



Man With a Mission

Dave Zerfoss and Husqvarna have big plans to help you “master your great outdoors.”

3/19/2008

By Karen Keb Acevedo

Photo courtesy Husqvarna

I recently had the opportunity to sit down in Louisville, Ky., with Dave Zerfoss, president of Husqvarna Forest & Garden, for a chat about Husqvarna’s new campaign, “Master Your Great Outdoors.”

With the great passion and inspiration you’d expect from the president of a large company, Zerfoss described how Husqvarna, the world’s largest manufacturer of chain saws, lawnmowers, trimmers and blowers, is improving operations and reaching a new level of customer support with its dealerships.

The history of Husqvarna dates back more than 300 years. As a Swedish company, its core values could be considered “ahead of the curve.” You see, the Swedes have a heritage of reverence for the outdoors.

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Dave Zerfoss is president of Husqvarna Forest & Garden, headquartered in Charlotte, N.C.

As Zerfoss explains, nearly all major events in Sweden are held outdoors and their relationship with the land is a spiritual one. Their culture dictates that land is a gift and that, as inherent stewards of the land, they are totally responsible for it.

This extends to the Swedish concept of “one man’s land” and is manifested in the fact that anyone can camp anywhere in Sweden (“private” property included), without recourse, for 24 hours because of this belief that land belongs to everyone. (I don’t think this concept would go over very well in the United States.)

This refreshing, holistic vibe that runs through Swedish culture extends, naturally, to the equipment they produce. From this ingrained reverence for the land, overall environmental impact figures heavily into the equation when it comes to equipment design and function.

Husqvarna products have always been known for their ergonomic qualities, ease of use, low sound levels and low emissions, making for an overall reduced environmental impact.

The innovative X-TORQ technology for 2-stroke engines in chain saws, trimmers, blowers and hedge trimmers, reduces fuel consumption up to 20 percent and emissions up to 60 percent--while increasing power--has been evolving for the last 20 years in the company’s goal to significantly reduce emissions.

In another nod toward responsible consumption, Husqvarna strongly advocates safety and proper use of power equipment. Zerfoss describes the company’s commitment in the form of dealer instruction and clinics, safety DVDs, special programs such as “Kids and Mowers Don’t Mix”, and expert advice available on its website, www.MasterYourGreatOutdoors.com.

While he appreciates the skill involved in lumberjack sports, he doesn’t believe these events are the best representation of safe equipment use and has steered clear of sponsorships.



Recognizing that there's a new type of farm consumer out there (you), Husqvarna, like many equipment manufacturers today, is embarking on a crusade to upgrade dealerships and provide a more pleasant dealer experience. Well-lit, modern showrooms and certified service departments are included in the plans, and perhaps, hold onto your hats people ... good coffee!

More than 5,000 Husqvarna dealers are in business across the United States, with about half of these being "total source dealers," meaning they have stock representation from all the major product groups and are committed to Husqvarna's unique mission.

While your outdoor chores and land stewarding may be challenging, it should be enjoyable, and your equipment should help you accomplish these tasks. So, now is the time to get comfortable, get responsible and "Master Your Great Outdoors."

—Karen Keb Acevedo is editor-in-chief of Hobby Farms, Hobby Farm Home, and The Popular Farming Series.