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Case IH Recognized for First-Class Agricultural Innovation from ASABE with Seven Awards

The AE50 awards, sponsored annually by ASABE, highlight the best innovation in engineering and technology across agriculture, food and biological systems.

Case IH emerged as a big winner in this year's AE50 awards, presented by the American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers (ASABE), for the most innovative products in the agricultural, food and biological industries. With seven product innovations recognized by ASABE, Case IH was among the most awarded agriculture companies. The awards – chosen by global engineering experts – highlight Case IH's continued focus on purposeful solutions to elevate farmer productivity around the world.

The following Case IH product innovations were recognized with AE50 awards:

- AF Series Combines.
- Axial-Flow® 260 Series Combines.
- C500 Series Corn Heads.
- Automatic Productivity Management 2.0 for Magnum™ Tractors.
- Steiger® Quadtrac Heavy-Duty Suspension.
- Large Square Baler Automation.
- Modular Tramline System for Early Riser® 2160 48 Row 20-inch Large Front-Fold Planter.

"These product innovations recognized by ASABE are a reflection of our commitment to serve farmers with solutions to boost their efficiency and productivity," said Kurt Coffey, Vice President Case IH North America. "We are honored to be presented, once again, with AE50 awards for engineering and technology innovation across our portfolio of products."

Harvesting Lineup Expansion

This year, Case IH upgraded and expanded its combine lineup with the launch of the Axial-Flow 260 series and the new AF series, built to meet the varying needs of farmers across the globe. With the largest harvesting lineup in the industry, farmers can find the perfect harvesting partner for their operation at Case IH.

The **Axial-Flow 260 series combine** incorporates the latest technology to take harvesting to the next level with subscription-free, integrated technology. The premium technology built within the combine sets a new standard for operator experience while also maximizing throughput and grain handling with single-rotor Case IH harvesting technology.

To expand the Case IH combine portfolio, the **AF series combines** have been redesigned from the ground up to maximize capacity and crop flow with efficient horsepower, simplified maintenance and connec-

tivity built-in at base. The single-rotor AF9 and AF10 models, along with the dual-rotor AF11, provide solutions in Class 9 and 10+ to help farmers cover more acres in less time with increased power and throughput.

The **C500 series corn heads** were created to pair seamlessly with the AF and 260 series combines, delivering the reliability, durability and enhanced grain savings and performance farmers expect from Case IH.

Automation for Balers

Designed for hands-free efficiency, **Case IH Large Square Baler Automation** controls speed and steering to match windrow volume and maximize throughput for consistent, high-quality bales. Case IH Large Square Baler Automation is the industry's first LiDAR (light detection and ranging) baling system, simplifying the driver experience for hay producers while delivering efficiency and productivity.

Tractor Enhancements

Case IH continues to set the bar in track technology with the **Quadtrac Heavy-Duty Suspension (HDS)**. HDS brings greater productivity through faster transport speeds of up to 26.5 mph, and less shock to the machine and operator due to the fully suspended track system conforming to the ground. Built for durability and agronomic principles in mind, HDS delivers unmatched comfort and reduced soil compaction via a larger footprint.

To enhance and refine the industry legends, Model Year 2025 Magnum tractors with 21x5 PowerDrive transmissions will have **Automatic Productivity Management 2 (APM2)**. APM2 manages the driveline and engine to control ground speed while optimizing fuel economy and preventing engine stalls.

Early Riser Planter Innovation

The **Modular Tramline System for the Early Riser 2160 48-row 20-inch Large Front-Fold** planter offers industry-leading 20-inch planter tramline compatibility, productivity, and performance. The Modular Tramline System is tailored to the swath sizes of a farmer's equipment fleet while minimizing the number of unused tramlines in a field.

These modular tramlines reduce the risk of running over plants on subsequent passes through the field with narrow track or tire-equipped tractors, liquid fertilizer applicators, and/or sprayers. This results in increased yield potential, increased productivity and reduced operator fatigue.

To learn more about these award-winning products, visit caseih.com or speak with your local dealer.

Revolutionizing Soil Health and Organic Farming with Propane-Powered Soil Steaming



By Michael Newland, director of agriculture business development at the Propane Education & Research Council (PERC)

As agriculture adapts to modern challenges, innovative solutions are vital for growers aiming to meet both consumer and environmental demands. At the 2025 World Ag Expo, the Propane Education & Research Council (PERC) is introducing technology that could transform how farmers combat soil-borne threats.

At the Western Propane Gas Association (WPGA) booth (West Street WS20 and WS22), attendees can learn about propane's pivotal role as a clean, reliable, and cost-effective energy source in agriculture production. In addition to viewing a variety of propane-powered equipment—like irrigation engines, a mower, and generators—attendees will get an exclusive first look at the new propane-powered soil steamer. A press conference introducing the new technology will be held at the WPGA booth on Tuesday, February 11th at 3 p.m.

The propane-powered soil steamer offers a pesticide-free, eco-friendly method to boost crop yields while reducing reliance on chemicals—a significant advancement for sustainable farming practices.

Harnessing the Power of Steam

For decades, soil steaming has been an effective tool for disinfecting soil, but scalability issues have limited its use on commercial farms. The new propane-powered soil steamer solves this challenge. Designed for efficiency, it targets the top 1-2 inches of soil, where most weed seeds and nematodes reside, using shallow steaming technology. This precision ensures optimal results while minimizing energy consumption—a significant advantage for high-value crops like strawberries, lettuce, carrots, and cabbage.

In trials, this method has proven to increase lettuce yields by up to 25% in areas impacted by soilborne pathogens like lettuce drop. These results underscore the potential for

healthier, more abundant harvests.

Eco-Friendly and Economical

Cleaner, lower-emission propane plays a critical role in ensuring the efficiency and environmental benefits of this system. By replacing pesticides and herbicides, the soil steamer addresses increasing consumer and regulatory demands for chemical-free farming methods. Additionally, the reliability of propane-powered equipment provides farmers with consistent performance even in remote areas, bypassing the risks associated with electrical grid instability.

Farmers also stand to benefit financially. By reducing weeding labor costs by up to 50 percent and enabling shorter crop rotation intervals, the propane-powered soil steamer offers a high return on investment. Its banded steam application is tailored to

specific crop needs, further enhancing operational efficiency.

Propane's Role in Sustainable Agriculture

Beyond soil steaming, propane has long been a trusted energy source in agriculture, powering grain dryers, irrigation engines, building or water heating, and more. Its portability, availability, and naturally reduced emissions make it an essential tool for modern farming. With technologies like the soil steamer, propane continues to demonstrate its versatility and value as a clean energy solution.

A Promising Future with Propane

The propane-powered soil steamer represents a significant step forward in sustainable farming practices overall. As growers face mounting pressures to increase efficiency and reduce environmental impact, innovations like this offer practical, impactful solutions. By integrating this technology into their operations, farmers can achieve healthier crops, greater yields, and a greener future.

For more information about the propane-powered soil steamer, visit www.Propane.com/Soil-Steamer. For more information about propane's versatility in agriculture, visit www.Propane.com/Agriculture.



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Friends of the California State Fair Opens Annual Scholarship Application

By Friends of the California State Fair

The application period for the 2025-26 Friends of the California State Fair Scholarship Program is now open to graduating high school seniors and current college students in the state of California.

Through this program, Friends of the California State Fair will award scholarships of \$1,000 to \$2,500 scholarships across twelve categories such as agriculture, art, business, culinary/hospitality/event planning and trade school. Eligibility criteria vary by category but every candidate will be evaluated on academic achievements, community involvement, volunteerism and essay responses.

In addition to the category winners, the Ironstone Concours Foundation/Friends of the California State Fair selects one exceptional candidate as the overall winner to receive a \$5,000 scholarship. In 2024, this recognition went to Teagan Wunschel, a cattle rancher now studying Animal Science and Ag Communications at California State University-Chico.

"As a fifth generation rancher I've been immersed in the world of ranching from an early age. But, it was my decision to venture into showing cattle that introduced me to a new level of learning about the importance of breed improvement and advocacy that inspired in me a love of the beef industry that extended beyond our ranch and has driven me to pursue an education where I hope to focus on bovine genetics and breed improvement," said Wunschel in her scholarship application. "I will use my degree in Animal Science and Agriculture Communications to advocate for agriculture in California and help push for new and improved breeding that can produce a more sustainable product for consumers while also benefiting producers."

The scholarship application deadline for the 2025-26 academic year is March 3, 2025. Learn more and find a link to the online application process at calexpostatefair.com/participate/friends-of-the-ca-state-fair/scholarship.

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CCOF Releases New Marketing Toolkit for Small and Underserved Producers

California Certified Organic Farmers (CCOF) released a comprehensive Small Organic Farmer Marketing Toolkit for small-scale and underserved organic producers. The toolkit, available in English and Spanish, provides actionable strategies for farmers to improve the marketing of their organic products. The toolkit serves as a guide that reduces the market accessibility gap between family farmers and large-scale operations that have their own marketing departments.

CCOF designed the Small Organic Farmer Marketing Toolkit to provide producers with the concepts, strategies, and insights needed to successfully market organic products, boost sales, and expand their customer base.

The toolkit covers marketing essentials including identifying target audiences; branding and business identity; direct-to-consumer, wholesale, and business-to-business sales and marketing channels; marketing tips for websites, email, and social media; making the most of farmers markets and trade shows; and more.

Through CCOF's partnership with the Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF), the toolkit will be disseminated to approximately 500 producers. CAFF will provide 600 hours of technical assistance and 18 trainings, both in-person and virtual, to build the marketing skills that small and underserved organic farmers and transitioning farmers need to access new markets.

"We are thrilled to provide this toolkit to help small and underserved producers improve their marketing reach and connect with more customers," says CCOF CEO Kelly Damewood. "We are proud to work with CAFF to get it into people's hands and start seeing positive results."

The first training opportunity will take place at EcoFarm, an organic farming conference held annually at Asilomar in Pacific Grove, CA, on Thursday, January 23, from 10:30am – 12:00pm. The workshop "Sell More of What You Grow" will introduce the toolkit including concepts and practical steps to enter new markets. "We are excited to partner with CCOF to make marketing resources more accessible for farmers. Throughout the rest of 2025 and through 2026, we will host a series of no-cost workshops so that every farmer has the opportunity to strengthen their marketing skills," says Grace Jackson, Farmer Services Central Valley Regional Lead.

The Small Organic Farmer Marketing Toolkit is made possible by an Organic Market Development Grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service, Marketing to Expand Economic Opportunity for Small and Underserved Farmers. The toolkit is part of the \$3 million grant CCOF received from the USDA in 2024 to open and expand new revenue streams for the organic industry and create more opportunities for American farmers.

Young orchard water and nutrient management workshops offered in Madera, Stockton, Parlier, Tulare



UC Cooperative Extension researchers will discuss best irrigation and nutrient management practices tailored specifically for young orchards in the San Joaquin Valley.

By Pamela S Kan-Rice

Assistant Director, News and Information Outreach

Growers invited to discuss young almonds, pistachios, walnuts, olives, citrus and peach orchards starting Feb. 18

To help growers manage irrigation and nutrients for young and immature orchards, UC Cooperative Extension is offering workshops in Madera, Stockton, Parlier and Tulare.

The workshops will feature presentations by various experts and researchers focusing on best irrigation and nutrient management practices tailored specifically for young orchards in the San Joaquin Valley. They will cover almonds, pistachios, walnuts, olives, citrus, and peaches.

"Attendees will gain insights into the irrigation and nutrient needs of young orchards, which are different from those applicable to mature orchards, and learn strategies for adjusting these practices as orchards mature," said Moneim Mohamed, UC Cooperative Extension irrigation and soils advisor for Stanislaus, San Joaquin and Merced counties. "This knowledge aims to ensure healthier tree development, better resource use and more resilient orchards in the face of climate change."

Growers, certified crop advisers and other agricultural professionals are encouraged to attend. Workshop attendees may request one-on-one assistance from a UCCE farm advisor.

Speakers include UCCE advisors Moneim Mohamed, Mae Culumber, Cameron Zuber, Tobias Oker, Phoebe Gordon and Raymond Mireles; UCCE specialists Giulia Marino and Khaled Bali; Charles Hillyer of Fresno State; and USDA research agronomist Sultan Begna.

The Young Orchard Irrigation and Nutrient Management workshops will be held in four locations:

Madera

Feb. 18 (8 a.m.–12:30 p.m.)

Madera County Farm Bureau,
1102 S Pine St., Madera, CA
93637

Register at <https://ucanr.edu/orchardsmadera>

Stockton

Feb. 20 (8 a.m.–12:30 p.m.)

Robert J Cabral Agricultural
Center, Assembly Room 3, 2101
E Earhart Ave #200, Stockton, CA
95206

Register at <https://ucanr.edu/orchardsstockton>

Parlier

Feb. 25 (8 a.m.–12:30 p.m.)

Kearney Agricultural Research
and Extension Center, Nectarine
Room, 9240 S. Riverbend Ave,
Parlier, CA 93648

Register at <https://ucanr.edu/orchardskearney>

Tulare

Feb. 27 (8 a.m.–12:30 p.m.)

UC Cooperative Extension, 4437-B S. Laspina St., Tulare, CA
93274

Register at
<https://ucanr.edu/orchardstulare>

Workshops are free and include coffee breaks, lunch and workshop materials along with the presentations. Registration is required.

These workshops are supported by a grant from California Department of Food and Agriculture and co-sponsored by Almond Board of California, California Pistachio Research Board, Meter Group Inc., AvidWater, SWAN Systems, and HotSpot AG.



Moneim Mohamed, UCCE irrigation and soils advisor, will discuss water and nutrient management in non-bearing walnuts.

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Scientists Leverage AI to Fast-Track Methane Mitigation Strategies in Animal Agriculture

A new study from USDA's Agricultural Research Service (ARS) and Iowa State University (ISU) reveals that generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) can help expedite the search for solutions to reduce enteric methane emissions caused by cows in animal agriculture, which accounts for about 33 percent of U.S. agriculture and 3 percent of total U.S. greenhouse gas emissions.

"Developing solutions to address methane emissions from animal agriculture is a critical priority. Our scientists continue to use innovative and data-driven strategies to help cattle producers achieve emission reduction goals that will safeguard the environment and promote a more sustainable future for agriculture," said ARS Administrator Simon Liu.

One of these innovative solutions starts in the cow's stomach, where microorganisms contribute to enteric fermentation and cause cows to belch methane as part of normal digestion processes. The team of scientists found a group of compound molecules capable of inhibiting methane production in the largest of the cow's four stomach compartments, the rumen, which can be tested to help mitigate methane emissions.

One molecule in particular, bromoform, which is naturally found in seaweed, has been identified by the scientific community to demonstrate properties that can result in reducing cattle enteric methane production by 80-98 percent when fed to cattle. Unfortunately, bromoform is known to be a carcinogen, limiting its potential use in cattle for food safety reasons. Therefore, scientists continue to search for molecules with similar potential to inhibit enteric methane. However, this type of research presents challenges of being especially time-consuming and expensive.

In response to these challenges, a team of scientists at the ARS Livestock Nutrient Management Research Unit and ISU's Department of Chemical and Biological Engineering combined generative AI with large computational models to jumpstart the quest for bromoform-like molecules that can do the same job without toxicity.

"We are using advanced molecular simulations and AI to identify novel methane inhibitors based on the properties of previously investigated inhibitors [like bromoform], but that are safe, scalable, and have a large potential to inhibit methane emissions," said Matthew Beck, a research animal scientist working with ARS at the time the study was completed and is now with Texas A&M University's Department of Animal Science. "Iowa State University is leading the computer simulation and AI work, while ARS is taking the lead in identifying compounds and truth testing them using a combination of in vitro [laboratory] and in vivo [live cattle] studies."

Publicly available databases that contained scientific data collected from previous studies on the cows' rumen were used to build large computational models. AI, along with these models, was used to predict the behavior of

molecules and to identify those that can be further tested in a laboratory. The results from the laboratory tests feed the computer models for AI to make more accurate predictions, creating a feedback loop process known as a graph neural network.

"Our graph neural network is a machine learning model, which learns the properties of molecules, including details of the atoms and the chemical bonds that hold them, while retaining useful information about the molecules' properties to help us study how they are likely to behave in the cow's stomach," said ISU Assistant Professor Ratul Chowdhury. "We studied their biochemical fingerprint to identify what makes them do the job successfully as opposed to the other fifty thousand molecules that are lurking around in the cow's rumen but don't actively stop the production of methane."

"This study successfully demonstrated that fifteen molecules cluster very close to each other in what we call a 'functional methanogenesis inhibition space,' meaning they seem to contain the same enteric methane inhibition potential, chemical similarity, and cell permeability as bromoform," added Chowdhury.

Scientists believe AI can play a significant role in understanding how known molecules interact with both proteins and the microbial community of the rumen and thereby discover novel molecules and potentially key interactions within the rumen microbiome. This type of predictive modeling can be particularly helpful for animal nutritionists.

"There are other promising strategies currently available to mitigate enteric methane emissions, but the available solutions are relatively limited," said USDA-ARS Research Leader Jacek Koziel. "This is why combining AI with laboratory research, through iterative refinement, is a valuable scientific tool. AI can fast-forward the research and accelerate these several pathways that animal nutritionists, researchers, and companies can pursue to get us closer to a very ambitious goal of limiting greenhouse gas emissions and helping mitigate climate change."

The study also presents a total computational and monetary cost breakdown to conduct this research on a per molecule basis. This analysis was conducted to show an estimate of potential costs and foreseeable pitfalls of this research. This estimate can be used to guide decision-making on investments for this type of research to be done entirely in a laboratory.

Chowdhury, Beck, and Koziel are co-authors in the paper published in *Animal Frontiers*, along with Nathan Frazier (ARS) and Logan Thompson (Kansas State University). Mohammed Sakib Noor, an ISU graduate student, is working with Chowdhury to develop the graph neural networks.

The Agricultural Research Service is the U.S. Department of Agriculture's chief scientific in-house research agency. Daily, ARS focuses on solutions to agricultural problems affecting America. Each dollar invested in U.S. agricultural research results in \$20 of economic impact.

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CLOVIS VETERANS MEMORIAL DISTRICT | Clovis, CA

UC ANR Fire Network shares resources on reducing impacts of wildfire, smoke



Yana Valachovic, University of California Cooperative Extension forest advisor, discusses home-hardening options with homeowners in Nevada County. Photo by Katie Low

By Michael Hsu

Senior Public Information Representative

Fire advisors offer guidance on minimizing damage, preparing for evacuation, protecting against smoke

With exceptionally dry conditions persisting in many parts of California, residents should double their efforts to prepare homes, families, businesses and communities for potential wildfire and smoke impacts, according to University of California fire experts.

"Even as firefighters make progress in containing the Los Angeles-area fires, communities must continue to be vigilant across Southern California and other regions that are experiencing this historically dry 'wet season,'" said Lenya Quinn-Davidson, director of UC Agriculture and Natural Resources' Fire Network.

The Fire Network is a team of UC Cooperative Extension fire and natural resource advisors, specialists and staff who deliver fire-related research, outreach, and support for communities across the state.

The experts have assembled a website with a wide range of relevant resources at ucanr.edu/fire. Quinn-Davidson said the "Wildfire Preparedness" page contains essential information on how to protect homes and property from fire: <https://ucanr.edu/sites/fire/Preparedness>.

"There are many small but significant tasks that people can complete to shore up potential danger spots and minimize fire damage," she emphasized.

Experts highlight six things to do before evacuating

For communities where evacuation warnings have been

issued, Quinn-Davidson and other members of the Fire Network urge residents to do six key things in advance of an actual evacuation order.

Close windows, fireplace screens, pet doors and skylights.

Move inside patio cushions, brooms and door mats; tie open wooden gates that attach to the house or deck to prevent a fire from traveling from the fence to the house.

Relocate any propane tanks away from the home.

Stage buckets of water and garden hoses in visible locations.

Dress for evacuation: long sleeve cotton clothes, sturdy shoes, hat and face protection and leather gloves.

Put your "go-bag" in your vehicle and share your evacuation plans with out-of-area family or friends.

The UC ANR Fire Network website also includes downloadable checklists – in English and Spanish – for your go-bag (https://ucanr.edu/sites/fire/Safety/Evacuation/Preparing_a_Go-Bag/) and for a host of important pre-evacuation tasks for your household, property, pets and livestock (<https://ucanr.edu/sites/fire/Safety/Evacuation/>).

ty/Evacuation/).

"These actions can make a tremendous difference when preparing for wildfire, even just hours before evacuation," Quinn-Davidson said.

Take precautions to protect yourself from smoke

During wildfire events, smoke from nearby fires can blanket nearby areas. A primer on harmful health effects, a list of tips for reducing smoke exposure, and other resources and links can be found on the UC ANR Fire Network site: https://ucanr.edu/sites/fire/Safety/Air_Quality_and_Smoke/.

"It's important to monitor your local air quality so you can mitigate smoke impacts," said Katie Low, statewide coordinator for UC ANR's Fire Network. "One go-to resource is fire. airnow.gov. If the AQI – Air Quality Index – is high, I would limit my outdoor activity, wear an N95 mask if I do go outside, and run my air purifier."

For instructions on making a DIY air cleaner, creating a "clean air space" in your home and fitting an N95 mask properly, visit the California Air Resources Board's "Smoke Ready California" page: <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/smokereadyca>.

A wildfire can also contaminate drinking water to an extent beyond what boiling can remedy; residents should check with their local water department or district for any advisories.

Another useful tool is the crowd-sourced #FireMappers fire activity map – powered by the National Alliance for Public Safety GIS Foundation, GISCorps, and CEDR Digital – accessible through the UC ANR Fire Network site: <https://ucanr.edu/sites/fire/Safety/Current/>.



AGRICULTURE: Together We Grow

NATIONAL AG DAY — Tuesday, March 18, 2025

American agriculture provides food, fiber and renewable resources for a growing world.

With a population of 8 billion people (and counting), America's farmers are more important now than ever before.

The Agriculture Council of America gratefully recognizes the essential value of farmers and America's farm families. On National Ag Day, we invite everyone to unite and celebrate the role that agriculture plays in all our lives.

Please join us on March 18, 2025 — along with producers, agricultural associations, corporations, universities, government agencies and countless others — to raise our voices in celebration of agriculture ... because *Together, We Grow*.

Learn more at agday.org

For sponsorship opportunities, contact jennyp@nama.org.

Kubota Unveils Wide Range of Customer Solutions at CES® 2025, Brings More Connectivity and Automation to Its Equipment Portfolio

Powertrain and Tech Choices Debuted for Residential, Ag, and Construction Segments; New All-Terrain KATR, CES 2025 Best of Innovation Award Winner.

Kubota North America during a media briefing at CES® 2025 shared their vision for the future that includes offering more customer solutions across its entire equipment portfolio and providing greater choice—offering diverse powertrain options, seamless access to data and analytics, improved connectivity, and advanced automation. This approach ensures that Kubota meets increasing complexities and challenges with more certainty and simplicity and empowers its customers like never before.

"What you need to know about Kubota is that we develop solutions with our customers in an innovation cycle that never ends," said Todd Stucke, President of Kubota Tractor Corporation, and Senior Vice President, Kubota North America. "That all starts with observing and listening to our customers. From there, we design and build solutions to help our customers overcome their challenges. And we're never entirely done because we continue to iterate over time and continue the cycle, always listening, and always improving."

At the show, Kubota showcased a range of equipment offerings that deliver choice—across its residential, specialty agriculture, and construction segments—to provide the right product, with the right technological capabilities, for every customer. Equipment that was on display included:

- **Agri Concept 2.0** – An electric tractor concept offering data, AI, automation and electrification as a choice of powertrain for when you want to drive and autonomous when you don't.
- **Smart Autonomous Sprayer** – A fully autonomous chemical sprayer that scouts to identify pests and sprays with precision to lessen spray drift and overuse. The result reduces labor and the use of chemicals in the field.
- **Flash** – Ultra-detailed images are gathered to detect plant-level health. When coupled with AI, Flash provides recommendations on a grower dashboard to help make crop decisions one plant at a time.
- **KATR** – The Best of Innovation winner in the CES Innovation Awards® 2025 program, the Industrial Equipment and Machinery product category, Kubota's four-wheeled all terrain, multifunctional robot. The KATR maintains a level cargo deck when working on uneven terrain and can work autonomously or remotely to tackle a range of versatile applications in agriculture and construction environments.
- **Smart Robotic Pruner** makes advanced image capture possible. When coupled with AI, and machine learning that classifies buds and canes based on position and fruiting potential, it optimizes production precision and accuracy.

- **Smart Plant Imager** – Uses advanced robotics and hyperspectral imaging cameras to capture real-time data and insights.

- Within the construction segment, the Kubota KX038-4e electric excavator is a zero-emissions, quiet electric excavator that addresses ventilation, noise, and emissions allowing for work at night, in residential areas, or even indoors.

- **Hydrogen Engine Genset** that matches the portable power diesel models, but with the benefit of a quiet, clean hydrogen engine, offering a power source choice without sacrificing performance.

- And, within Kubota's residential segment, a Smart Autonomous Zero-Turn Mower showcasing Kubota's cooperative technology that facilitates multiple machines working together to complete large tasks and makes it possible to do more with smaller machines, less investment and risk than one industrial-sized machine.

"At Kubota, we believe that truly listening to our customers drives innovation in every aspect of what we call the 'Work Loop,'" said Brett McMickell, Chief Technology Officer of Kubota North America. "The Work Loop—an essential cycle of assessing, analyzing, and acting—has always been fundamental to effective task management. With the integration of advanced sensors, AI-driven analysis, networking protocols, automation, and robotics, we are enhancing this cycle to be more seamless and efficient than ever before."

This application of the Innovation Cycle to the Work Loop is how Kubota meets the diverse needs of its customers. Two such customers working closely with Kubota in their pursuits to overcome challenges in both an agriculture and construction settings joined Kubota at the show:

- Kyle Stumpfenhorst of Rural Renovators, a custom builder for the residential, agriculture, and commercial industries, where he is the founder and owner, and operator of Kubota equipment.
- And, Edwin Evers, a Major League Fishing professional bass angler and pecan orchard farmer from Oklahoma.

"We will continue to learn from many of our customers across segments to iterate the next product and technology solution that will help them manage tomorrow's challenges and grow their businesses," McMickell added. "This is how Kubota works to make a better quality of life for individuals and society."

For more information on Kubota's participation in CES® 2025, visit KubotaUSA.com/innovation.



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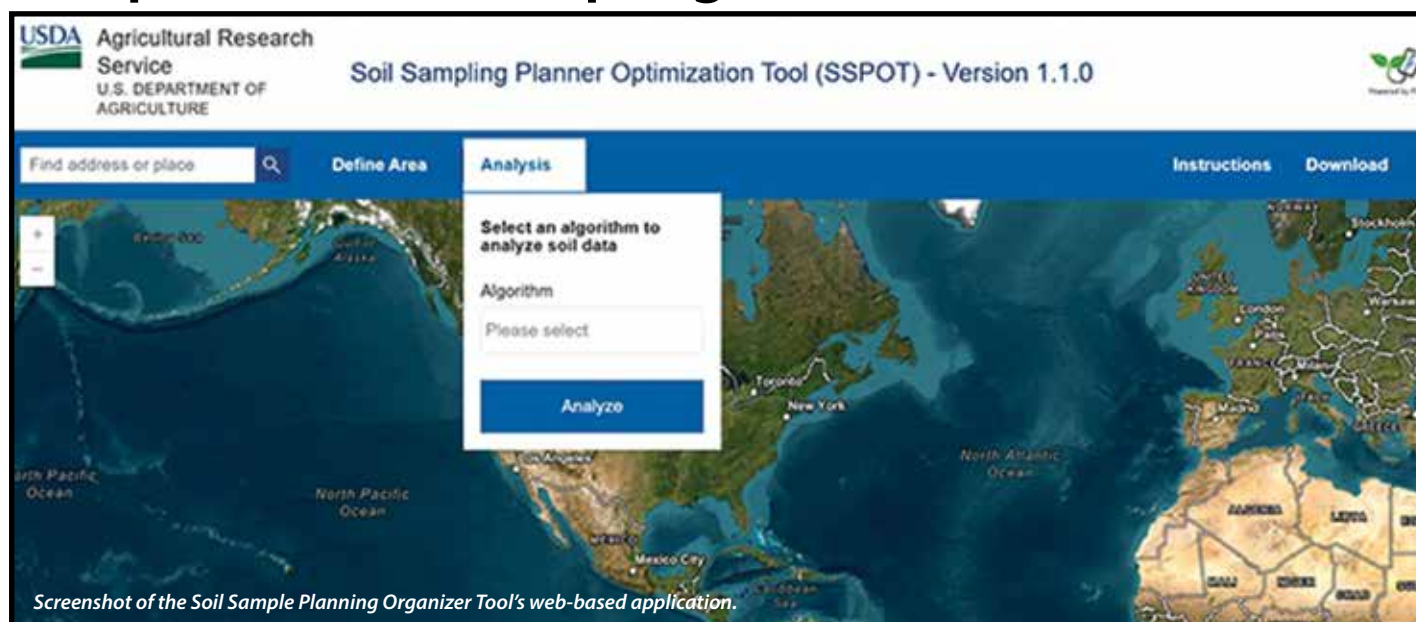
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UNL, USDA Collaborate to Create Web-based App to Optimize Soil Sampling



Screenshot of the Soil Sample Planning Organizer Tool's web-based application.

The USDA's Agricultural Research Service (ARS), the University of Nebraska–Lincoln (UNL), and the ARS's Partnership for Data Innovations (PDI) have launched a new web-based application to facilitate digital soil mapping and optimize soil sampling. The Soil Sample Planning Organizer Tool, or SSPOT, can be accessed at <https://sspot.scinet.usda.gov>.

Effective soil management relies on understanding the various factors that drive soil productivity, including pH levels, nutrient variability and organic soil carbon. Soil sampling has emerged as a valuable tool in advancing precision farming, particularly in today's changing climate and the growing need to monitor carbon footprint in agriculture.

Land managers and researchers rely on routine soil sampling to monitor soil variability and determine the best practices to increase production while maintaining sustainability. However, they often face the challenge of identifying the optimal number of soil samples and their locations in complex and varied landscapes while managing limited time, resources, and labor.

Selecting a well-distributed set of sampling sites is crucial for effective soil management decisions, and SSPOT aims to simplify this process.

SSPOT is a user-friendly tool with integrated algorithms to help users determine the optimal placement of samples needed to comprehensively understand soil activity in various soil types over time. The integrated algorithms simplify the process for non-experts and ultimately saves land managers, producers, and soil researchers both time and money.

Users can select their specific Area of Interest (AOI) on the SSPOT map and utilize one of two "optimizer" algorithms. The algorithms use the USDA's Soil Survey Geographic Database and customizable grids to ensure sampling activities are thorough and efficiently capture the full picture of soil health within the selected area. SSPOT enables users to customize parameters for their search and export the results for practical

applications in the field.

Screenshot of the Soil Sample Planning Organizer Tool's web-based application. Screenshot of the Soil Sample Planning Organizer Tool's web-based application.

"SSPOT is an example of collaborative science, where a multidisciplinary team of experts from academia, the federal government, and the private sector worked together to bring a vision to life," said Virginia Jin, a location coordinator and research leader with the ARS Agroecosystem Management Research Unit. "We are confident that this tool can push forward the advancement of research for the benefit of croplands, grazinglands, and forestry."

Furthermore, a version of SSPOT will support the USDA's National Resources Conservation Services in their conservation evaluation and monitoring activity efforts, including soil sampling needs.

The project began at UNL with Trenton Franz, a professor of hydrogeophysics at the School of Natural Resources, who developed the initial algorithm and provided the scientific backing behind SSPOT. Consultant Ben Cook developed the original SSPOT prototype with Franz, and both contributed greatly to the new SSPOT interface, which was developed with support from industry partner, Esri, inc. The ARS team led the testing and refining of the software, incorporating valuable feedback from stakeholders throughout the process.

"Every project aiming to understand soil variability across a field faces the same questions: How many samples should I take, and where should I collect them?" Franz said. "While these questions seem straightforward, the answers vary greatly depending on location and project goals. SSPOT was designed as a user-friendly tool to help both producers and researchers make informed sampling decisions."

SSPOT is part of ongoing collaborations among USDA, UNL and PDI aiming to strategize soil sampling to and improve soil health in the U.S.

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New Holland Celebrates Triple Win at AE50 Awards for Hay and Forage Innovations



New Holland Agriculture is proud to announce that it has been honored with three prestigious AE50 Awards from the American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers (ASABE). These awards recognize the most innovative designs in engineering products or systems for the food and agriculture industries. New Holland's IntelliSense™ Bale Automation, CropSpeed Monitoring System, and UltraFeed™ Pickup have each been acknowledged for their groundbreaking contributions to agricultural technology.

"These awards highlight New Holland's unwavering commitment to hay and forage innovations. By continuously developing advanced technologies in this segment, New Holland ensures that farmers can achieve higher efficiency, better crop quality, and reduced operational costs." Says Carlo Lambro, Brand President at New Holland. "The IntelliSense™ Bale Automation, CropSpeed Monitoring System, and UltraFeed™ Pickup are all designed to enhance the productivity and profitability of hay and forage operations, symbolizing New Holland's dedication to supporting farmers in their pursuit of excellence."

IntelliSense™ Bale Automation: Revolutionizing Baling Efficiency

The IntelliSense™ Bale Automation system – already a winner of a Silver Medal Award at Agritechnica 2022 – has set a new standard in the large square baler industry.

This cutting-edge technology for New Holland's BigBaler range offers the potential for greater productivity, bale quality, fuel efficiency and operator comfort by automating

key baler and tractor functions. It integrates SmartSteer™ swath guidance and IntelliCruise II™ speed control, utilizing LiDAR (light detection and ranging) technology to provide precise navigation and real-time adjustments. Farmers have underlined the system's ability to automate feedrate and swath guidance, which significantly reduces operator fatigue and increases efficiency.

CropSpeed Monitoring System: Enhancing Crop Management

The CropSpeed Monitoring System featured on the FR Forage Cruiser self-propelled forage harvesters is the first system of its kind in the industry, and it's based around a spout-mount-

ed radar sensor that monitors the crop flow leaving the machine, detecting any change in its rate in relation to the forage harvester's forward speed.

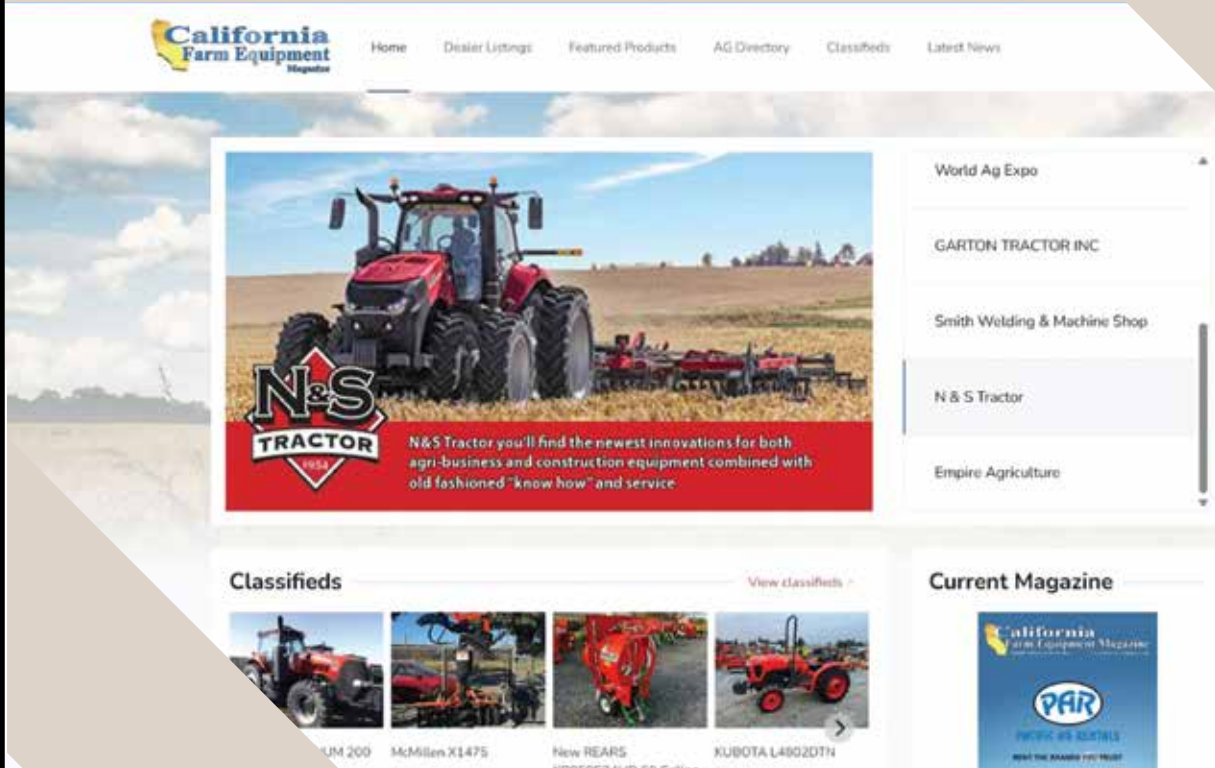
Operators using the system have the potential to reduce blockage likelihood and make dense blockage far less likely to occur in the machine, with the cleanout and work resumption being far faster. This system also helps less-experienced operators operate with more confidence to ensure they can maximize the output of the FR Forage Cruiser with minimum operator training before getting in the seat.

UltraFeed™ Pickup: Maximizing Forage Harvester Productivity

The UltraFeed™ Pickup head is designed to enhance the performance of New Holland's FR Forage Cruiser self-propelled forage harvesters. Presented in 3.0m, 3.5m and 4.0m working widths (10ft, 11.5ft and 13ft), the UltraFeed™ Pickup efficiently handles larger windrows and improves crop flow through the harvester. Its robust belt-driven driveline and innovative auger design ensure increased capacity, uptime, and service life. The UltraFeed™ Pickup also features a large roller windguard and optional auto greasing system, further optimizing productivity and reducing maintenance.

The AE50 Awards will be presented at the Agricultural Equipment Technology Conference (AETC), which is scheduled to take place from February 9-12, 2025, in Louisville. This event will celebrate the most innovative designs in agricultural engineering, including New Holland's award-winning technologies

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The Ultimate Guide to Game Day Hosting

Super Bowl LIX - Sunday, February 9, 2025



Photo courtesy of Shutterstock

6 tips to host a game day gathering like a pro

FAMILY FEATURES

From kickoff to the final whistle, game day is all about spending time with friends and family while rooting for your favorite team. When it's your turn to host, you can bring all the fun of a tailgate party to the comfort of your couch with the proper plan for hosting.

Show Your Team Spirit

Make your guests feel excited from the moment they walk through the door – or as soon as they pull in the driveway – by decking out your space in team colors and memorabilia. Use football- or team-themed banners, flags, balloons, coasters and tablecloths to set the mood.

Wear your favorite jersey and create a stadium-like atmosphere with fun props like foam fingers or pom-poms for guests to use and cheer on their team.

Prep Ahead of Time to Score Big

Avoid a rush before kickoff by making a checklist of everything you'll need. Ensure your TV and sound systems are working correctly and that you have access to the right channel or streaming platform.

Make a store run at least a day in advance to grab everything you'll need for your watch party: dishes, snacks, drinks, tablecloths, trash bags and some household essentials like Finish Ultimate Dishwasher Detergent. Finish Ultimate tackles dish cleanup in the kitchen like a pro, so hosts can enjoy all the fun parts of game day without the worry.

If possible, pack your coolers the night before – just as you would for tailgating at the stadium – and prep and cook any dishes you can ahead of time, so you can enjoy the action with minimal interruptions.

Feed the Fans

Football fans are often foodies, too. A buffet-style food setup allows guests to help themselves to their favorite snacks and dishes throughout all four quarters.

Review your game plan ahead of kickoff to make sure your game day menu offers a variety of finger foods, such as wings, sliders and nachos. Then, take your menu to the next level with unique eats like this new saucy, cheesy creation – the TRUFF Hot Honey Bacon Cheddar Dip with Pretzel Bites – to add a spicy twist.

To complete the roster of game day eats, include a veggie tray or charcuterie board and a variety of beverages, including water, soda and juice. To stay on theme, consider serving cake or brownies in the shape of a football for dessert or topping cupcakes with icing in the team's colors.

Tackle Cleanup

All those delicious snacks your guests are enjoying are sure to make a mess. For hosts tackling cleanup during the game, don't miss out on all the on-screen action—turn to the star player to make cleanup a breeze: Finish Ultimate Dishwasher Detergent.

Finish Ultimate tackles tough game day messes, even without pre-rinsing, leaving hosts more time to cheer on their team and less time in the kitchen cleaning up.

Create the Perfect Viewing Environment

Ensure everyone has an unobstructed view by arranging your seating strategically. Use a combination of couches, chairs and floor cushions to accommodate your guests. Scatter small tables throughout the area within easy reach for guests to place their drinks and snacks while the action is live.

To ensure fans never miss a moment of the action, turn the TVs in other rooms to the game as well; just ensure the sound is down in case the main screen is ahead or behind of the secondary viewing options.

Consider Downtime Entertainment to Keep the Energy High

While the main event is watching the action, you can keep the excitement going during halftime and commercial breaks with fun activities like cornhole, football trivia, bingo, mascot matching or an old-fashioned game of catch. Also have some board games, card games

or video games on hand for those who might want to take a break from watching or children who aren't as engaged in the on-screen action.

For the ultimate game day recipe and to find more ways to tackle dish cleanup in the kitchen on game day, visit finishdishwashing.com/truff-hot-honey-bacon-cheddar-dip.



Hot Honey Bacon Cheddar Dip with Pretzel Bites

Recipe courtesy of Finish

Prep time: 15 minutes

Cook time: 1 hour

Servings: 12

- 5 slices bacon
- 1/2 cup honey
- 2 tablespoons TRUFF Original Hot Sauce
- 16 ounces cream cheese, softened
- 2/3 cup lager-style beer
- 1/4 cup Dijon mustard
- 24 ounces cheddar cheese, grated
- 1/2 cup fresh scallions, chopped
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 1/2 teaspoon cracked black pepper
- 24 ounces frozen pretzel bites, baked according to package instructions

Preheat oven to 400° F.

Evenly space bacon in 13-by-9-inch dishwasher-safe ceramic or glass baking dish.

Bake bacon 10 minutes.

Microwave honey 15-20 seconds. Add hot sauce and whisk to combine.

Remove bacon from oven and carefully pat dry with paper towels.

Brush bacon with hot honey and return to oven. Set aside any remaining hot honey for later use.

Bake bacon 10-15 minutes until brown and crisp. Set bacon aside to cool.

Chop bacon into small, bite-sized pieces. Pour bacon pan drippings into bowl and discard once cool.

In bowl, whisk softened cream cheese, beer and mustard to combine.

Add grated cheddar cheese, chopped scallions, garlic powder, onion powder and black pepper. Stir until thoroughly combined.

Spread mixture evenly in 13-by-9-inch dishwasher-safe ceramic or glass baking dish.

Bake 20-25 minutes, or until hot and bubbly.

Remove from oven and rest 5 minutes.

Sprinkle top of dip with chopped bacon and drizzle with remaining hot honey.

Serve dip alongside baked pretzel bites.

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16-\$19.90	17-\$20.80	18-\$21.70	19-\$22.60	20-\$23.50
21-\$24.40	22-\$25.30	23-\$26.20	24-\$27.10	25-\$28.00

UPCOMING EVENTS

FEBRUARY 2025

4-6: The Oldest Farm Show in the West- The Granddaddy of Farm Shows Celebrating 60 Years of Agricultural Excellence! For 60 years now, the Colusa County Farm Show has been a one-stop shop for all things agriculture, celebrating innovation from across the country. With free parking and free admission to all attendees- farmers, suppliers, and buyers meet to explore the latest in modern farming equipment and techniques. Join us for an unparalleled opportunity to stay ahead of the curve and revolutionize your farming practice! The Show is open from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm on FEB. 4th & 5th, and 9:00 am to 3:00 pm, on FEB. 6th, 2025. Colusa County Fairgrounds, 1303 10th St. (Hwy. 20) Colusa, CA 95932 (530) 458-2641 ceo@colusafairgrounds.com

11-13: World Ag Expo 2025, the largest annual agricultural show of its kind. The International Agri-Center® Tulare, CA. World Ag Expo® provides a platform of networking, education, and business in one of the most productive ag counties in the United States. For information email: info@farmshow.org, or call 559.688.1030, 1.800.999.9186

15-17: AgSafe ACTIVATE22 Annual Conference, Monterey CA. Focused on the industry's most vital resource, it's people. With more than 50 sessions being offered in English and Spanish. Info: Phone: 209-526-4400 Fax: 209-526-4404 Email: safeinfo@agsafe.org Website: www.agsafe.org

25: Sustainable Winegrowing & Certification Overview (Webinar). Participate in this free webinar to learn about the California Sustainable Winegrowing Program (SWP). To register visit: <https://sustainablewinegrowing.org/events/sustainable-winegrowing-certification-overview-webinar/>

APRIL 2025

11-13: California Antique Farm Equipment Show™ Volunteers started the equipment show about 30 years ago because they wanted somewhere to go where they could appreciate vintage equipment. QUESTIONS: Contact the International Agri-Center® 559.688.1030 or 800.999.9186. Email: info@farmshow.org

To list your special event in California Farm Equipment send details to CFEM, PO Box 1128, Visalia, CA. 93279. or email to: info@cfemag.com.

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KIOTI Tractor Debut at 2025 Consumer Electronics Show

Ag Machinery Manufacturer Showcased Vision of 'AI to the Field'



KIOTI Tractor, a division of Daedong-USA Inc., announced its first-ever appearance at the 2025 Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas. On display with its parent company, Daedong Corporation, the booth focused on the theme of 'AI to the Field,' and showcased how technology can be integrated into farming practices.

The interactive exhibit displayed technology innovations developed by Daedong, a leader in South Korean agricultural machinery. Visitors explored the company's blueprint for AI-driven future agriculture through immersive experiences showcasing its self-developed technologies, including precision farming, multifunctional agricultural robots, and AI plant cultivation systems.

"It was an honor to be at CES 2025, sharing solutions that will change the way the world cultivates food," said Jun Bahk, president and CEO of Kioti Tractor. "During the show, visitors saw first-hand how technology addresses challenges to produce better, higher-quality crops. In collaboration with Daedong, we're excited to share a blueprint for the future of agriculture."

Interactive Precision Agriculture Experience featuring the Kioti RX7340 Utility Tractor

Visitors were able to enter the cab of the new Kioti RX7340 utility tractor for an interactive experience showcasing the use of Daedong's precision technology throughout the farming cycle. During the simulation, visitors witnessed how AI autonomously manages farming tasks, experiencing how soil analysis and prescriptions, growth and pest diagnosis, and

harvest processes differ – compared to conventional farming methods – through the tractor's display system. The simulation leverages agricultural lifecycle data collected during Daedong's trials on more than 400,000 acres of farmland in South Korea.

Unveiling of New and Award-Winning AI Technologies

In addition to the precision farming technology, Daedong showcased its technologies focused on AI and robotics. Its multifunctional agricultural robot was unveiled for the first-time at CES 2025. Demonstrated in a strawberry field scenario, the robot's AI software responded to voice commands and its environment, autonomously performing various tasks. The robot will carry out end-to-end tasks based on a single AI model, from transplanting strawberry seedlings to removing unnecessary runners and managing the overall growth cycle. The demonstration explored how new technology can overcome the limitations of traditional agricultural robots that are only capable of automating specific tasks.

The company also presented its award-winning AI-based plant cultivation system. Placing seed capsules in the cultivation system, the AI software, aided by an embedded camera, recognizes the variety and assesses its growth status. The system automatically adjusts environmental factors, including temperature, humidity, airflow and nutrient solution, to allow for optimal plant growth.

For information about Kioti Tractor and its equipment offerings, visit KIOTI.com. Learn more about Daedong Corporation by going to daedong.co.kr.

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*Offer available January 1, 2025 – February 28, 2025. Rebates and/or financing based on the purchase of eligible equipment defined in promotional program. Pricing and rebates in US dollars. Additional fees including, but not limited to, taxes, freight, setup and delivery charges may apply. Financing must be through DLL or Sheffield using one of the available financing options. Financing is subject to credit approval. Customers must take delivery prior to the end of the program period. Some customers will not qualify. Some restrictions apply. Offer available on new equipment only. Prior purchases are not eligible. Offer valid only at participating Dealers. Offer subject to change without notice. See your dealer for details. Offer valid only at participating Dealers. Offer subject to change without notice. See your dealer for details. © 2025 Kioti Tractor Company a Division of Daedong-USA, Inc.

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Empowering Farmers Through Innovation: John Deere Expands Self-Repair Solutions, Furthering Farmer Independence

John Deere (NYSE:\$DE) announced another significant step forward in supporting customers' ability to maintain and repair their machines across the agricultural and construction industries. The latest addition to Deere's suite of digital solutions will further empower customers and independent repair technicians by, among other things, enabling them to reprogram Deere-manufactured electronic controllers.

These new capabilities will be integrated into the John Deere Operations Center™ and will offer more comprehensive solutions for diagnosing and repairing equipment while ensuring machine reliability, safety, and compliance.

"John Deere has a long-standing commitment to enhancing our customers' ability to repair their equipment. Consistent with that commitment, we've continued to deliver new and enhanced solutions designed to improve that experience" said Denver Caldwell, Vice President of Aftermarket and Customer Support. "As our equipment has become more technologically advanced, so too have the repair tools needed to advance customer capabilities. We are committed to offering customers the best equipment ownership experience, both in the form of world-class dealer support and extensive self-repair resources. This offering advances our goal of minimizing customers' unplanned downtime and enables them to be more productive and profitable in their operations."

For years, John Deere has invested in enhanced solutions and is excited to take the next step as we continue to gather feedback from customers through the development process to complete our pilot. The customer and independent repair technician pilot will set the stage for launch in the U.S. and Canada by the second half of 2025.

Commitment to Repairability

For decades, John Deere has empowered customers to take control of their repair and maintenance needs, from publishing operator, diagnostic, and technical manuals, to selling parts over the counter to customers and independent repair shops to developing digital tools

like Customer Service ADVISOR™. John Deere's latest expansion will offer a more user-friendly, centralized platform for self-repair. As a leader in agricultural and construction technology as well as customer support, John Deere is committed to further enhancing machine ownership for a new generation.

Expanding Existing Tools and Resources

In addition to the new solution, John Deere has an expansive suite of tools currently that support customers throughout their machine ownership journey, including:

- John Deere Bookstore for viewing operators' manuals for free and purchasing technical manuals;
- Quick Reference Guides and instructional videos for maintenance tips;
- Shop.Deere.com for finding and purchasing parts online;
- John Deere Operations Center™ for managing farm data, maintenance, and machine information;
- Customer Service ADVISOR™ for digital manuals, and for clearing and refreshing codes, taking diagnostic readings, and performing limited calibrations; and

Equipment Mobile this free app is a one-stop-shop for machine information including operators and parts manuals, maintenance plans, quick reference information, trouble code lookup, and software updates on select 4G connected machines.

Innovating to Enhance Machine Ownership

John Deere is an industry leader in self-repair resources for customers and remains committed to future investments that enable customer and independent repair technicians to improve machine uptime. Recent enhancements demonstrate the ongoing commitment to continuous improvement, empowering equipment owners and improving machine ownership worldwide. John Deere will continue to innovate, making it easier for customers to work on their machines and their systems to keep them up and running when they need them the most.

To learn more about John Deere's commitment to customer uptime and repairability, visit Deere.com/repair.





Key Shopper Behaviors Drive Growth of Watermelon Category

The U.S. watermelon category has experienced strong growth over the last year, with households across the country making an estimated \$2.7 billion in fresh watermelon purchases. According to a recent shopper segmentation study conducted by the National Watermelon Promotion Board (NWPB), an increase in annual watermelon purchases was driven by higher household penetration and spend within key shopper segments.

The shopper segmentation study, which examined shopper behaviors and purchase trends based on consumer panel data, showed that over 3 million new U.S. households purchased watermelon in 2024 boosting U.S. household penetration to 72%. On average, shoppers made five watermelon purchase trips during the year, spending \$5.83 per trip for an estimated annual household spend of \$28.94.

Based on their annual spend, watermelon buyers were divided into three segments: Light, Medium, and Heavy. The Heavy segment represented 25% of watermelon households, and accounted for 63% of total category purchase dollars in 2024. This segment contributed \$97 million of the incremental purchases, highlighting their role as the primary drivers of category growth.

The study identified several actionable opportunities for continued category growth:

Increase Shopping Frequency: Encouraging households to make one additional watermelon purchase trip per year could bring over \$550 million into the watermelon category.

Expand Household Penetration: A 1% increase in household penetration, from 72% to 73%, could generate an additional \$38 million in incremental sales.

Target Heavy Shoppers: Developing marketing strategies focused on engaging with the Heavy watermelon shopper segment could further boost spending and repeat purchases.

The findings from the shopper segmentation study provide a strategic roadmap for driving continued growth in the watermelon category. By leveraging these insights and targeting the heavy shopper segments, the industry can unlock opportunities for sustained category growth.

These findings, combined with earlier consumer research, offer a comprehensive understanding of watermelon buyer demographics, characteristics, and purchasing behaviors. This enables retailers and producers to effectively target key consumer groups and maximize sales opportunities.

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