

Northwest Tillers focuses on beefier product engineering

By PEGGY STEWARD
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YAKIMA, Wash. — These aren't your father's tillers.

For more than 50 years, Northwest Tillers Inc. has been manufacturing tough tillers for the serious farmer.

Now, those tillers are even more durable, thanks to new gear design that ups horsepower, new improvements to Northwest's unique belt-drive, and beefier engineering throughout.

"We're an established company with proven products," said Todd Marquis, company president. "But look at us now. We've updated our tillers to make them even more reliable."

More than 20 improvements have been engineered into Northwest Tillers products, based on input from farmers, he said.

"We've been an industry leader for many years," said Ted Marquis, Northwest Tillers chief executive officer. "Our tillers are manufactured in the United States and are competitively priced with imported products."

He cited a large Washington state farming operation that used a Northwest Tillers rotary tiller to work up 9,000 acres before the gear box needed maintenance.

The implements are versatile and are manufactured one at a time in the company's Yakima plant to

meet a farmer's needs, Marquis said. Tillers are in use in forage crops, potatoes, onions and corn in the Columbia Basin.

Northwest Tillers products are also in use at Christmas tree farms in Pennsylvania, in sugar cane fields in Louisiana, Australia and Brazil, in pineapple plantations in Hawaii, in cotton fields in California, and in grass seed fields all over the United States. There are units designed for vineyards, orchards and hop yards.

Todd Marquis estimates 9,000 to 10,000 units have been used in the field over the years, and some 30-year-old units are still operating. Parts for Northwest Tillers products are available, even on decades-old tillers, within 24 hours, he said.

Tillers are available from 4 feet wide to 30 feet wide, said Carl Penuel, Northwest Tillers vice president. Carl Penuel and his brother Ray work with farmers to help manufacture products that meet individual needs.

Traditional field preparation requires the use of a disc, plow and harrow and several trips over the ground. Northwest Tillers "Full Till" and strip till units can prepare ground for seeding in just one pass, Carl Penuel said. A mesh roller attachment repacks the soil, helping to prevent erosion and retain moisture. That saves the farmer time, labor and the expense

of running tractors with several implements.

Some farmers add drills or planters behind the tiller, seeding at the same time as preparing the soil, Penuel said. Tillers can also be equipped with spray booms to incorporate chemicals in the same field pass.

Ted Marquis said the tiller is the only one on the market with adjustable rotors, which means units can also be set up for strip tilling.

Some of the improvements Penuel listed include a new gear case design that boosts gear case life and allows horsepower to range up to 235 hp per gear box.

Northwest Tillers is known for its unique belt-drive technology. The system is designed to outlast clutch-drive systems because it absorbs the shock transmitted from the tiller to the tractor PTO, helping to protect tractor investments, Todd Marquis said. The belt-drive has also been improved to increase horsepower and belt longevity.

Reinforced center drives and case-hardened shafts add longer life, Penuel said.

"We think of them as the Cadillac of tillers," Marquis said.

Northwest Tillers products



PEGGY STEWARD/Capital Press

Todd Marquis, president of Northwest Tillers, checks out a unit manufactured in the company's Yakima, Wash., plant. The units, manufactured one at a time, feature a unique belt-drive system and beefier engineering throughout.

are sold through selected dealers. 800) 204-3122 or (509) 575-1950. On the Internet:

For information, call (1- www.nwtiller.com

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