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CORPORATE
HEADQUARTERS
WADE MFG. CO.
R. M. WADE & CO.
FARM & GARDEN PRODUCTS DIVISION

Dear Website Guest,

I would like to personally welcome you to the R.M. Wade 150th anniversary website. When we started working on the website we wanted to share with you the history of R.M. Wade & Co which has been owned and operated by five generations of the same family since 1865. As we progressed through the historical information it became apparent that we have been part of a much larger story, the revolution in food production which has occurred during the last 150 years. We have played a small role in this story of the increase in the efficiency and productivity of the American farmer, who has gone from very primitive horse drawn implements to the highly automated tillage and harvesting equipment used today. As a result food production by fewer and fewer farmers increased output many times over. This has never happened before in history.

As of 1850 farming practices had remained virtually unchanged for thousands of years. Everything was done the same way it always had been done with back-breaking labor on very small plots of land often limited by the size of the family. Irrigation, if any, was done with inefficient and environmentally harmful gravity (canal) irrigation, the same as the Egyptians had used 5,000 years ago. However, around 1850 things started to change as individual inventors and innovators developed new types of machinery which increased the farmer's productivity, while making his job easier. These inventors were blacksmiths, farmers, small machinery shops, equipment salesmen, and engineers who wanted to improve the way people farmed. It was a technological revolution similar to the hi-tech revolution today in which new "disruptive farm equipment technology" was introduced which changed man's relation to the land, farming and food. The John Deere plow, McCormick Reaper, hay balers, seeders, gasoline engines, the Heider and Ford Ferguson tractors, all made it possible for fewer and fewer people to feed the country and eventually feed much of the world. This revolution freed up people and made their lives infinitely better. It was a critical element in winning the major wars of the 20th century by sustaining our allies and soldiers and helped prevent famine as world population increased from 1 billion to over 6 billion today.

It was more than just the equipment as improved fertilization and tillage practices increased yields and the widespread adoption of sprinkler and drip irrigation made it possible to farm previously unproductive arid areas. R.M. Wade has been a leader in the evolution of efficient irrigation technology since the introduction of our Wade Rain sprinkler systems in 1936. The Wade Rain division has been involved in many of the innovations in automatic sprinkler systems such as Powerroll wheeled sprinkler lines and also many new drip and micro irrigation products.

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In 1865 there were 19 million farmers feeding 35 million people and today 6.4 million farmers feed 320 million Americans and hundreds of millions of people around the world. This is remarkable. Our company is proud of the role we have played in this great American food production revolution which is still changing the world, as many other countries are now using the technology to grow their own food.

A brief word about the company. We believe we are the oldest family company in Oregon which has been continuously owned and managed by the same family. Over the years we have had good and not so good times. We have survived a lot from financial panics, depressions, fires and floods, wars and dramatic changes in the market place. Today the fifth generation of the family represented by John Wade Newbegin is taking over the management of the company and directing its operations. We have been blessed over the years with so many intelligent, hardworking, creative, dedicated and loyal employees that have made everything possible. We cannot thank them enough.

We hope you enjoy the website and the story of our part in the agricultural revolution of the last 150 years. By the way we aren't finished yet and we hope to be celebrating our 200th anniversary fifty years from now.

Thanks for visiting our website.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ed Newbegin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail.

Ed Newbegin
President
enewbegin@waderain.com