



## Leader's Steady Hand Helps Keep Kioti Tractors Moving Forward

**C. G. Kim's--president of Kioti's U.S. Tractor Division--focus on continuous improvement shines light on products and employees.**

By Karri Sandino

Photo Courtesy Kioti

Mr. C.G. Kim is the president of Kioti Tractor Division, Daedong-USA, Inc. Kioti's decision to distribute its own products several years back might seem like nothing special, but it has everything to do with Kioti's commitment to knowing what its customer and dealers need.

C.G. Kim, president, Kioti Tractor Division, Daedong-USA, Inc., describes the successful transition from third-party distribution to self distribution as one of the company's significant accomplishments.

And it was all about conscientious decision-making.

### The Direct-Distribution Challenge

As a company, Kim says, "we decided we need to distribute and market our own products and to build a dealer organization."

By this, he means Kioti's environment would be one in which "dealers can be characterized by their loyalty to the Kioti product and brand and their devotion to service and product support."

"This was not an easy process and it is one that continues today as we add new, qualified dealer partners," he says.

Meeting the challenge to establish a well-recognized foreign brand in the U.S. market began in 1985 when Daedong Industrial introduced their first Kioti compact tractor in the United States. By 1993, the company had established enough of a toehold in the market to create Daedong-USA, the North American distribution arm of the Korean parent company, Daedong Industrial Co., Inc. The Korean-based tractor manufacturer was founded in Korea in 1947 before the Korean War; it's established itself as number one in the Korean agricultural machinery industry.

Kioti is a division of Daedong-USA, which distributes Kioti products for Daedong Industrial Co., Inc.,

The real push for Kioti in the United States came when C.G. Kim joined Daedong-USA in 1997. Kim focused on direct distribution, and under his guidance, the company has experienced an average annual revenue growth of 30 percent.

### Progress Never Stops at Kioti

Continued progress and the constant pursuit of excellence are overarching philosophies of Kioti, says Kim.

"Kioti, as a company, consistently looks for areas for improvement, ways we can do things better and methods that add value to what we do.

"This corporate culture pervades all aspects of our business and we are determined to be the best at what we do and to become the leader in the industry," says Kim.

Flashback to the company's original, Wilson, N.C.-warehouse—Kioti needed to take a careful look at its infrastructure and capabilities to serve its dealers and retail customers.

"While the facility served its purpose, it did not lend itself well to the distribution of tractors, attachments and implements," Kim explains.

"For Kioti to grow and to provide the services our dealers and end users require, it was necessary for Kioti to move to a new facility specifically designed for our needs," he says.



In 2004, Kioti moved from Wilson to its modern headquarters and distribution center in Wendell, N.C.

In the midst of all the changes, growth in the Kioti line of products continued also, says Kim.

Within a relatively short span of time, Kioti's line of premium compact and utility size tractors has grown from two models to over twenty models ranging in size from 22 horsepower to 90 horsepower and each year, Kioti and Daedong bring new models and products to the North American marketplace.