprayer, a tall machine with skinny tires that could travel at higher speeds on the highway without causing stress on hydrostatic wheel parts as was occurring in sprayers presently on the market. Δ



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