

Northeast

DEALER

The Newsletter of NORTHEAST EQUIPMENT DEALERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

Could It Be Two Years Before Farmers See a New Farm Bill?

The Ugly Truth About the Fight Over Funding

By TYNE MORGAN

Time is running out to get a new farm bill written and passed by the end of the year. With only 11 working days left to get it written and passed before current legislation runs out, Congress is also in disagreement with how long it will take to get a new farm bill finished, which is why one ag economist fears it could take two years.

Even as staffers on the Senate and House ag committees worked tirelessly, the farm bill took a backseat to larger funding issues, including the current battle to keep the federal government open.

The biggest hurdle for agriculture is the effort to create a stronger safety net, especially since Joe Outlaw, Texas A&M extension economist co-director of the Agricultural and Food Policy Center, thinks the days of passing ad hoc payments, such as WHIP, are over. As conservatives try to clamp down on spending, he thinks it will become more difficult to pass one-off disaster aid legislation.

"The conservatives in Washington, at least for the time being, they are not even wanting to fund the government because they want to cut payments. So in that environment, I don't see a lot of ad hoc disaster going out," says Outlaw. "Now, if it's a disaster hits in the right place, then I can see something getting passed. But this whole idea of taking care of farmers without going through the appropriations process, in my mind, is about to come to an end."

Outlaw, who's worked on eight farm bills, says if it isn't passed by February, it could be two years before agriculture sees a new farm bill because of the election. If FAPRI's baseline projections are correct, a financial crisis could ensue before then, as commodity prices are projected to fall below the cost of production during that time.

The Fight for Funding

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) – currently has baseline

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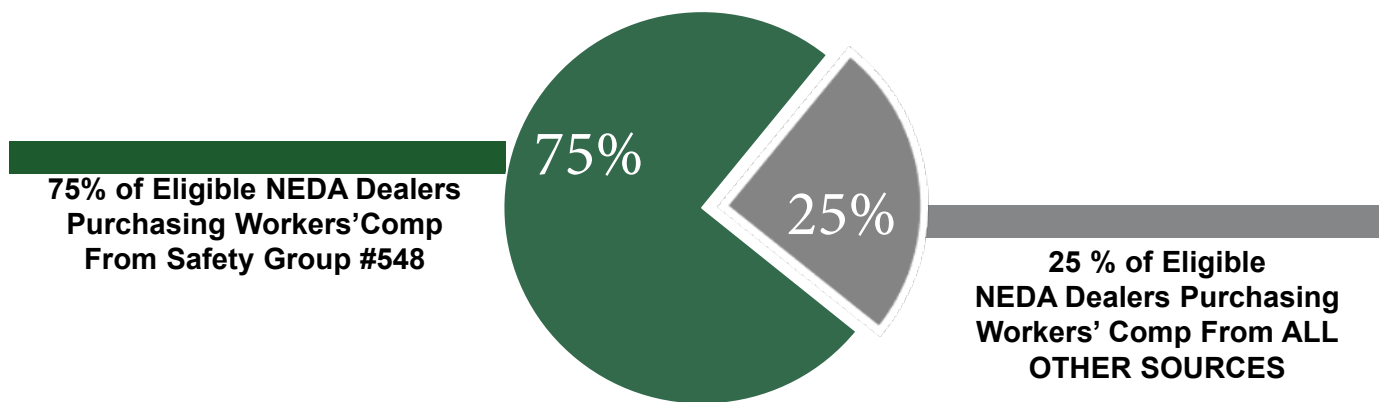
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Observations from the **FIELD**

Advocating on our members' behalf has been and continues to be the primary focus of the association's time and resources – serving our members is our first and overriding priority!

Serving our members can mean something different on any given day. Some days it means researching laws and regulations. Another day, it may mean vetting products and service providers that our members might use, building grassroot support, identifying dealers/personnel willing to testify/engage with legislators/their staff, drafting testimony, presenting testimony, engaging with industry representatives and government agencies, reviewing a manufacturer's correspondence, identifying willing partners, forming/participating in like-minded coalitions, helping a dealer work through a challenge, sourcing legal/regulator advice, exploring/researching "new" industry/market trends, workforce development programing, conducting forklift training, and the list goes on. Clearly some answers, solutions, and recommendations are easier and less time-consuming, while others are long term "challenges" requiring substantial investment of the association's time and treasure, and then there's those that we're still looking for a viable answer or solution!

How that service benefits our members isn't always easy to determine, document, or quantify. That said, I would argue that because of the investments NEDA has made on our members' behalf and our continued dedication to member service, your membership dues return a significant ROI. For example, our work updating dealer law warranty provision addressing reimbursement, submission, parts, and labor has been a focus of much of NEDA's legislative work. Quantifying the dollar value of that work isn't easy, but I can tell you that one manufacturer equated it to a .35% surcharge on whole new complete machine settlements for dealers of agricultural, turf, and commercial worksite equipment located in that state. Establishing values associated with other amendments and provisions is equally challenging. That said, if one considers the costs associated with a dedicated facility, staff, and accounting system, as well as unreasonable display or stocking requirements, one could argue that the financial benefit to a dealership/location would easily exceed \$5000.00 or more year. Add in ready "research" resources willing to dig in and engage with regulators and agencies, and I hope our members feel that their dues, legal fund donations, and time and participation are valuable investments.

Sales reports I've read and received from dealers seem to indicate that the strength we've seen in the large Ag equipment market is tempering. Compact equipment, power sports/UTV, and OPE markets, to include compact construction equipment, seem to be holding steady. Several articles have pointed to higher interest rates, machinery prices, and input costs when explaining sales data. Hopefully, strength in the commodities markets will continue to support large equipment sales and stock market gains will help consumers reach a bit farther into their pocketbooks. Regardless, I'd like to encourage dealers to fully engage with their staff, manufacturers, and customers when building out next year's business plans, knowing we'll see higher operating/overhead costs.

Within that planning work, I would like to remind dealers to examine the question I posed in last month's article: Do you have training and professional development tracks in place? Is your dealership maximizing your assets (to include EMPLOYEES)? Are there gaps or opportunities? Will your facilities, staff, and financial resources match or support future demands?

"If everyone is moving forward together, then success takes care of itself." Henry Ford



TIM WENTZ
Field Director / Legislative
Committee Chairman
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New Farm Bill?

continued from page 1

spending over a 10-year period at \$1.51 trillion. \$1.2 trillion of the funding for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

Ag groups are fighting for an increase in the reference price under Title 1 of the farm bill, but that increase will require a lot more money than what's available.

"We're talking about needing \$20 billion to \$25 billion for a 10% increase in those reference prices across all the crops," Outlaw says. "If you want to 20%, which is what the producers really want, that's an impossible \$50 to \$55 billion."

With a long, drawn-out fight to finish the farm bill likely, Outlaw says farmers need to start making their voices heard.

"Within two years, prices are going to be below your cost of production, unless something happens on the input side," Outlaw says. "That means we're not going to be making any money. We shouldn't have to wait until there are problems, but unfortunately, the way things work in Washington these days, we tend to have to have a crisis to get things done."

Read article in its entirety [here](#).

► Published online **AgWeb Farm Journal** | 9.19.23

Looking For Greener Pastures: John Deere Dealer Eyes Relocation In Centre County

BY BRET PALLOTTO | *Centre Daily Times*

BELLEFONTE, PA – An agriculture equipment dealer with a home along state Route 45 plans to head off to greener pastures. Authorized John Deere dealer **LandPro Equipment** is preparing to relocate from 2818 Earlstown Road to the intersection of U.S. Route 322 and Summer Lane in Potter Township, Centre County subdivision and land development planner Chris Schnure said Tuesday during the county commissioners meeting.

The business plans to construct a 19,443-square-foot commercial sales and equipment repair building, as well as a 7,500-square-foot building equipment storage. The property is about 9 1/2 acres. Neither the cost of the project nor a timeline for the move was offered during the public meeting. The company did not immediately respond Tuesday. "It seems like this will be a good addition to that section of 322, where there's multiple businesses that are related to either home design, development, repairs," appointed county Commissioner Amber Concepcion said. "There's quite a few similar businesses that are along those lines."

[Read more.](#)



Authorized John Deere dealer LandPro Equipment plans to relocate from 2818 Earlstown Road to the intersection of U.S. Route 322 and Summer Lane in Potter Township. Photo: GENE J. PUSKAR AP

► Published online **Centre Daily Times** | 8.22.23

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Fastline Auctions Are Here

Fastline Auctions are here! After 45+ years as a leader in the agriculture equipment space, connecting dealers and farmers with the farm equipment they need, Fastline Marketing Group has entered the online auction space with our Auction platform. Leveraging our extensive farmer audience and our deep dealer connections, our expansion into equipment auctions was the next logical step in our growth.

Fastline Auctions was established with the primary goal of providing a reliable and user-friendly platform for buying and selling equipment and machinery. Combining our best-in-class inventory portal platform and our farmer audience, Fastline continues our goal of serving the farming community and helping them grow. We have always provided a safe, convenient way to search for equipment next door, or across the country, and now the agriculture community can take advantage of another way to buy.

Why Fastline Auctions?

"Fastline Auctions was built to provide yet another option to our community: a way for our sellers to conveniently and efficiently sell their equipment and take advantage of the buyer traffic that we've built over the last 45 years" said Ted Schepmann, Director of Fastline Auctions. "It allows us to continue to be on the forefront of service and technology and further our commitment to the agriculture space"

The Fastline Auction platform has many benefits:

- Lowest commission rates in the industry
- Multi-channel marketing delivers millions of impressions to interested buyers
- Lien free titles
- No buyers fees
- Easy to use platform

These benefits all add up to create an easy-to-use environment for both buyers and sellers, but that's not all.

Transparency is at the core of our values. We have strived to build a trusted platform where buyers and sellers can engage with confidence. Detailed product descriptions, high-

quality images, and honest condition reports provide bidders with all the necessary information to make informed decisions.

We also take all of our relationships very seriously. Regardless if you're buying or selling equipment, we understand the importance of excellent customer support. Our team of experienced professionals are readily available to address any queries or concerns, whether it's about registering on the platform, placing bids, or arranging logistics, our dedicated support team will ensure that participants receive timely assistance throughout their auction journey.

With a strong online presence and a vast network of connections, we have a nationwide reach, connecting buyers and sellers from all corners of the country. This extensive coverage not only increases the chances of finding the right products, but also opens up new markets and new opportunities for sellers.

An online auction platform wouldn't have the trust you need without safety, and that is paramount in the digital world. We take every precaution to ensure secure transactions by employing advanced encryption technology and secure payment gateways to protect users'

personal and financial information, providing a worry-free auction experience.

So what does this all mean? It means that we have successfully carved a niche in the competitive landscape of online auctions. Through its user-friendly interface, diverse product range, transparent processes, and exceptional customer support, we will continue to grow and build on our previous successes, and continue to support the agriculture community.

As a powerhouse in the industry, Fastline Auctions continues to redefine the auction experience, making it an excellent choice for anyone looking to buy or sell equipment and machinery online.

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RIGHT TO REPAIR UPDATE

'Right to Repair' in the OPE Industry

In recent years, some 20 state legislatures have considered "right to repair" bills that would inappropriately require manufacturers to provide broader consumer access to tools and information for the digital diagnosis and repair of outdoor power equipment (OPE). Beyond U.S. legislatures, similar policymaking is also being debated in Washington, both in Congress and at the U.S. Federal Trade Commission, and in the European Union.

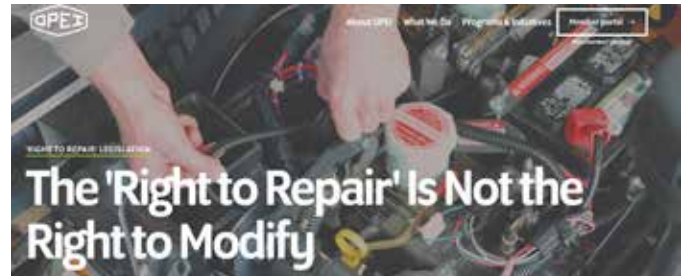
At the request of special interest groups promoting consumer rights for the repair of products, these flawed and overly broad bills would give unauthorized access to the software code that manufacturers develop as part of their equipment.

OPE manufacturers invest considerable resources in innovations that result in cutting-edge equipment that helps both commercial and consumer users maximize the productivity of their OPE. In a digital economy, many of these innovations involve sophisticated technologies integrated into the equipment, which govern among other things critical safety and emission controls. With applicable OPE products, dealers also invest considerable resources in training qualified technicians to service and repair these rapidly-evolving technologies.

Why Outdoor Power Equipment (OPE) Manufacturers Oppose 'Right to Repair' Legislation and Policymaking

Current legislation and policymaking is overly broad with unintended consequences for consumers of outdoor power equipment ("OPE"). The OPE industry is instead committed to the consumer's right to repair where it does not risk modifications to products which compromise consumer safety, product performance, and environmental protection.

- Modification is not repair. Modifications are outside the scope of recommendations for repair made by the manufacturer.
- Providing access to embedded software may result in modifications, not repair.



► Posted online [OPEI.org](https://www.OPEI.org)

Online Fraud With Equipment And Parts

A little bit of warning. If you're looking for help for your tractor's equipment machinery out there on the internet, fraud is extremely common. Today I'm going to show you a gentleman that I just saw who had seven scammers after him almost immediately.

The example is coming out of a Facebook group called New Holland Tractors and Equipment. It's about 20,000 people out there that go back and forth sharing their experiences with their machines, helping each other out sometimes with mechanical issues or concerns, or bouncing ideas off of one another whether a new piece of equipment is right for their specific application. Things that we usually help with here on the dealership level, but sometimes crowdsourcing that information from the internet can be helpful. In this case, this gentleman was reaching out looking for a broom for a New Holland MC22. Now what is an MC22?

It's a front mower. It would have been made in about the early 2000s, so it's about 15 to 20 years old at this point. This particular gentleman was looking for a broom attachment to go onto the front of this mower. Now this is truly a needle in a haystack. The attachments for this machine are long discontinued by this point. It was a low-volume model to begin with and the most unusual of attachments. They really sell very few of these particular brooms, so this is a great thing to go to the internet for help. On the dealership side, we

could do very little in order to be able to solve this customer's need, and so sharing this out in this Facebook group made a lot of sense. Here's how the conversation goes. He throws this need out here on the internet and immediately Frank Mitchell is out here. "Hello, sir, I have one." Barks Morgan, "Have one in my garage. Send me a direct message." Frederick William, "Message me and let's take a look at what I have." [chuckles] Danny Wallace, "Are you looking to get a new one or a used one, sir?" Derek Main, "Still searching? Message me and let's take a look at what I've got." Albert Rose, "Have some used ones available. PM me if still searching."

Now, things continue with some people throwing some actual caution out to this gentleman, seeing what's going on. "Sure are a lot of scammers on here, be careful." Also from the original poster, some of these comments have "direct messaging" me. Some of these people are not just posting in this group, they're sending individual messages to the person who's asking for this broom offering them products. Now, as we go on, some of these people continue to come back for a second and third time. We hear from Frank Mitchell again coming back and offering his piece a second time. "Have you found anything?"

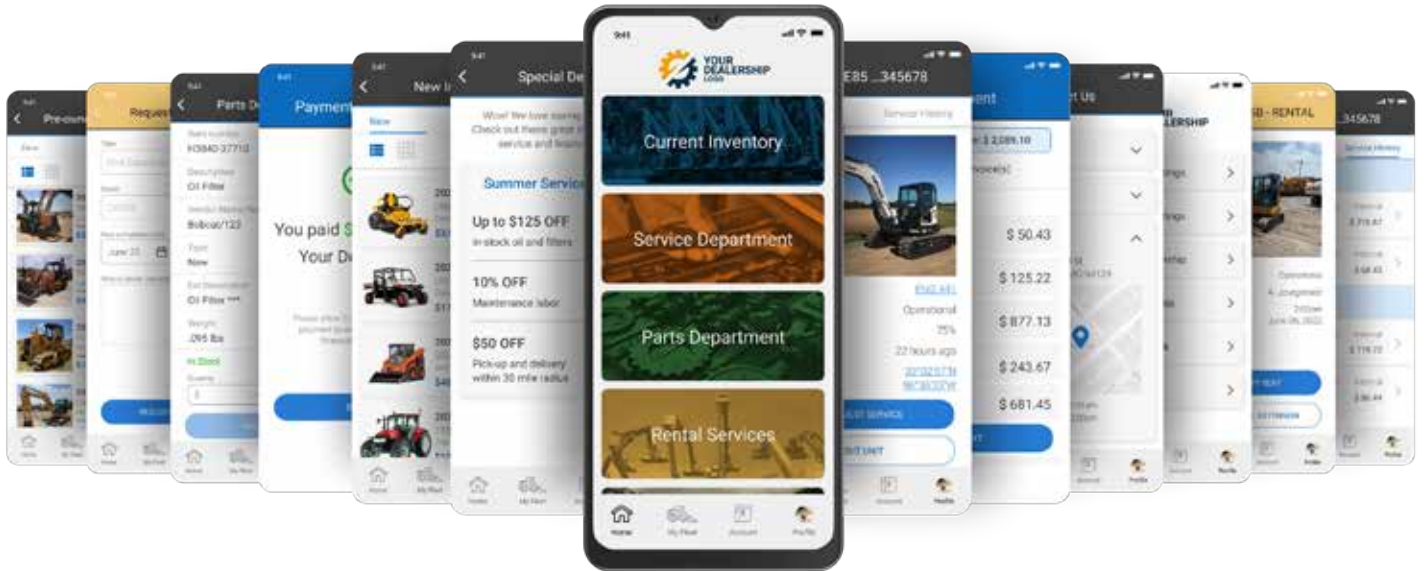
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Here We Go Again – DOL Proposes Big Increases to the Minimum Salary Requirements for the FLSA's White-Collar Exemptions

BY ADAM R. LONG

On August 30, 2023, the U.S. Department of Labor issued proposed regulations that would sharply increase the minimum salary requirements for the Fair Labor Standards Act's white-collar overtime exemptions. These proposed regulations, if they take effect, would impact millions of currently exempt employees and create significant compliance issues for many employers.

The 2023 Proposed Regulations

On August 30, the Biden Administration DOL issued a new Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on this issue. The proposed regulations would make the minimum salary requirement equal to the 35th percentile of weekly earnings of full-time salaried workers in the lowest-wage U.S. Census region, which currently is the southern U.S. Based on 2022 data, this number would be \$1,059 per week (\$55,068 annually). However, the DOL indicated that it will use the most recent data available when it issues the final regulations, which likely will result in a significantly higher threshold. The DOL projects that the minimum weekly salary threshold could be as high as \$1,140 (\$59,285 annually) by the final quarter of 2023.

In addition, the DOL proposes tying the minimal annual compensation threshold for the FLSA's highly compensated employee exemption to the 85th percentile of salaried workers nationally. Again, based on the 2022 data (which is less than what the final number likely will be), this change would increase this annual compensation threshold from \$107,432 currently to a number likely in excess of \$143,988.

The DOL projects that 3.6 million currently exempt workers would be affected by these changes in the first year after the proposed regulations are implemented.

That's not all. The proposed regulations include automatic updates (i.e., increases) every three years to these minimum salary levels, using the same methodology for calculating the threshold numbers based on the statistical data.

The proposed regulations do not include any changes to the white-collar exemptions' duties test.

[Read entire article.](#)

► Posted online **McNees Pennsylvania Labor & Employment Blog** | 8.31.23

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A Message from the CEO of Nocti Business Solutions

What is skills-based hiring? If you look at social media postings related to the subject, you'll find statements focused on expanding your talent pool, reducing bias, or even improving employee retention. Sounds great, but what does all that mean? Essentially, skills-based hiring is an approach focusing on a candidate's current skills as the metric for ranking the best potential hire. This method differs from looking at an educational resume or even past work experience. The keyword in the sentence above is "current." A potential employee could list their experience in a particular occupation but that may lead to several unknown questions such as: How dated is the experience? Has the occupation changed regarding processes, materials, tools, or codes since the potential candidate last performed the job? Was their educational experience related to the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) code that you are looking to hire, or was the educational experience just an example of a potential candidate's endurance?

Using a skills-based assessment during the hiring process involves designing or utilizing an assessment of a candidate's current skills based on the skills derived from the desired job description. These assessments can take many forms, including written instruments, or performance-driven simulations, scenarios, or presentations. NBS worked with the Northeast Equipment Dealers Association (NEDA) to develop and validate national skills-based assessments that can be used at dealerships across the country.

A technician screening test was developed to determine what skills a technician currently has and the score report provides a blueprint to develop a training program to improve the skills the technician does not currently possess. If the dealership has a formal training program, NEDA also offers four leveled assessments to move a technician through a training program. Using the screening assessment as a guide, a technician can

be placed into the program at any level and test through the remaining levels at their own pace.

Thank you, John. I am honored to step up to serve NBS in the exciting world of workforce development and with such a talented team. We all know that change is inevitable, expected, and can still be unnerving. We are committed to delivering the same level of customer service and quality partnerships through our leadership transition. Our team is also excited about exploring new possibilities in serving your workforce needs across an ever-changing landscape. From the changing face of workplaces, to growing demands for technical skills, and to shifts in how and where (and even why) employees learn, NBS is ready to help design cost-saving solutions.

Both John and I recognize that NBS can reduce hiring-related expenditures through customized or standardized skill-based hiring and provide information to improve the existing skills of current employees. By closely aligning job descriptions to hiring practices, NBS can bring a new level of efficiency to this process. Our organization has helped employers make better hiring decisions and has assisted companies in certifying the skills of their prospective hires and existing employees for over a quarter of a century.

NBS takes pride in finding the right solution for your business or industry. Sometimes the solution is a standardized pre-employment test in a technical area, sometimes it is a customized credential, and sometimes it may be a brand-new system for certifying new technicians for tomorrow's workplace. If this sounds like the kind of partnership from which your company could benefit, please contact us. We would be happy to help you find a solution that best fits your organization's needs.



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3 Ways to Market Your Parts Department

By STEVE MITCHELL | CBT NEWS

If you're CVS, Walmart or Costco, people stop by for random things anytime you're open. And the traffic is high. But, as a dealership parts department, no one is stopping to walk through your parts to browse the shelves – even if you let them past the counter.

Customers don't need you until they need you. And even if they need you, they may only get one thing because they don't see everything you have to offer. So other than opening up your shelves so customers can cruise through your inventory while waiting for their service appointment, what else can you do to increase parts sales?

Let's look at a few possibilities as we consider how you can market your parts department.

1. Be found where your customers are searching

Yes, studies show that 97% of most people begin looking online when searching for what they need. And they'll start and even complete their buying process online.

If you don't have an eCommerce portal for people to purchase parts, it's time to put that up. And make sure you can deliver overnight because of Amazon.

If we've been taught anything over the last year, it's the importance of service, and assisting the customer begins online. Making it convenient for them makes the sale and keeps them with you. Because 70% of the buying process can be completed before any conversation occurs with your customer, you need to provide opportunities for them to purchase parts online. Making it easy for customers to buy from you is critical.

2. Educate your customer

Consumers think that OEM parts cost more, and, in some cases, they're correct. But it's for a reason. As Edmunds suggests, "The saying 'you get what you pay for' rings true here. Some aftermarket parts are inferior because of the use of lower-quality materials." So, this is an opportunity to provide some education.

In the parts area, waiting room, on YouTube, and through a monthly email, you can find opportunities to discuss or insert a comparison chart between the parts and accessories you offer and the items a consumer will find at a parts store or independent mechanic. Of course, the price will be one thing to compare, but there's also the problem of whether you or the OEM will warranty the part if it causes damage.

At your counter or your online store, the consumer can pick any part and have the one choice that works. You can assure them of its quality and ability to work with their [equipment]. They will also know it comes with a warranty.

Yes, price is important, but so is peace of mind for the customer. Educating them on the slight differences in

price versus the enormous expense of extra repairs can make a difference. Letting them know that you may be less expensive will create a lifetime customer.

3. Get away from the dealership

Sadly, we've become accustomed to doing everything digitally – including reaching out to people. Sending emails, buying PPC ads, having a CRM, and working on organic search is vital. But there's no substitute for face-to-face interaction with people.

In almost any location, we have an opportunity to bring parts and set up booths at car shows, farmers markets, go-kart races, and any other place our local customer frequents. If your customer isn't coming to you, then you can go to them, show you care by supporting what they're doing, and bringing along some of your hottest items to sell. You can also bring an iPad or laptop (with 4G or 5G service capability) and help them see the ease of ordering from your online store.

Building the right customer relationships is vital for your dealership, and one of the best ways to do that is through face-to-face interaction. It will build loyalty and trust, introduce them to what's available, provide opportunities for education and show you care about what's important to them.

Dealerships are heading into uncharted water in many ways. Service is becoming more important, putting the customer first is becoming essential, and meeting their needs with delivery and personal attention can make all the difference. In many ways, it's as if we are moving backward in time to an era of service when driving up to a gas station would bring out someone to wash the windows and check the oil.

The truth is, abundantly meeting the needs of the consumer is service. And service is everything it's cracked up to be. If you can market that, you'll grow your parts department.

► Published online **CBT news**

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Help Employees Make the Most of Their Benefits Before the Year Ends

BY SYDNIE FULTZON

Your employees have a lot on their minds during the last few months of the year. From buying gifts, hosting family and attending social events, the holiday season has many people running in circles. However, an important facet of the year's end that often gets overlooked is reviewing and maximizing employee benefits that expire or turn over on December 31st.

Reminding your workforce to take advantage of their available perks and programs not only helps them maximize their benefits but also boosts morale and shines a spotlight on all the ways your company values employees. Plus, improved usage numbers can prove the Value of Investment of your benefits plan to leadership as well.

You should use a big content push to boost engagement of your benefits by the year's end.

Time Off

While it can be tricky to coordinate holiday vacation requests when everyone wants the same days off, it's important to accommodate employees whenever possible. In fact, a win win solution is to encourage your employees to utilize their vacation throughout the year to help prevent job burnout and better space time off.

However, not everyone has that luxury. If your paid time off or vacation program is set around the calendar year and unused days do not roll over into the new year, you might need to send out a few reminders in the fourth quarter to make sure employees don't lose their earned hours or days.

Holiday Offerings

Separate from accrued time off, if your company offers paid or unpaid holiday time off, shout it from the rooftops! You may have covered company holidays like Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Year's Day during new hire onboarding, but a little refresher can remind employees of upcoming time off and bring a smile to their faces.

Flexible Spending Accounts and Dependent Care Accounts

Another employee benefit that expires at the end of the year is the Flexible Spending Account.

Specifically, the funds in dependent care accounts disappear at the end of the year, while healthcare FSAs may offer either a small rollover amount or a short two and a half month extension into the new year.

Either way, employees enrolled in an FSA need a reminder to "use it or lose it" due to IRS regulations. You can bundle this reminder with a note to complete a new enrollment form if they wish to have an FSA in the new year, as FSA enrollments do not carry over either.

In your reminder message, be sure to include an FSA enrollment form, information on how to submit it and a list of qualifying items FSA and DCA funds can be spent on.

Employee Assistance Programs

Given that EAP utilization is measured at just 5.5%, a reminder to take advantage of complimentary access to a variety of professionals can benefit your entire workforce and their family members.

Most EAPs offer a set number of sessions per person, per issue, and per calendar year, while many include access to legal and financial professionals in addition to mental health counseling.

The 4th quarter of the year is a great time to highlight this benefit to your employees, especially as they deal with the added emotional and financial stress the holidays can bring.

Healthcare Reminders

When you mention "employee benefits," health insurance is typically the first thing that comes to mind. While employees are likely to use their health insurance throughout the year, there are ways you can help everyone maximize their coverage at year end.

If your plan covers an annual physical once per calendar year (as opposed to once every 12 months), remind your covered members to get physicals scheduled before 12/31.

Likewise, if your plan covers dental cleanings twice per calendar year (as opposed to once every 6 months), remind your covered members to go in for their second cleaning before the new year. If your plan has a dental maximum that drops back to \$0 in the new year, help your employees strategize by suggesting anyone who needs dental work and has already used part of their maximum wait until after New Year's Day to schedule their appointment.

Many plans also cover a set number of visits to specialists like physical therapists, chiropractors, or massage therapists. Remind members to take advantage of their remaining visits before January 1st.

Some plans include a 4th quarter deductible rollover. If your plan does, communicate this benefit in a simple way that helps employees understand how to use it to their advantage.

Finally, 70% of employers offer flu shot programs to their workforce, a perk that deserves to be highlighted as winter approaches.

This article has been edited. Be sure to read the entire article [here](#).

► Published online [backstitch](#)

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Motivating the Sales Team

Recently I was speaking with a VP of Sales who said he was having trouble motivating his salespeople. "They're just not putting the work in. They're doing the bare minimum and I can't seem to do anything to get them going."

First, when hiring salespeople, you want to hire people who are self-motivated. Just as you can't teach honesty, integrity, and other key character traits, you can't teach motivation and you can't motivate anyone. That said, here are a few ideas to nudge them in the right direction and maybe even motivate them a little.

Keep in mind that the number one motivator for salespeople is money. While there are some exceptions, the top salespeople across the board, absolutely have money as their number one motivator. Of course, your top people also usually come self-motivated too. For the rest of the pack, 90 to 95% of them also have money as a top motivator. Because of this, it's extremely important to structure the pay plan in such a way that the behaviors you want are rewarded with money, and the behaviors you don't want are not rewarded with money. What gets rewarded gets done. In other words, if you want them chasing new business, pay them handsomely for new business.

While you may need to pay a new sales rep a small base salary or draw until they get going, you want most of a salesperson's income to come from commissions made on sales. The problem with high base salaries is that if the salesperson is able to live a decent existence just off of the base salary, they're not going to be motivated to make lots of sales calls. For example, I was working with an insurance agent who was new to sales. He had sold one policy in his first six months and it was to his dad. He would come in a few minutes late and at 5 o'clock it was like a fire alarm went off, he was out the door quickly. The owner couldn't figure



BY JOHN CHAPIN

out why he never seemed motivated to work and wasn't making any sales. It turned out they were paying him \$700 per week salary

plus commission. He lived with his parents who also bought him his car and were paying for all his food and everything on the personal side. The agency, in addition to the \$700 a week, was paying for his cell phone and gas and other business expenses including health insurance. So, basically, he had \$700 a week to spend going out drinking with his friends. Hmm, I wonder why he wasn't motivated to work.

Another situation can arise when salespeople get paid on residuals. Once they get to a certain residual income level, these days it's around \$120,000 to \$150,000, they go completely into service mode. They stop all new-business activities. Why? They're comfortable, they're able to pay the bills and have some money left over. In this case, they need to get paid much less for residual business, and much more for new business. It's funny that the salesperson who was servicing their accounts all day, once the pay plan shifts to paying for new business versus old, will completely flip to new business and ignore their customers. Their top-notch customer service, that they demanded their customers needed from them, they now couldn't care less about. Service goes right out the window. Some will even go as far as saying, "I don't get paid to service accounts. That's someone else's job." Hm, short memory.

The average person won't work harder than they need to. Unfortunately, most salespeople are average people. Ultimately, there are four ways you can attempt to motivate people. External-negative, external-positive, intrinsic, and peer.

My first manager used to use external-negative, or to be more specific he used to say, "If I put a gun to your head, you'd do business." This is a negative consequence or penalty for not doing something. When motivating underperforming salespeople, a sales manager usually starts with a probation period followed by loss of one's job for failing to do the necessary work or make quota.

External positive was first and second place in the sales contest in the movie: "First prize: a brand-new Cadillac. Second prize: a set of steak knives." This is a reward for work done or a goal achieved. This could be \$100 for the person who makes the most calls in the next hour or a limo lunch for whoever closes the most business this week. This is not as powerful as the first motivator as generally we respond more to pain but is still a way to get leverage on others. By the way, the third prize in the Glengarry-Glen Ross Contest was external-negative: "You're fired!"

The third motivation source: intrinsic is the most powerful motivation among high achievers. This form has the most potential power and, if strong enough, can be used all by itself. This is the "personal WHY". In other words, what are the personal reasons the salesperson needs to be successful? This can be kids and family, it can also be nice cars and houses, or other things money can buy, or it can be darker, like someone told them they'd never be successful. You can ask salespeople what their long-term goals are and if they aren't sure, maybe even make some

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Ultimately, there are four ways you can attempt to motivate people. External-negative, external-positive, intrinsic, and peer.

Now that marijuana is legal in Maryland, what do employers need to know?

BY DENISE ELLIOTT

Effective July 1, 2023, Maryland became the 21st state to legalize recreational cannabis. Individuals 21 and over may now purchase, possess, and use cannabis products without fear of criminal repercussions in the state. Cultivation of no more than two plants is also permitted. Because Maryland has a developed dispensary system for medical cannabis, progressing from the legalization of recreational cannabis (last fall) to implementation (on July 1) was relatively straight forward. Several dispensaries in Maryland have been granted dual use licenses, and on July 1 were allowed to sell cannabis products to anyone over the age of 21 – medical certification is no longer needed.

What does this mean for employers in Maryland and its surrounding states?

Neither the initial ballot measure approving the use of recreational cannabis, nor the subsequent laws passed to implement such approval, specifically address use by employees or the impact of such use on the workplace. Nonetheless, we can glean some information from what is and what is not included in the new law.

First, the law provides that cannabis may not be consumed in a vehicle. Thus, it follows that employers can implement policies that prevent the use or possession of cannabis in company vehicles, vehicles used for work purposes, or in private vehicles on the employer's property.

Second, the law requires that businesses subject to Maryland's Clean Air Act take steps to add cannabis and hemp products to the list of substances that may not be smoked or vaped indoors. Accordingly, employers can and must implement policies prohibiting the smoking and vaping of cannabis and hemp products in the workplace. Likewise, individuals have no affirmative right to use cannabis at work and employers can enact – and should enact – general policies prohibiting all use at work and during work hours. Drug and alcohol policies should specify that employees may not be under the influence of or impaired by cannabis while working.

Third, there are no provisions in the new law, or any other law in Maryland, restricting an employer's ability to test for cannabis/THC. Unlike New York and New Jersey, for example, employers in Maryland may include marijuana/THC on their testing panels, including for pre-employment or random tests.

Finally, there are no employment protections for off duty use by employees. Accordingly, employers – for now – may continue to administer and follow drug and alcohol policies that strictly prohibit use of recreational cannabis by employees. If an employee tests positive, does not have a medical certification for use of cannabis, and the employer has a policy providing for discipline or termination in the event of a positive test, the employer may follow its policy

– at least for now. Notably, several states are starting to include or enact protections for off duty use, requiring that employers show impairment before issuing discipline. Maryland has not yet done so, but employers should keep an eye out for further developments in this space.

[Read entire article.](#)

► Published online **McNees Pennsylvania Labor & Employment Blog**

Developers of Farming Simulator are Having to Turn Away Equipment Requests

By **Diego Flammini**
Staff Writer | *Farms.com*

The video game sector, expected to be worth north of \$100 billion in 2023, includes games inspired by multiple industries – including agriculture.

Farming Simulator from Giants Software, for example, is the top farming simulator game in the world.

The game allows players to control hundreds of licensed tractors, combines, cultivators, loaders and other pieces of equipment from some of the top ag machinery manufacturers in the world.

Each version of Farming Simulator can include up to 500 pieces of equipment, and equipment makers want in on the game's success.

In fact, the game has grown in popularity to the point where developers at Giants Software are turning away requests from some manufacturers who want to see their equipment included in upcoming versions of the game.

Farms.com recently connected with reps from the video game developer to find out how a piece of equipment is integrated into the game and the feedback they've received from ag equipment manufacturers.

Watch the [YouTube](#) video.

► Published online [Farms.com](#) | 4.20.23

Rick Rousch Retires from Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences

Dear Friends of the College,

It is with very mixed emotions I share with you that after almost 9 years serving as dean, I decided to step down as dean of the College of Agricultural Sciences effective September 15 and retire in December. Although this was a difficult decision, it is the right decision.

Retirement has been pending for some time. Among other considerations, my wife Robyn Krause-Hale and I have 4 children and 4 grandchildren in Australia. We have excellent leadership across the college, and there seems no better time than now to step aside.

It has been the privilege of a lifetime working with all of you during my tenure here. Our college has incredibly talented and dedicated faculty, educators, staff, and

advocates. I am very proud that together we have accomplished a great deal, with a strong trajectory for the future.

I want to thank all of you for your support though these years. Robyn and I value and cherish our time in State College and have built many strong ties and friendships that will transcend the distance as we move back to Australia. I wish all of you, the college, and Penn State nothing but the best!

Sincerely,
Rick Rousch

Motivating the Sales Team

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suggestions: a dream lifestyle, taking care of kids and future generations, or parents, to leave a lasting legacy, a combination? Where do they want to be in their career 5, 10, or 20 years from now? Ask them: If they had no limits on time or money, what would they have and do with their life? What is their endgame? Do they want to retire and to where?

The final source is peer motivation. This is who the salesperson spends time with personally and professionally. People usually rise to, but rarely above their peer group. "Birds of a feather *do* flock together." This also relates to your environment. If you have an office of negative people in which no one is held accountable, any success will be fleeting or completely non-existent. To motivate others, provide a work environment that is successful, positive, and professional and one in which people are held accountable. Have them look at the people they hang out with.

Again, when it comes to motivation, it's best to hire self-motivated, hard-working salespeople but the reality is, most companies do a poor job of this. Second best is to help them find their intrinsic motivation while also providing some peer motivation by providing a successful, positive, hard-working environment. That said, it's a good idea to throw in some external-positive motivation from time to time in the form of prizes and rewards. Lastly, you may have to rely on some external-negative motivation as a last resort before you show someone the door.

John Chapin is a motivational sales speaker, coach, and trainer. For his free eBook: *30 Ideas to Double Sales* and monthly article, or to have him speak at your next event, go to www.completeselling.com John has over 35 years of sales and sales management experience as a number one sales rep and is the author of the 2010 sales book of the year: *Sales Encyclopedia* (Axiom Book Awards). You can reprint provided you keep contact information in place. E-mail: johnchapin@completeselling.com.

Four Unexpected Tips to Prepare Your Shop for the Upcoming Snow Season

"Snow fighter" is a term that gets thrown around the snow and ice management industry quite often, and for good reason – the business of snow management barely resembles any other outdoor service. I often see it compared to lawn and landscape, primarily because many of the customers and equipment are the same. But that is where the similarities end.

For instance, let's take a quick look at the life of snow removal operator:

Work schedule? That is up to Mother Nature.

Equipment needed? Also up to Mother Nature.

Length of a job? Totally open-ended.

How to charge for each job? Pick your poison.

When does each client expect the work to be done?

All at the same time – NOW!

Combine all of that with the fact that the safety and well-being of citizens is directly impacted by keeping roads and establishments maintained from snow and ice, and it is easy to see why snow management resembles firefighting more than lawn mowing.

1. Pre-Season Equipment Buying
Communication is a game-changer.
2. Pre-Season Parts
If it can wear – stock it. If it can break – stock it.
If it can leak – stock it.
3. Pre-Season Maintenance
Out of sight, out of mind, onto the pallet racks – flip this thinking.
4. Pre-Season Prep for the Fight
Service: July. Parts: August.
Equipment: September.

Read [entire article](#) here.

► Published online **RDO Equipment Co.**

Story written for Snow PRO magazine and first appeared in July/August 2021 issue

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The Toro Company and Lowe's Announce Strategic Partnership

Toro's full line-up of all-season outdoor power equipment available at Lowe's nationwide in spring 2024.

BLOOMINGTON, MN and MOORESVILLE, NC – The Toro Company and Lowe's Companies, Inc. recently announced a strategic retail partnership through which Lowe's will carry Toro zero-turn riding mowers, walk mowers, portable power equipment and snow blowers in both the gas and rapidly expanding battery categories.

The Toro product lineup will be available at all Lowe's stores nationwide and online for the spring 2024 selling season. As the leading retailer of outdoor power equipment, Lowe's adds Toro as a market leader in all-season solutions for the outdoor environment.

"Our Pro and DIY customers count on Lowe's to have the best selection of outdoor power with the innovation they need and brands they trust," said Bill Boltz, Lowe's executive vice president of merchandising. "The addition of the iconic Toro brand is yet another example of how we are delivering on that promise. Whether for lawn care in the spring or for snow removal in the winter, Toro's reliable products will give our customers the confidence to tackle outdoor projects in any season for years to come. The Toro brand is one more reason to shop Lowe's industry-leading outdoor power selection."

► Published online

[CISION PR Newswire](#) | 9.7.23

CNH Puts Full-Electric Utility Tractors On Deck

New Holland T4, Farmall 75C due out early 2024

By Dave Bedard

Heavy equipment firm CNH plans to get two new all-electric utility tractor models onto at least a few dealer lots in 2024 — including one it bills as a first in the tractor market.

CNH's New Holland Agriculture arm said Monday its T4 Electric Power model, "the first all-electric utility tractor with autonomous features," will be launched this week at the Farm Progress Show, and commercially available in North America with "select dealers" early in 2024.

The Decatur, Illinois farm show will also host the unveiling of the Farmall 75C Electric, a utility model that CNH's Case IH arm billed in a separate release Monday as its "smartest" electric tractor.

New Holland said the T4 "opens a new class in the market, the Utility Electric," and will be an "ideal solution for lower-horsepower field operations" such as mixed farms, hay and forage, dairy and other livestock and greenhouse, vegetable and orchard crops.

The T4 Electric Power battery system and fully electric drivetrain provide a 110-kilowatt-hour maximum energy storage capacity in a 400-volt circuit, for 74 horsepower (55 kilowatts) rated power and 65 hp (48 kW) PTO power, CNH said.

Given the usual light-, medium- and heavy-duty applications of a utility tractor, New Holland estimates the T4 can provide four hours' average runtime, or up to eight working hours in strictly "low-energy demand" applications.

[Read entire article here.](#)

► Posted online [Glacier Farmmedia Network](#) | National Edition | 8.31.23



Case IH's Farmall 75C Electric. (Image courtesy CNH)

Honda Recalling Lawnmower, Pressure Washer Engines

About 392,000 Honda lawnmower and pressure washer engines are being recalled. A manufacturing problem can cause the camshafts to fail. It can also cause the starter rope to suddenly retract when the user is pulling it to start.

Honda has gotten 2,197 reports of incidents related to camshaft failures, including seven reports of minor injuries.

Authorized Honda Power Equipment dealers will fix the problem for free.

For more information you can contact American Honda Motor at 888-888-3139 or at powerequipment.honda.com/support/recalls-and-updates or crmshonda.my.salesforce-sites.com/service/pew2c

► Published online [WRAL News](#) website | 9.14.23



Kubota Introduces Fourth Generation M7 Ag Tractors



[Kubota Tractor Corporation](#)

announced a new generation for the M7 Series at the 2023 Farm Progress Show and welcomed it to the brand's lineup of agriculture tractors, building on and enhancing the productivity that farmers and producers expect from the M7 Series.

The new M7-4 Series features the same horsepower segments as before, ranging from 128 to 168 in engine horsepower, with three new models, the M7-134, M7-154 and M7-174. Customers can optimize the tractor for their specific needs with all models available in Deluxe, Premium and Premium KVT, offering benefits for any farm application.

"We're thrilled to welcome the new generation of M7's to the Kubota ag tractor family," said Morgan Ludwig, Kubota livestock tractor product manager. "This new generation matches the performance that customers know to be true of Kubota and the existing M7, but uplevels the operator experience with adjustments to comfort and new features for productivity that fit a broad spectrum of ag applications, including hay operations, loader work and small- to mid-sized row crop farming."

► Published online [Agricultural Equipment Guide.com](#) | 8.29.23

Precision Sprayer Cuts Chemical Use

System uses individualized sensors and nozzles for each row crop and shroud to help prevent spray drift

By Ron Lyseng | [Glacier Farm Media](#)

Makers of the Ecorobotix ARA claim their sprayer can apply chemical to a crop using one nozzle per row. Each is triggered to turn on and off using instructions from a single sensor dedicated to reading that specific crop row, on a 20-foot sprayer at 5.5 km/h.

The company also says the sprayer can reduce chemical use by as much as 95 per cent.

The first two North American systems are already at work on Quebec vegetable farms. After one month's experience with the Ecorobotix ARA, both operators report a 95 per cent chemical reduction is realistic.

[Read entire article here.](#)

Each Ecorobotix nozzle is dedicated to a single crop row and triggered by its own controller. Quebec farmer Martin Van Winden says there is about an 80 per cent reduction in crop protection chemicals. Photo: Ecorobotix



► Published online [Glacier farmmedia - Farmtario](#) | 8.28.23

Case IH Breaks Through Its Own Horsepower Threshold: The Steiger 715 Quadtrac

By Margy Eckelkamp | [AgWeb Farm Journal](#)

Marketed as the highest horsepower Steiger tractor ever, the Steiger 715 Quadtrac headlines the updates of the model year 2024 Steiger tractors from Case IH.

The Steiger 715 Quadtrac is powered by a FPT Industrial brand-new C16 TST engine to provide 715 rated engine hp with peak horsepower at 778 hp.

Case IH leaders say the tractor was built with farmer feedback from the drawing board, and farmers told the manufacturer they needed to cover more ground in less time.

"Customers have been asking for more horsepower to improve productivity in the field," says Tom Curley, global product manager for Case IH Steiger tractors. "This entire five-year process has involved farmers, and it's resulted in the largest Steiger ever built."

The Steiger 715 Quadtrac unveils a new heavy-duty undercarriage which helps deliver power to the ground and supports a road speed 2 mph faster than before.

In all there are seven updated Model Year 2024 Steiger tractors in the series — the 425, 475, 525, 555, 595, 645 and 715.

[Read entire article here.](#)



► Published online [AgWeb Farm Journal](#) | 9.13.23

How Do You Retain Your Top Talent?

Private bonus plans provide strong incentive for top team members to remain with your business — while also helping you stand out among other employers.



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