

The Forestry Equipment



**JOHN DEERE**  
Nothing Runs Like A Deere™

# Review

January 2007

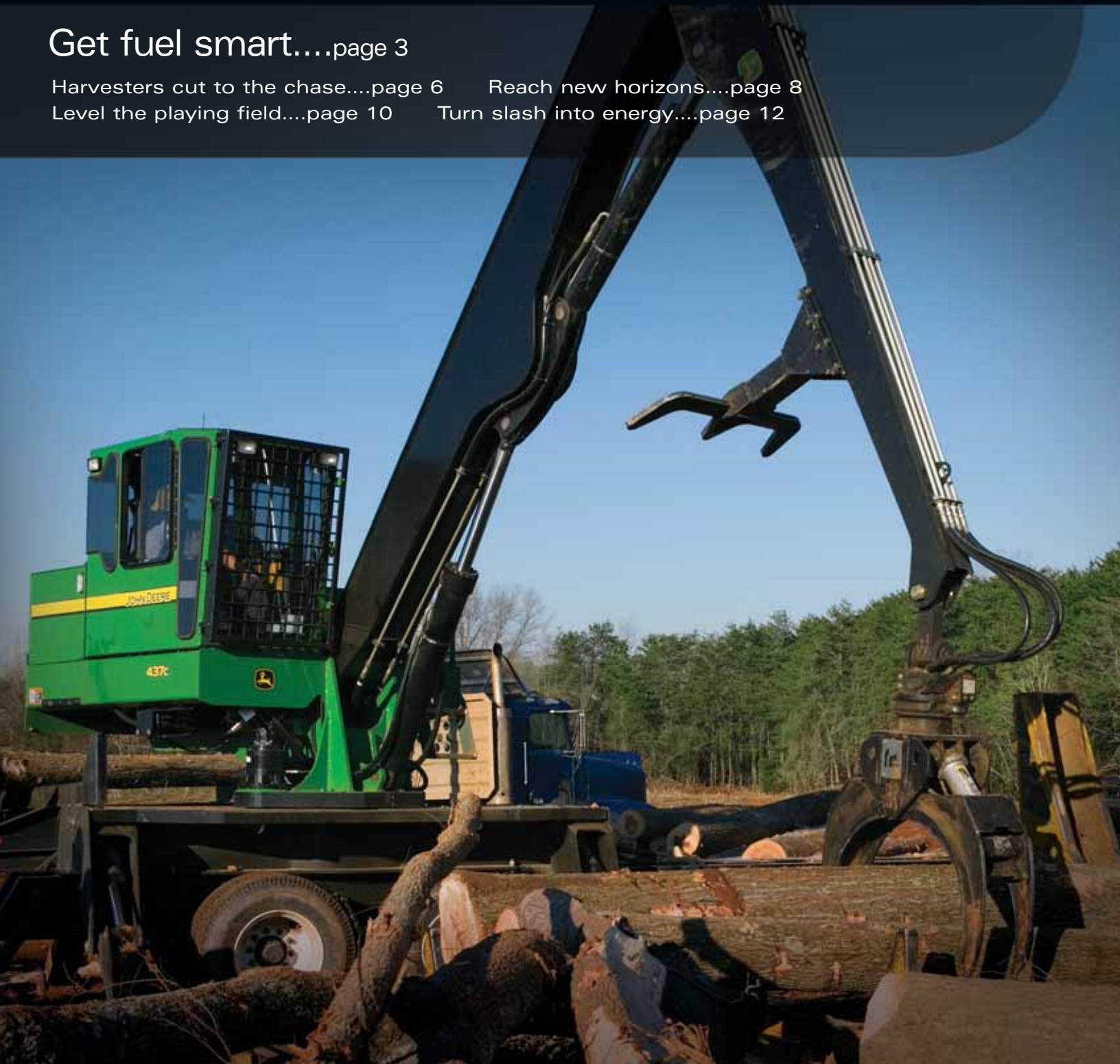
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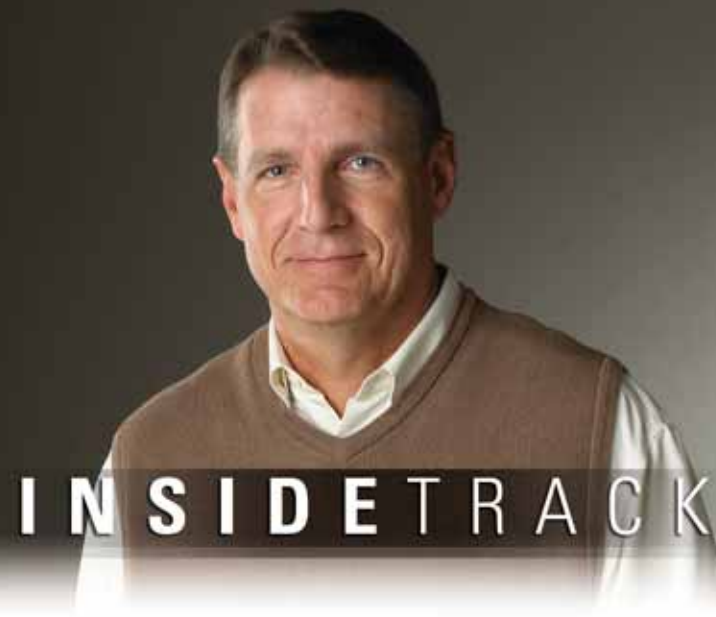
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## INSIDETRACK

### The message is loud and clear

As I visit with loggers from around the world a consistent message comes through: "Build us machines with higher productivity and uptime, and lower daily operating costs."

At John Deere, we're listening closely to what you have to say and translating this message into improvements in both current and new machine designs. These improvements are already delivering significant advances to help you get the most out of your logging operations.

As an example, our 909J and 959J Track Feller Bunchers feature a massive new four-way leveling system with smooth, cushioned control that delivers best-in-class stability on steep slopes and rough forestry terrains. The J Series is also available in a harvester configuration, incorporating this same leveling system with a purpose-built harvesting boom, as well as offering the industry-leading Waratah harvesting head. You can read more about the J Series in the words of logger Ed Smith on pages 8–9 in this issue.

Of course, as the worldwide leader in forestry, we have put in place a strong dealer network, enabled by the worldwide John Deere parts support infrastructure, to ensure your parts are there when you need them. And should one of these forest-tough machines ever have a failure, our technicians are trained and certified to ensure the diagnosis is fast, accurate, and cost effective.

So, if you're looking for increased profits through optimum productivity, maximum uptime, and lower daily operating costs, choose John Deere. We're working hard every day to ensure we continue to earn your business.

Sincerely,

**Tony Worthington**  
Director, Worldwide Forestry Operations & Division Quality

## The 437C Knuckleboom Loader

# With Fuel Sense

*Ask a logger what keeps him up at night and nine times out of ten he'll tell you fuel prices. Sure the list would go on and on, but rising fuel costs biting into profits would be right at the top. >>>*



\*Based on 12-month UCC filings of new forestry equipment as of May 30, 2006. Subject to John Deere Credit approval. PowerPlan is a service of FPC Financial, f.s.b.



**“We were working in some fine timber that was like 90 feet long, and that thing picked them up like they were matchsticks.”**

— Charles Holland, Holland & Holland Logging, New Hill, North Carolina

**Enter the John Deere 437C Knuckleboom Loader**

When it was introduced in the spring of 2005, the 437C with load-sensing hydraulics was being touted as a highly fuel-efficient loader that could work

laughing because I’ve never had a loader that could do that,” he said. “But they were right. We filled it right to the rim and ran it for an hour. We filled it to the rim again and it only took three and a half gallons. We did it three times, and we put it through its paces. We were sold.”

smartly adjusts power to each load, the 437C is wowing customers with its outstanding fuel economy.

Like Paul Gunter of North Edisto Logging, Inc. in West Columbia, South Carolina, who said, “We’re getting 28 to 30 loads on one tank of fuel, running them with delimiters

Charles Holland agreed, “I was tickled because I have sensitive ears and when I run the 437C, it’s just a pleasure not having it roar in your ears. The noise level is down where you can stand it.”

Customers are also noticing that visibility is greatly increased with a wraparound rear window, polycarbonate skylight, and single-cylinder boom design, which opens up the view to the front.

That design had Charles Holland skeptical at first. “The competitive loader we were running had two boom

cylinders on it and the 437C only had one, so it made me wonder if it would be able to turn the wood. But it has no problem handling big logs. We were working in some fine timber that was like 90 feet long, and that thing picked them up like they were matchsticks.”

What these loggers have also come to appreciate beyond the 437C is the dealer support they receive. Both Gunter and Miller go through Van Lott Equipment and are more than impressed. They both mentioned that Vandy Lott, Jr. is the kind of guy who will deliver parts himself, and that means a lot.

Charles Holland says that Greg Browning at R.W. Moore earned his

trust with the results of the 437C’s fuel efficiency.

“To me if you have a dealer who’s a straight shooter, who will work with you and help you when there’s problems, well, that’s 90 percent of the trouble. I’ve been real loyal to them because they’ve been real loyal to me.”

But back to the list of what keeps loggers up at night. The John Deere 437C Knuckleboom Loader gives you one less thing to worry about, which is best summed up with Rette Miller’s comparison, “I was getting about 19 loads on a tank of fuel with my competitive loader, but with the 437C I’m averaging 47 loads.” Enough said. ■

Miller Logging and North Edisto Logging, serviced by John Deere dealer Van Lott, Inc.

**“We’re getting 28 to 30 loads on one tank of fuel.”**

more than a day on a single tank of fuel. That claim was met with a lot of skepticism from full-tree customers.

Charles Holland of Holland & Holland Logging in New Hill, North Carolina, was one of them.

“John Deere kept telling me it could run an hour on less than five gallons of fuel, and I just sat there

Rette Miller of Miller Logging, Inc. in Greenwood, South Carolina, echoed that thought. “After the third day of running my 437C on a tank of fuel, I actually called my dealer and told him my fuel gauge must be broke.”

Of course, individual fuel consumption depends on usage, but thanks to its hydraulic design, which

and topping saws. That’s a big, big deal. We figure if they keep running as well as they are, they’ll pay for themselves with the fuel savings.”

Miller figures he’s saving between \$1,500 and \$2,000 a month on fuel from what he was spending on his competitive loader. Holland says his fuel savings are making about 25 percent of the payment on the machine.

That’s the thing loggers who run the 437C love – it’s just as productive as their competitive loaders, if not more so, and all that fuel savings is going back into their profits.

By separating hydraulic flow, with main and stick functions as one section and swing functions as another, productivity is optimized.

Isolation mounting of the cab helps reduce vibration and noise levels, and customers are noticing.

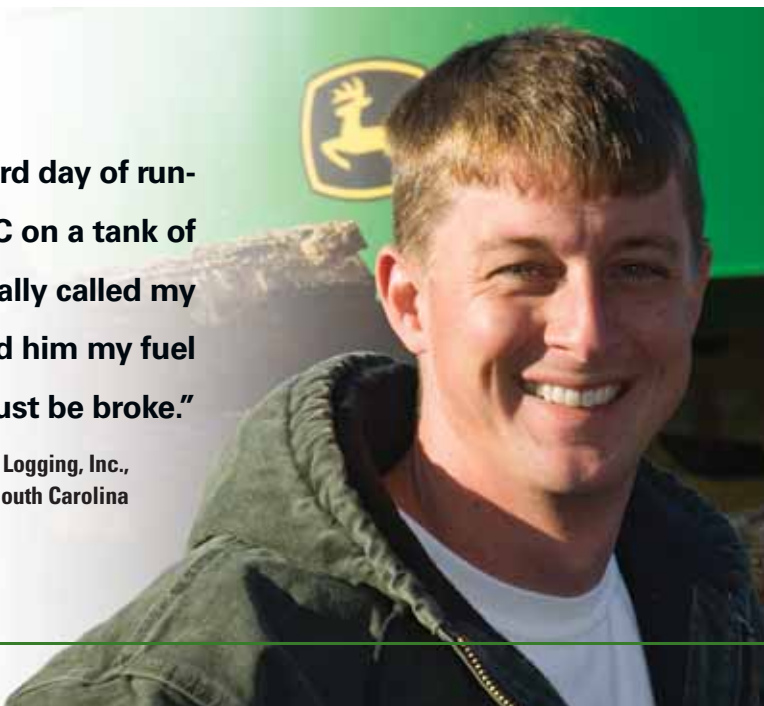
“It’s the quietest cab around. I don’t need earplugs to operate it,” Miller said.

Paul Gunter, North Edisto Logging, Inc., West Columbia, South Carolina



**“After the third day of running my 437C on a tank of fuel, I actually called my dealer and told him my fuel gauge must be broke.”**

— Rette Miller, Miller Logging, Inc., Greenwood, South Carolina



# Making the cut

Deere harvesters and cut-to-length logging help loggers survive and thrive in Great Lakes region

Cut-to-length (CTL) logging has been popular with loggers in the Great Lakes region for a number of years. Needing only a harvester for felling, delimiting, and cutting to length and a forwarder for transporting trees, CTL requires fewer machines and operators — and less fuel — than the full-tree method, which requires feller bunchers, skidders, pull-through delimiters, and knuckleboom log loaders. CTL is more environmentally friendly, too. Loggers cut and harvest selectively, which minimizes soil disturbance and damage to residual trees.

John Deere's hard-working and highly efficient 1270D Harvester continues to be a machine of choice for CTL logging. With its unique leveling cab, strong parallel boom, and balanced bogies, the 1270D is the most productive and reliable harvester in its class.

Several loggers in the upper Midwest who have adopted the cut-to-length method report that CTL logging has made them more productive — and profitable — in a region where mill closures have driven down rates.

## More productive in the Upper Peninsula

Tree-length logging has become a thing of the past in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Logging customers are demanding CTL because of its minimized impact on the forest.

"When you drag full-length trees out, you run right over second-growth timber," explains Jeff Jacobson, owner of Jacobson Logging, Felch, Michigan. "With cut to length, we can pull trees out without doing damage."

Jacobson runs five harvester-forwarder CTL systems, which include two 1270D Harvesters. "If it wasn't for the 1270s, we'd never produce the volume we do," says Jacobson. "They are more productive and cost effective than competitor harvesters, and are great on fuel. They'll run two or three days on what other machines burn in a day."

## More comfortable, too

"The ride is like a Cadillac compared with other harvesters," he says. "It's much more comfortable, and you can see much better because the cab is higher in the air. The balance is great — it goes through the woods beautifully."

"And other machines don't hold a candle to their incredible power. Everything about the 1270s is excellent — the only way they could be better is if they ran themselves!"

Jacobson also appreciates the maximum uptime with only minimal upkeep. "We're working at least an hour a day to maintain other machines," says Jacobson. "On the 1270s, if we work an hour a week on them, that's a lot. And service and support are excellent — we make a call and they're out here the next morning, if not the same day."

In business since 1979, Piwarski Brothers of Iron River, Michigan, started transitioning to CTL in 2000 when the Forest Service started to restrict the times of year they could tree-length harvest. Work has been steadier ever since. In recent years, the company has worked year-round instead of having to take several months off during the rainy season.

*Continued on page 14*



Rick Delaney, owner, Delaney Forest Products



Jeff Jacobson, owner of Jacobson Logging, Felch, Michigan



The Piwarski Brothers of Iron River, Michigan



**Needing only a harvester and a forwarder, cut-to-length requires fewer machines and operators — and less fuel — than the full-tree method.**

Delaney Forest Products, Jacobson Logging, and Piwarski Brothers all serviced by John Deere dealer Nortrax Midwest

Talk about ready to work. The 909J Feller Buncher is already tailor-made for the rugged terrain of the forest, but add the input of your forestry customers, and you've got yourself one tough, operator-friendly machine.

That's exactly why Ed Smith's new 909J Feller Buncher is working so well for his logging operation. Ed owns Ed Smith Trucking, Ltd. in West Bank, British Columbia. His company, which has been around for 15 years, works in very tricky terrain — steep slopes, creek draws, and swampy areas.

"We tend to get the steepest and ugliest ground," Ed says. "We were running a flatbottom [non-leveling machine], and we just couldn't access a lot of the timber. We had to hand-fall quite a bit of our timber, and with the leveler we've been able to bunch quite a bit now."

#### New B-Series Felling Heads

That's just one of the advantages that Ed's company is enjoying with their new 909J. Ed Smith is a customer of Brandt Tractor, a dealer that has taken very good care of them. During the development of the J-Series Feller Bunchers, his crew had the opportunity to test an early

version of the 909J before it was released to the public. His operators loved it, and their response to the new machine was part of its development process.

Ryan Smith, the heavy-duty mechanic and foreman for Ed Smith Trucking, is very pleased with the final product they received. "It's quiet in the cab, it's stable, and the head they have on it — it's really nice for collecting. It's really smooth."

The J-Series Feller Bunchers are teamed up with the new B-Series Felling Heads, which feature 20-percent more accumulation capacity, as well as the optional high-rotation wrist — features that have these operators smiling.

"What can you say about rotation — it just gives you so many more options," says Blake Milligan, equipment operator for Ed Smith. "I find that the head is doing more where I used to do a lot of padding. I've only had it overextended once, and I did that just to see where the stop was. I tell you, it's just the way to go."

Ryan Smith agrees with Blake. "The high-rotation wrist is the only way to go, and the head collects really nicely to it. It keeps the tops untangled, and that's really nice."

Blake has spent the most time in the cab of the new 909J. As the primary operator, there are a lot of features on

this machine that he likes — visibility is one that has really stood out to him, especially with the new cab-floor window.

"The first time I climbed into that machine, I was just tickled about the new floor window. You see your tracks, you see the ground; when you're tilted far and you're far forward on the tilt and you swing around, and when you're coming down a steep hill again, you've got to see the ground below you — and the only way is through that window."

#### Stability and uptime

Blake also finds the machine to be excellent for power and stability — key factors for Ed Smith in trying out the leveling buncher in the first place.

"I think my biggest reason for picking this machine was stability," Ed says. "My operator is not taking chances anymore; he is stable when he's cutting. That was really our main purpose in buying a tilt unit."

"It's very stable," Blake says. "I've run various machines before, and I always wonder, 'Could I have climbed that with the other machine?' and vice versa. So far it's been really good uptime. Fuel consumption is down — it's been pretty trouble-free so far. We got to help develop the

machine, so everything was there. We're really happy with it, and it seems to be a really well-laid-out machine."

And where upkeep is concerned, easy access has allowed maintenance to be trouble-free as well. Ed describes the serviceability of their new machine: Very good. "You can get to anything you want in that thing — you can tear out in an hour or so. It's very accessible."

"I don't know if it can get any easier or better," Blake confesses. "I can service this thing...I've got it down to a pretty good science — I can burn through it pretty quick."

"Costs are very good," Ed adds. "The fuel economy on this machine is awesome, better than we thought it would be."

Overall, the crew at Ed Smith Trucking is very pleased with their new 909J Feller Buncher, and is especially pleased that their specific feedback was taken seriously. John Deere is recognized for listening to their customers and using their input prior to building their machines.

"John Deere brought us into the development of this machine, and we really appreciated that, and they listened to us," Ed says. "They built a machine that we wanted, and that's why we bought it." ■

Ed Smith Trucking serviced by John Deere dealer Brandt Tractor Ltd.

# The customer knows best



Ryan Smith, heavy-duty mechanic and foreman for Ed Smith Trucking, Ltd.



The glass floor and roof of the 909J

add to the all-around cab visibility.



The new B-Series Felling Heads feature 20-percent more accumulation capacity and high-rotation wrist.



Blake Milligan, equipment operator for Ed Smith Trucking, Ltd.

Ed Smith, owner of Ed Smith Trucking, Ltd.

## The McGee's take the 759G to a new level

**"Deere has great equipment, and their parts availability is outstanding. And in my opinion, the 759G is the best buncher out there."**

— Clint and Brian McGee,  
McGee & Sons Logging,  
Fairburn, Georgia



Brothers Clint and Brian McGee of McGee & Sons Logging in Fairburn, Georgia, find themselves working in all sorts of terrain. They go from working in a swamp to clearing timber on the side of the interstate for a deceleration lane. As Clint said, "It's probably about a 60-degree slope, with traffic. There's zero room for error. We needed a machine we could rely on in any kind of situation."

What they were looking for was a track feller buncher with a leveling system. They demoed four different brands of equipment, including the John Deere 759G. After extensive research and conversations with other loggers, they went with the 759G. The list of features that impressed them was long.

The most important feature was how the leveler put the cab to the front or rear of the tracks, which makes it much more stable. On some of the other machines the cab stays in the center of the track frame, causing it to slide backwards.

"The control you have over the tree with the 759G was way past anything else we ran. The way the saw head is able to hold the tree even on the steep terrain with the tree leaning back out of the head or leaning away from you is outstanding," Clint said.

They've been very impressed with the fuel efficiency of the feller buncher, too, and have been running the machine up to two-and-a-half days on a single tank of fuel. Clint stressed the point by saying, "Anybody will tell you John Deere has the most fuel-efficient equipment in the industry."

The new reversing fan that automatically blows away debris has been a real uptime boost to their operation.

They don't have to get out every 30 to 45 minutes to clean off the screen by hand. And those 5 to 10 minutes really add up at the end of a shift. As Clint said, "Any time you can keep the operator in the cab, you're going to be better off from a productivity standpoint."

He continued, "The 759G is one of the quietest cabs I've ever been in, and it's more comfortable. And that's a lot easier on the operator."

Another plus was that the 759G could be lowered below 14 feet (the others couldn't), which allows the McGee's to transport it themselves, saving them \$1,000 every time they move it.

The McGee's have always had a great relationship with Metrac, their John Deere dealer, and their salesman, Todd Smith. "One thing about Todd and Metrac is they've always been honest with us, good or bad, and that means a lot when you get a straightforward answer. The relationship you have with that dealer means everything."

But maybe the thing that sold them most on the John Deere feller buncher was that John Deere was willing to stand behind the machine much longer than the competition. And according to Clint, if somebody is willing to stand behind their equipment like John Deere, then they must have something worth having. "To be honest, that's what pretty much sold us on the machine."

After 200 hours, Clint McGee thinks the 759G has saved them about four or five days of chain-saw work. "Deere has great equipment, and their parts availability is outstanding. And in my opinion, the 759G is the best buncher out there." ■

McGee & Sons Logging serviced by John Deere dealer Metrac, Inc.



# Bundle of energy



**“In the slash bundler, Deere has developed what appears to be a great solution to the challenge of gathering woody debris that typically is not processed during a standard logging operation.”** — Lisa Stocker, director of public affairs, Potlatch

## Deere’s 1490D Slash Bundler plays powerful role in producing energy from the woods

Remember the DeLorean in *Back to the Future*, which in the future ran on garbage? With the price at the pump exceeding three dollars a gallon, no doubt many Americans have probably daydreamed about owning such a car.

Garbage-powered cars may not be available any time soon, but the ability to convert organic waste, such as forest or crop waste, into energy exists today. The only renewable energy source that can meet our demand for carbon-based fuel, biomass may someday reduce our dependence on foreign oil.

John Deere’s 1490D Slash Bundler is not as flashy as a DeLorean, to be sure, but its ability to efficiently process slash — the unused limbs and tops of harvested trees from logging operations — is getting a lot of notice.

A new research project funded by the Department of Energy will demonstrate the potential of using the machine for harvesting slash.

“As a forestry leader, Deere is interested in what the industry is doing to promote the use of wood in producing energy,” says Andrew Bonde, manager, forestry marketing, John Deere. “This study is a great example of how the private and public sectors can work together to look at emerging technologies that address our country’s energy needs.”

### Cost-effective slash bundling key

Slash represents a potentially bountiful and renewable source of biomass for energy production. Until recently, however, using slash as a biomass feedstock was considered uneconomical. One of the biggest challenges is collection — the process is extremely costly and labor intensive.

“Harvesting and transportation costs represent well over half of the total cost of delivered biomass,” says Philip Steele, Mississippi State University, the project’s principal investigator. “That’s a major problem that has constrained the cost effectiveness of utilization of biomass for energy.”

Enter the John Deere 1490D Slash Bundler. “Transporting heavy, wet slash would be prohibitively expensive, so the idea is to bundle it up and leave it on the ground to dry,” Steele says. “The 1490D does this extremely well, and at 20 to 30 1,300-pound bundles per hour, it’s extremely productive.”

### Private-public partnership

The project is sponsored by the Mississippi Technology Alliance-Strategic Biomass Initiative (MTA-SBI). “MTA-SBI’s goal is to foster relationships between industry and academia in hopes of commercializing biomass technologies,” says Sumesh Arora,

director, MTA-SBI. “We focus on funding technologies that can be commercialized quickly or proliferating the use of ones that are already on the market.”

MTA-SBI brought together Mississippi State University, the University of Arkansas, John Deere, and the Potlatch Corporation for the project. MSU is looking at bio-refineries as a way to stimulate economic development in Mississippi.

Potlatch Corporation, a real-estate-investment trust that owns and manages 1.5 million acres of timberlands, is assessing the feasibility of developing a bio-refinery that would use forestry and agricultural feedstocks. With natural gas prices more than doubling the last three years, Potlatch is looking for a way to put a lid on the sudden surge in energy prices.

“The bio-refinery concept we are evaluating calls on us to use forest residues not being used by woods

products manufacturers,” explains Lisa Stocker, director of public affairs, Potlatch. “The project will help us determine how to gather the unused biomass to ensure there is enough material left for nutrient cycling and soil productivity, as well as give us data on the costs associated with using forest residues as a feedstock.”

Potlatch provided forestlands for an initial two-week demonstration. During the demonstration, the 1490D bundled slash immediately following first and second harvest of plantation stands, as well as slash residue from a newly clear-cut mature stand.

The 1490D performed about eight hours of bundling at each site — approximately 150 bundles per site. “In the slash bundler, Deere has developed what appears to be a great solution to the challenge of gathering woody debris that typically is not processed during a standard logging operation,” says Stocker.

Over the next year, time and motion studies conducted by Dave Patterson from the University of Arkansas at Monticello will help determine the economic feasibility of using slash bundlers on Southern pine sites. A series of other tests by Mississippi State University will be performed to analyze the moisture content of the bundles, the ecological effect from the bundling process, and the energy content of different slash types.

“John Deere has a unique product, and we hope this project can demonstrate its value to the North American forestry community,” says Sumesh Arora. “This machine is able to efficiently collect wasted forest materials that cannot be used for other purposes, but which can now be converted to energy. That’s why we’re trying to bring technologies such as this to the attention of the industry. Today we have one slash bundler in the country, but we need 100 or more.” ■



With its unique leveling cab, strong parallel boom, and balanced bogies, the 1270D is the most productive harvester in its class.

Continued from page 6

“CTL is more agile and much lighter on the ground, so we can work when it’s wet,” explains co-owner Steve Piwarski. “With tree-length, we really had to have the right job to be able to work during the spring.

“One thing we really like about CTL is the ability to get merchantable wood out of every tree,” he adds. “With a slasher operation, everything went into a hopper and we had to pick it out.”

Today the company runs two harvesters, including a 1270D and a John Deere 1110D Forwarder, compared to the four machines it was using for tree-length harvesting. The company gets the same amount of production, but on half the fuel and three-quarters the machines and operators.

One reason for the increased productivity is cab-leveling technology. “You’re always sitting perfectly level and looking right at the head at all times, so you can focus on what you’re doing instead of sliding around,” explains Piwarski. “A more comfortable operator is going to be a more productive operator. And if you can produce one more cord an hour, you’re going to be that much further ahead.”

The parallel boom is fast, accurate, and easy to control. “It’s unbelievable how agile they are,” says Piwarski. “And yet you have long reach and power in the same boom...very unique. It’s an excellent design.”

Piwarski is also impressed by the durability of the 1270s. “They take a lot of abuse, but we don’t have many down days,” he reports. “And if there are problems, I can call the dealer and have an answer in ten minutes.

“With Deere, you know you have the parts and service support of a worldwide operation. And in the logging busi-

ness, you need someone who is going to be there for the long run.”

#### Cost-efficient logging in the Dairy State

Tree-length logging is also becoming a forgotten art in parts of central Wisconsin. “You don’t really see tree-length harvesting in this part of the state,” says Rick Delaney, owner, Delaney Forest Products. “Maybe a couple crews ten years ago. But even before the advent of harvesters and forwarders, you’d have chain-saw crews doing CTL.”

Located in Warren, Delaney Forestry has been in the logging business since 1974. The company has been doing CTL since the mid-1980s, purchasing a John Deere 70 Excavator converted to a harvester. It uses CTL mostly for pulpwood.

“CTL has to be the most cost-efficient way to process wood,” says Delaney. “You have one man running a harvester and one man running a forwarder and you’re done. I have to believe it is the only way to do it.”

Since the 1980s, Delaney progressed from the 70 to John Deere 290 and 490 Harvester conversions. Today the company runs four harvesters, including two 1270Ds, along with five John Deere forwarders.

“The 1270 is an excellent harvester — it has been producing well for me,” says Delaney. “Uptime is great, and one of the things you can’t have is downtime. If your machine is down, you are really in a hole.”

Delaney was the first customer in the U.S. to have the new, heavier-duty H480 attachment head. “It’s a great head,” he reports. “...Perfect for us because we cut a lot of bigger oak in the 20-inch range.”

Delaney also likes the leveling cab. “It’s a great feature that I couldn’t be without,” he explains. “On hilly ground, the cab keeps you level. On my tracked machines, I don’t want any part of those hills.

“After running the 1270, my employees have told me they cannot go back to track harvesters. There’s no comparison to the comfort.”

The balanced bogies provide go-anywhere mobility. “You can be up on a stump or down in a hole and not even know it,” he says. “It’s another great feature.

“John Deere has a heck of a product backed by good people and good product support,” he adds. “I’ve been completely satisfied.” ■



“We work on some pretty rocky ground, and I’m real impressed with how well our 1110D maneuvers with the balanced bogies.”

“Our 1110D is fast with excellent power, and it carries a good payload. It’s an eight-wheeler, and I’m surprised at how agile it is. I like the visibility, and the TMC™ system is very user friendly. When it comes to servicing, we’ve done nothing to it, but the way the cab lifts is outstanding. It’s the best design I’ve seen yet on any cut-to-length machine. But the number-one thing is our service guys. They put their heart and soul into making my machines work as much as we put into working them. I wouldn’t hesitate to buy another 1110D just because of the people, the service, and the quality of the machine.”

— RON BECKMAN, SR., Ron Beckman Timber Harvesting, Grand Rapids, Minnesota



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