



AGRI-TECH MANUFACTURING LTD.

Supplying Farmers Globally Through Innovation

When Ken Thomsen, a former R & D manager who looked after customer accounts and warranties, left Victory Equipment and founded his own farm equipment company, Agri-Tech in Nobleford in 1994, he had little idea of the success he'd find.

"I wanted a change and there was opportunity here," said Thomsen. "There was a fellow who owned his own business, Urvold Industries, and he was looking to retire. So I bought his assets, such as his building and equipment, and expanded Agri-Tech."

Now, 14 years later, Thomsen continues to expand his business while meeting the needs of southern Alberta's farmers.

"Every product we make is different," says Thomsen. "What makes our products different is innovation. We change things on existing equipment to make them work better and easier for farmers to operate, that sort of thing."

In recent years, Agri-Tech moved to supplying the oil and gas industry, a change that was motivated by the economy at the time.

"There was a downturn in the agricultural market that forced us to search for other opportunities," said Thomsen. "We mainly make skid-mounted tanks for larger companies that subcontract work out."

Even though Agri-Tech prides itself in its work for the oil and gas industry, as well as re-inventing and producing existing agricultural equipment, Thomsen says Agri-Tech's focus is on the farmers themselves.

"The majority of what we do is supply parts for farmers with old equipment," says Thomsen. "We hate to see farmers with equipment they can't use because they can't get parts for it. We like to keep old equipment running."

Agri-Tech supplies farmers in the United States, Australia, Ukraine and Russia as well as southern Alberta.

"We've tried to keep Agri-Tech running through the lean years by doing different things, such as supplying the oil fields, and probably for keeping people working here instead of scaling back," says Thomsen.

"I'm proud of the fact that we've adapted our shop to continue working when the agricultural industry slowed down, and gone after different types of things to keep the company going. I hope for the best. We've outlasted some of our competition and picked up part of their market, which makes us a little stronger."

Did you know:

- Agri-Tech Manufacturing Ltd. is a full service custom manufacturer for the agricultural industry as well as the oil and gas industry in Alberta.
- Agri-Tech Manufacturing produces some of the most innovative, rugged and reliable agricultural equipment available on the market today.
- Agri-Tech manufactures the Noble Blade Cultivator. The Noble Blade is a reduced-tillage plow that was designed to cut weed roots below the soil surface without greatly disturbing the soil, minimizing moisture loss.
- From 1930s to 1998, Nobleford's major employer was a cultivator factory established by Charles Noble, manufacturing variations of the Noble Blade.
- Nobleford's first mayor was Charles S. Noble
- Agri-Tech Manufacturing Ltd. was recognized in the Excellence in Business Retention Category at SouthGrow's 2007 Recognition Event.

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