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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Forage Harvester Connection

between

## Fox Tractor Company and UW-Madison

The selection of the Commemorative Toy for the 2012 Wisconsin Farm Technology Days recognizes the importance of the Fox Tractor Company's significant contribution to US agriculture by being the first company to manufacture forage harvesters in 1932. In 1988 the American Society of Agricultural Engineers recognized both Fox Tractor Company and UW-Madison for their contributions to the invention of the forage harvester by dedicating landmarks in Appleton, at the Fox Tractor manufacturing plant and Madison, at the UW-Madison's Agricultural Engineering research laboratory. The Landmark plaques have the description of the forage harvester history which is provided below. Since the Fox Tractor Company no longer exists the Appleton Landmark plaque is stored in Appleton museum. The Madison Landmark plaque is mounted on the UW-Madison Agricultural Engineering Laboratory and available for viewing by the public any time of day.

## Invention of the Pickup Forage Harvester

Historical Landmark

of

Agricultural Engineering

William J. Conroy of Alymer, Quebec, received patent No. 465,127 on the first hay chopper on December 15, 1891. Its sickle cut the crop, which was elevated

directly into a cylindrical curved-bar cutterhead. It was not commercially successful, but the need is recognized.

Professor Floyd Waldo Duffee, Agricultural Engineering Department, University of Wisconsin, built and field tested a silo filler with an attached hay loader in 1926. He presented the specifications of a complete unified harvester to the National ASAE Meeting in 1927. The J. I. Case Company built a field machine for Duffee, which he tested and improved until 1930.

Mr. Erwin W. Salberlich, chief engineer of the Fox Tractor Co., Appleton, Wisconsin, had also put together such a machine. At Duffee's urging, Saiberlich built his first harvester in 1931, which he improved and sold in 1932. He redesigned the machine during the great depression and Fox began selling it in 1936. His design was so fundamentally correct in principle that all machines built 50 years later were still very similar; more than 600,000 such harvesters had been built by 1986.

This development, which significantly reduced the cost and labor to harvest, store and feed forage, is hereby dedicated by:

The American Society of Agricultural Engineers

1988



UW-Madison's Agricultural Engineering Laboratory, 540 Elm Drive



Landmark Plaque on the UW-Madison's Laboratory building