

WORKSITE

Journal

SOULSCAPING

PAGE 4





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SOULSCAPING

This pair of talented brothers is as passionate about their excavation business as they are about their music.

NEXT IN LINE

View a time-lapse video of John Deere compact machines helping build the assembly line for our new X9 Combine.

FINDING HIS ROOTS

Successful landscaper in the nation's Heartland developed an entrepreneurial spirit at an early age.

LETTER FROM JUAN

TAKING THE NEXT LEAP FORWARD



In 2020 we launched the Smart Industrial operating model to allow us to unlock greater value for our customers even more rapidly. Our focus is on delivering intelligent, connected machines and technology solutions that will help make our customers as efficient and profitable as possible. For example, we've been leveraging customer feedback on the design of our new 333G SmartGrade™ Compact Track Loader (CTL), the first time a fully integrated grade-control technology is available on compact equipment. This machine will enable customers to take on new tasks and larger jobs that require accuracy.

Our new operating model emphasizes the use of technology to enable our machines to do things smarter, more precisely, and more productively — so our customers can do more with less. A great example of this is remote support and telematics. Through a JDLink™ connection, John Deere Connected Support™ enables remote machine monitoring (with customer consent) so our dealers can identify issues often before they cause costly downtime.

Another important component of our new operating model is lifecycle solutions. Our

new integrated support strategy will enhance customer value through proactive and reactive support and easy access to parts, value-add services, and performance upgrades, regardless of when a customer purchases our equipment. Because when customers buy from John Deere, they deserve our support for the entire lifecycle of their machine.

Another way we support our customers is by helping them manage costs through competitive financing and leasing rates. Beginning April 1, 2021, we're offering a Low Monthly Payment Program on our 316GR and 324G Skid Steers, 317G CTL, 26G Compact Excavator, 75G and 85G Excavators, and 204L Compact Wheel Loader.

To learn more about this program and other available leasing and financing options, I encourage you to contact your John Deere dealer.

Juan Raya

Manager, Global Compact Construction Sales

ZERO DOWNTIME. 0% APR FINANCING.

0% APR FOR 36 MONTHS*

ON ALL NEW JOHN DEERE COMPACT EQUIPMENT



ZERO IN ON BIG SAVINGS. SEE YOUR DEALER FOR DETAILS.

*Offer valid on qualifying purchases made between 01 March 2021 to 30 June 2021. Subject to approved installment credit with John Deere Financial, for commercial use only. Down payment may be required. Average down payment is 10%. Taxes, freight, setup and delivery charges could increase monthly payment. Available at participating U.S. dealers. Prices and models may vary by dealer. CR2211624



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MILLER EARTH LAFAYETTE, IN

SOULSCAPING



CREATING PERFECT HARMONY BETWEEN MUSIC AND EARTHWORK

Most third graders spend their time playing football or video games during their joyously free hours away from school. When LD Miller, owner and operator of Miller Earth LLC in Lafayette, Indiana, was in third grade, he had a bit more going on in terms of extracurricular activity.

"At eight years old, I recorded my first album with our family band," says Miller, already an accomplished harmonica player by that age. "We got picked up by an agency, and we ended up doing the touring circuit, 250 shows a year."

What was a fun way to spend time with family turned into a legitimate career path. Recording and touring with the Miller family band created opportunities to appear in Las Vegas and on television programs like

The Ellen DeGeneres Show, Sesame Street, and America's Got Talent.

"I've done so many things in this life, I already feel like I've lived a life," says Miller. "I'm here now doing excavation, and I'm just as passionate about it as I am music. I can feel both of them with my whole heart and soul."

HOME SWEET HOME

It was a long journey from working as rockers to working with rocks, but Miller and his brother Cole have managed to build up an impressive list of skills. The pair are the sole owners and employees of Miller Earth, and they're no strangers when it comes to getting down in the dirt.

— continued



**"I CAN FEEL [EXCAVATION AND MUSIC]
WITH MY WHOLE HEART AND SOUL."**

— LD Miller, owner and operator, Miller Earth LLC





"We've worked with machinery prior to starting Miller Earth, always getting involved with farming or excavation between music commitments," says Miller. "Eventually, we wanted to be home with our families and knew we could have just as much fun playing with big boy toys as we did playing in a band. That's when Cole and I started Miller Earth."

Miller explains that his sibling's passion for earthwork is what ignited his own love for it. Being a little brother, he always looked up to Cole and considers himself lucky to have been taught everything he knows about farming and excavation from his big brother. After so many years of working together as family doing something they enjoy, there was no reason to stop when starting their own company.

"Cole will be in an excavator and I'll be in a skid steer, and I feel like I just know what his next move is going to be. It's that brotherly connection, and it's a lot of fun," Miller says. "It doesn't hurt that he's an amazing operator."

CARRYING A TUNE

What drives Miller these days isn't the roar of a crowd, but the approval of a different kind of audience. He gives John Deere credit for this new type of standing ovation.



“THE BEST GUITAR, THE BEST SKID STEER. IT DOESN'T MATTER — EVERYBODY'S AN ARTIST IN THEIR OWN WAY.”

— LD Miller, owner and operator, Miller Earth LLC





MUSICAL MID-SIZE

Miller Earth LLC of Lafayette, Indiana, keeps it lean and mean with a John Deere 331G Skid Steer and a 50G Compact Excavator. "What my brother Cole and I love most about John Deere equipment is how responsive it is. Whatever we're thinking, we can make it happen. When we push with it, it doesn't stop. You cannot kill it," says owner and operator LD Miller. "And of course, all of our mowers and tools are John Deere as well. We buy as much Deere as we can, right down to the paper towels."

"We are proud of making a home for somebody and helping them customize their property and acreage," he says. "It's amazing to see people's faces, and we would have never been able to do this without our John Deere equipment."

Even before he was in the business of buying equipment, Miller had a love of John Deere, from digging in the sandbox with Deere toys to riding in John Deere combines. He thanks his parents for not just a great introduction to the Deere lifestyle but an outlook on what real artistry is.

TALENT SHOW

After the national tours and nightly shows at the Sahara on the Las Vegas strip, a talent agent came knocking at LD Miller's family band's door in 2006 about a new program called America's Got Talent. Not knowing quite what to expect, the Millers jumped all in and found themselves going all the way to the finals, taking second place after Piers Morgan voted against them.

"My first impression of that show is that it's just so uplifting," says Miller. "Even if there are some pretty stressful aspects of showbiz at that level, it's what somebody would always want to do. For an 11-year-old kid, it was pretty mind-blowing."

"My family raised me to look at everything that you do in life as a certain type of art and really hammered home the point that an artist should have the best tools they can get," says Miller. "The best guitar, the best skid steer, it doesn't matter — everybody's an artist in their own way."

Miller is quick to remember the backing band, making sure that his company's dealer, West Side Tractor, takes a bow.

"We rented our equipment before we could buy it. They helped us with that whole transition, and now we're rolling with momentum. Everybody's happy," he says, considering all the family-oriented work he's been doing for the vast majority of his life. "It feels like family when we deal with them. That's important."

MOTHER EARTH'S MASSEUSE

Just because Miller spends a little more time in the cab and a little less time in the studio doesn't mean he's done with music.

"I'm not really up for the fame, but I do like to make people happy with my music," he says. "And the same thing with the excavation. I like to have a happy client when we're finished with the process."

Miller stays plenty busy musically even if jamming with Stevie Wonder or hearing David Hasselhoff say he's "the best harmonica player I've ever seen" are moments in the past. He splits his time between his immediate and extended families, Miller Earth projects, and working on new material for his band named Miller. He also uses his experience and instincts to help other artists looking to elevate their music to the next level by enhancing the production or songwriting.

"If you're trying to start anything in life, you have to look at it like clearing the gap between not knowing what you're doing and being able to do it," Miller says. "I already cleared the gap, so now I can just focus on making music and doing work I'm proud of. I'm happy to be both a musician and Mother Earth's masseuse."

Miller Earth LLC is serviced by West Side Tractor, Lafayette, Indiana.

Check out the video at:
JohnDeere.com/worksitejournal



**COMPACT MACHINES HELP
BUILD NEW X9 COMBINE
ASSEMBLY LINE AT JOHN DEERE
HARVESTER WORKS**



John Deere compact machines are popular for ag applications. Skid steers, compact track loaders (CTLs), and compact wheel loaders are well suited to a wide variety of tasks, including loading feed mixers, scraping and bedding stalls, moving hay bales, hauling seed pallets and other materials, and installing fence posts. So it's fitting that these capable farmhands played an important role in constructing

the new assembly line at John Deere Harvester Works for the most powerful combine we've ever made, the X9.

Good combination for the combine line

Five John Deere compact machines were used on the project, including a CTL, a skid steer, and three compact excavators. "These machines are highly productive

and efficient in a factory environment with tight spaces, columns and other obstacles, and low ceilings," says Pat Hartmann, senior facilities engineer, John Deere Harvester Works, who oversaw the project. "And with a variety of attachments, they are very versatile."

— continued

“These machines are highly productive and efficient in a factory environment with tight spaces, columns and other obstacles, and low ceilings.”

PAT HARTMANN

Senior Facilities Engineer, John Deere Harvester Works

The new assembly line comprises seven production lines, with six lines feeding the main line. The line covers a 270,000-square-foot footprint, including an approximately 200,000-square-foot area where new concrete was poured. John Deere compact machines played a key role in this important process. Compact excavators equipped with hammers and thumbs broke up and removed old concrete. The skid steer and CTL used buckets to spread base material where new concrete would be poured. The CTL's tracks provided more flotation in areas where soil compaction was an issue.

Extremely tight tolerances for flatness were required for the concrete. “A major feature of the assembly line is a rail-based conveyance system for materials handling,” says Hartmann. “It ties four production lines into one system, so the concrete has to be extremely flat. It was very challenging, but it is cool to see new technology and handling devices come together to make it easier for our operators to assemble this new combine.” (See sidebar on facing page for other facts about the assembly line.)

Smart Connected Factory

The X9 assembly line is part of a new Smart Connected Factory strategy the company is implementing to revolutionize manufacturing at more than 60 John Deere factories around the world. It will establish digital threads of product and process information while seamlessly connecting people, supplies, equipment, and technology. Analytics improve decision-making and optimize outcomes. These capabilities create more dynamic logistics and production planning, improve the visibility and accuracy of materials throughout the global supply chain, and allow real-time customization of assembler instructions.

The state-of-the-art assembly line was completed over an eight-month period from August 2018 to April 2019 in preparation for the X9's release in Spring 2021. Some existing lines at Harvester

Works were moved to make space for the new line, but production in the rest of the factory proceeded without interruption.

“There was a lot at stake to build a production line in only eight months, and everyone did an outstanding job,” says Hartmann. “It was a very challenging and rewarding project to lead from a facilities standpoint. It required a lot of coordination and hard work between manufacturing, operations, and material flow, along with the skilled contractors and our facilities teams. There were bumps in the road along the way to be sure, but everyone came together to overcome obstacles. It was fulfilling to see all these teams come together to ensure the new assembly line is a success.”





JOHN DEERE HARVESTER WORKS, *East Moline, Illinois*

READY TO ASSEMBLE

The state-of-the-art X9 Combine assembly line features a rail-based conveyance system and includes:

270K Square-foot total footprint

200K Square feet of new concrete

7 New production lines

6 Lines feeding the main line


120 Overhead-bridge systems for hoisting heavy objects

80 Mechanical arms for raising or manipulating parts

400 Power-utility systems

80 Television monitors providing instructions

HARVESTING TO THE POWER OF X



Our most powerful combine ever, the X9 was introduced after years of input by farmers who identified their most important needs in a combine, including what does and doesn't work in their operations. Built for increased harvesting capacity, with more efficient power and better residue management, and loaded with integrated technology, the X9 offers large-acre farmers a giant leap forward in harvesting efficiency. It delivers 45-percent more harvesting capacity across all crop types, with no shortage of grain quality — while using 20-percent less fuel. The X9 can harvest up to 30 acres an hour in wheat. It can also harvest up to 7,200 bushels an hour in high-yielding corn, which is more than enough to fill seven semitrailer trucks per hour.



ABOUT

TIME

+ DAMAGE CONTROL

Check for noticeable exterior damage such as cracks, missing lugs, and exposed steel cables. This is typically the first indication that tracks need to be replaced. If left unaddressed, this can lead to track failure and significant downtime.

+ TREADING A THIN LINE

Just like car tires, it is important to check tread depth periodically. We recommend you replace rubber tracks when 40 percent of the tread depth remains compared to a new set of tracks.

+ DON'T GO OFF THE RAILS

Sprocket condition is a good indicator that tracks may need replacement. Loose tracks due to worn-out sprockets may mesh and skip — and potentially derail.

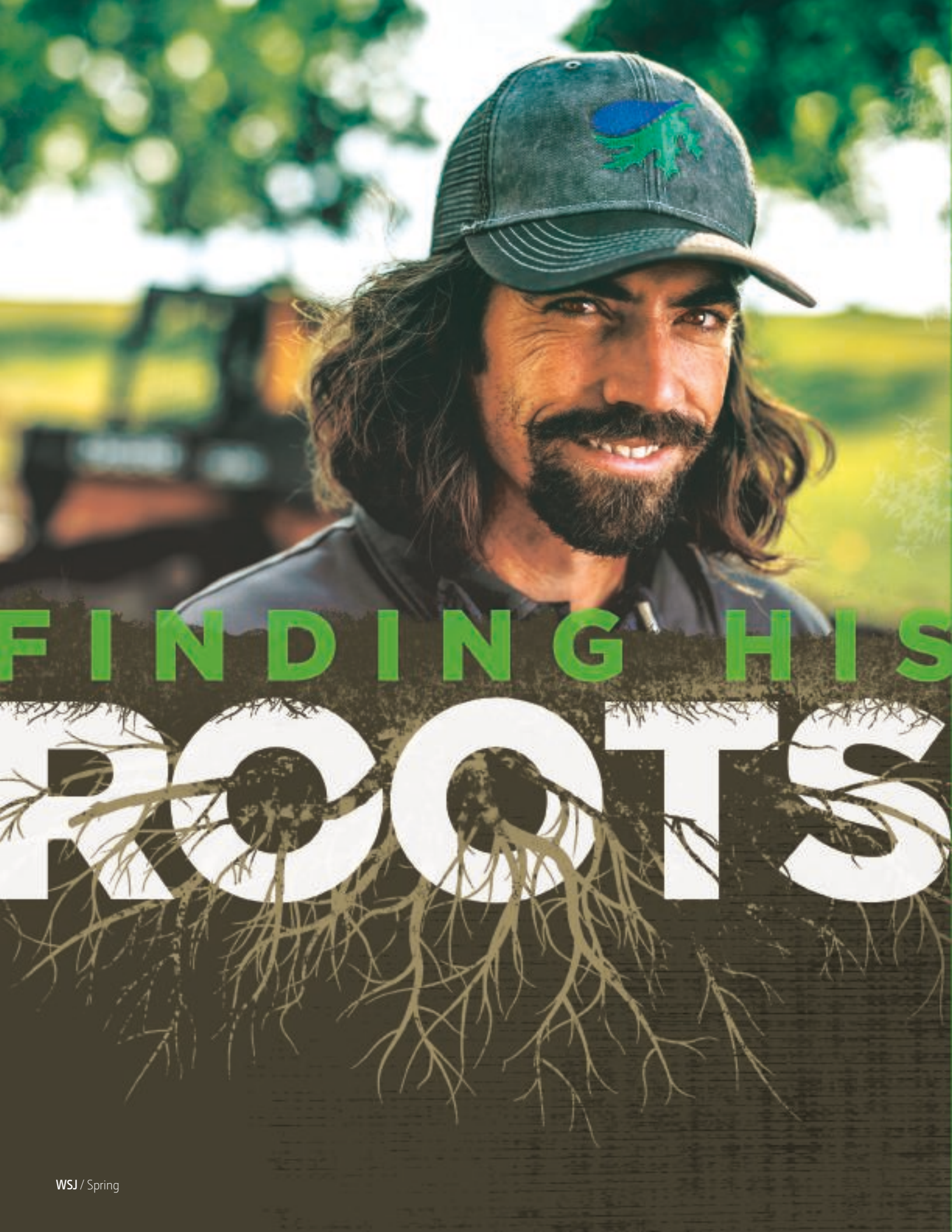
When should you replace the rubber tracks on your CTL?

Replacing the rubber tracks on your compact track loader (CTL) will help it continue to deliver maximum performance and productivity. Our new CTL rubber tracks are even more durable, for long life (see "Get Connected," page 19). Here are some things to look for to help you determine if it's time to give your old tracks the heave-ho.

+ TIE UP LOOSE ENDS

Rubber tracks lose tension over time, even with proper care and maintenance. We highly recommend you check track sag on a daily basis or as needed. Without proper monitoring, improper tension will cause the track to skip and derail, leading to downtime and unexpected costs.

Track adjustment is critical to the operation and life of the machine. On a John Deere CTL, track-tension adjustment is easy, requiring only simple hand tools like a box-end wrench and a grease gun. Track adjustment can be completed in just minutes per side without expensive special tools or complicated steps.



FINDING HIS

ROOTS

Ben Lemmons has built a thriving landscaping business in the Heartland

Ben Lemmons, owner of Deep Roots Landscape Management, has fond memories of growing up on a hobby farm near his present-day office in Manhattan, Kansas. "As a kid, I built forts, grew a garden, and raised a whole bunch of goats. It was a lovely place to grow up and a great place to start a business."

Admittedly, as a teenager, Lemmons could be a bit of a handful. "I got kicked out of home school," he remembers. "I had intelligent parents giving me and my four siblings a good education. They didn't mind home school, but I felt isolated. I'm a people person, so I continually rebelled against the teacher, my mom. So the principal, my dad, strongly recommended that I pick a different school option. I feel bad now about how I behaved then because my mom is such a sweet person."

Budding entrepreneur

The hobby farm proved to be every bit as important to Lemmons' education as the public school. He remembers how his father always aspired to owning his own business and encouraged an entrepreneurial spirit in his children. At 14, Lemmons was selling vegetables twice a week at the local farmer's market. He eventually saved up enough to buy his own truck and, with his parents' help, acquired a lawn mower. "I went door to door in the neighborhood and picked up some commercial mowing. At 17, I was doing about 75 lawns a week. When I was 19, I hired several employees and started to get serious."

— continued

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— **BEN LEMMONS, OWNER,
DEEP ROOTS LANDSCAPE
MANAGEMENT**



Twenty-one years later, the company now employs 16 full-time employees and maintains several hundred lawns a week. In addition to lawn maintenance, Deep Roots also handles landscape design and installation as well as irrigation design, installation, and maintenance. "When we started out, we always had hard workers, but not the experts that we have today. I've tried to foster an atmosphere where people can grow and expand their skill sets. To make good employees, you have to believe in them."

Onward and upward

Everyone knows everyone in Manhattan. "If you wave at somebody here, you wouldn't get a funny look from anyone," says Lemmons. "Everybody is friendly and loves our Kansas State Wildcats. Manhattanites are also a really faithful client base who prefer to buy local."

Lemmons is proud of the strong positive reputation his company has earned. "We don't need to advertise. It's all word of mouth. My clients know many of my staff members by name and speak well of them."

Deep Roots doesn't lay off employees during the winter, which is almost unheard of among landscaping companies in his region. "I'm passionate about treating people well and training them so they can make an income and provide for their families. As a result, I have less turnover and fewer inexperienced employees to train every spring. What's great is if I take care of my staff, they take care of my clients, and we move upward together."

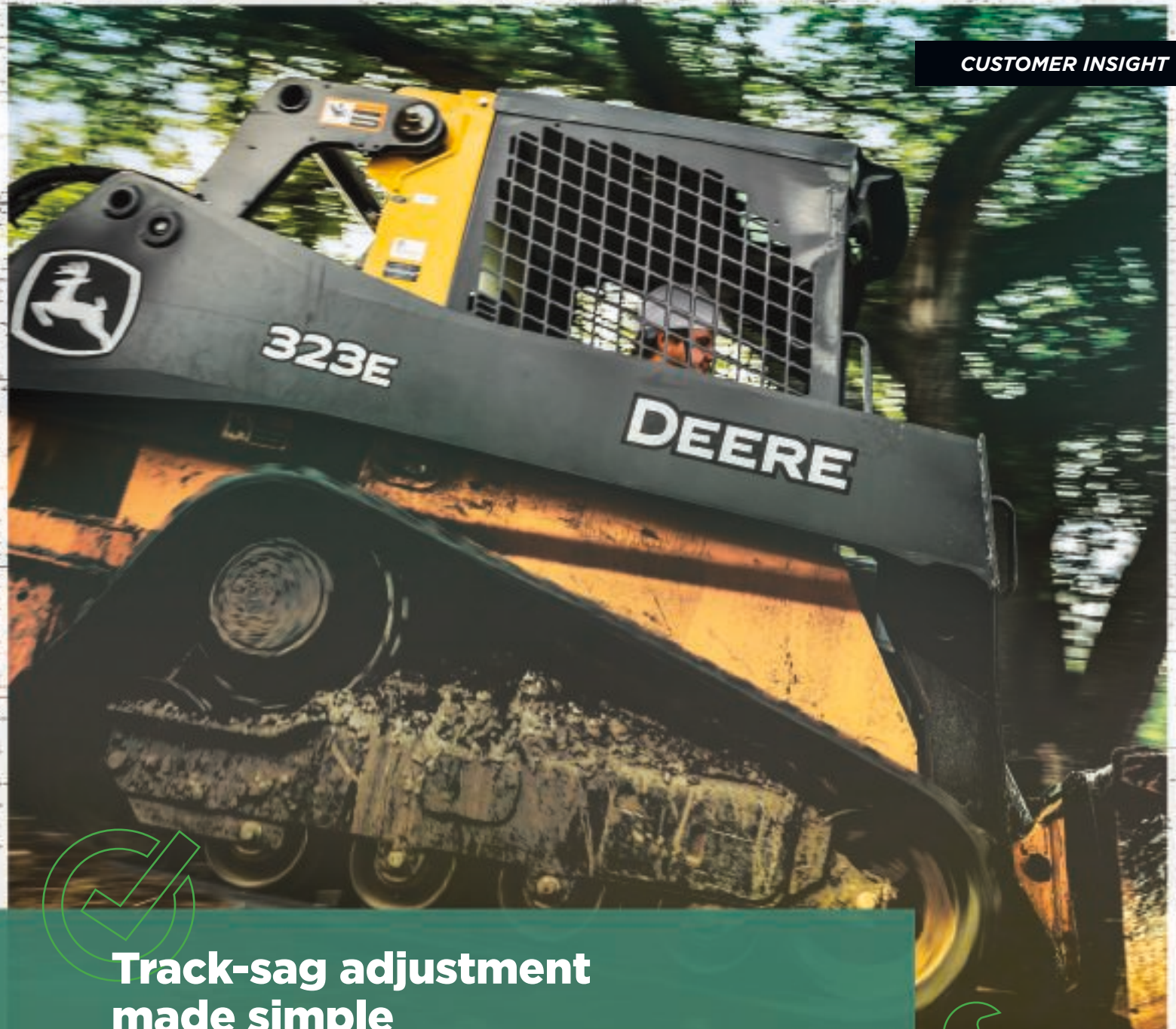
Building an employee-friendly work environment has been very beneficial. The company is on track to earn over \$1 million annually for the first time. Within five years, Lemmons expects to open a 15-acre tree farm. "My training was originally in nursery management. It's exciting because we deal in plants and trees but have never grown our own. In our area, there are about 10 types of trees that really grow well. We have excellent soil and water access, so we're working on offering each one."

— continued on page 18

I'M PASSIONATE ABOUT TREATING PEOPLE WELL AND TRAINING THEM SO THEY CAN MAKE AN INCOME AND PROVIDE FOR THEIR FAMILIES.

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— BEN LEMMONS, OWNER,
DEEP ROOTS LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT



Track-sag adjustment made simple

One of the most important parts of daily maintenance on your compact track loader (CTL) is checking and adjusting track sag. If it's too tight, the track and other components can wear excessively. If the track is too loose, the machine may feel unstable and the track could come loose from the sprocket. "On our old machine, it would take 20 to 30 minutes to tighten tracks and you needed special tools," says Ben Lemmons, owner of Deep Roots Landscape Management. "The process is much simpler on our John Deere CTL. You just need a grease gun and a wrench, and the whole process takes just a few minutes."



►
Deep Roots Landscape Management's agile yet stable 323E Compact Track Loader is a fast and efficient grading machine. And with a variety of attachments, it's very versatile.



On track toward profitability

Lemmons started using Deere equipment three years ago after a bad experience with a competitor's skid steer. "It was a lemon, and we weren't treated well by the dealer either. So I called our local John Deere dealer, PrairieLand Partners, and they helped us trade into a new machine."

The company runs a John Deere 323E Compact Track Loader with a variety of attachments, including forks, buckets, Harley rake, and tree auger. "It's extremely good at holding a level grade after installing a sprinkler system," says Lemmons. "It doesn't bounce around like a wheeled machine — it's just an incredibly fast grading machine, so we are more efficient."

Lemmons appreciates the machine's agility for getting into tight spaces. "And the tracks are perfect for working in flint rock, which is extremely hard on tires. Our guys love the joysticks, which were quick for them to learn. It has a lot of power for such a small package. We can lift things our larger machines would struggle with."

The 323E has proven much more reliable than the previous machine. "We normally have small windows of opportunity for weather for larger jobs, so uptime is a big deal," reflects Lemmons. "Downtime was costing us a lot of money and time on our last machine. Now we're spending our time logging billable hours instead of wondering if the machine is going to work that day. It's the difference between going out of business or not. We now have a machine that actually makes money."

Service and support have also been night and day. "We had no support from our other dealer — just an all-around bad experience. PrairieLand always treats us like we are their main priority. If we have an issue, they are there for us right away."

Ultimately, Lemmons wants to equip his crew with dependable machines that will help them do a good job. "When you show up to a job with equipment that is duct-taped and baling-wired together, customers wonder if you can do a good job. We're trying to be the company they look at and say, 'These guys are going to get it done.'"

Deep Roots Landscape Management is serviced by PrairieLand Partners, LLC, Wamego, Kansas.

▶ Check out the video at:
[JohnDeere.com/worksitesjournal](https://www.johndeere.com/worksitesjournal)

NOW WE'RE SPENDING OUR TIME LOGGING
BILLABLE HOURS INSTEAD OF WONDERING IF
THE MACHINE IS GOING TO WORK THAT DAY.
**IT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GOING OUT
OF BUSINESS OR NOT. WE NOW HAVE A
MACHINE THAT ACTUALLY MAKES MONEY."**

— **BEN LEMMONS, OWNER,**
DEEP ROOTS LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT

GET + CONNECTED



**11% MORE METAL-CORE
ADHESION STRENGTH***

**22% LOWER
ROLLER-PATH
WEAR RATE***

**15% MORE DURABLE
STEEL CORD***

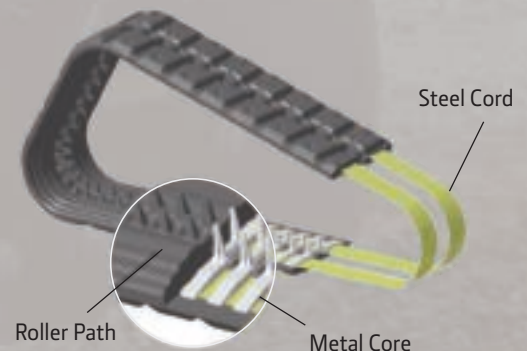
*Compared to previous CTL rubber tracks.

CTL RUBBER TRACKS

A PROVEN TRACK RECORD

John Deere compact track loaders (CTLs) are perfect for applications where you need to minimize ground pressure or surface damage. Our CTLs are designed for maximum productivity, extended wear, and easy, inexpensive maintenance. Durable components combined with our recommended operating and maintenance tips can help keep your CTL running better and longer.

> DESIGNED FOR DURABILITY



> GUARANTEED QUALITY



**18-MONTH/
1,500-HOUR
WARRANTY**

Deere CTL rubber tracks are backed by an 18-month or 1,500-hour warranty** on materials and workmanship. That's a 50-percent increase over our previous warranty. Flexible financing — including no-payment, no-interest programs — help ease upfront expenses.

**Whichever occurs first. See your dealer for complete warranty terms and conditions.



JOHN DEERE

JohnDeere.com/CTL

DESIGNED TO ROCK YOUR WORLD.

(AND SOD IT. HAUL IT. RAKE IT. MULCH IT. SWEEP IT...)

Landscaping is a world all its own. From hauling rock to laying mulch, no two projects are alike. The variety and demanding nature of the job requires a machine that's equally as versatile and productive. Enter John Deere's full line-up of Compact Track Loaders (CTL). With dozens of attachments for countless applications, not to mention a host of creature comforts, our CTLs make even the biggest landscaping jobs feel a lot smaller.

RUN
[YOUR]
WORLD