

Deere factory

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to meet business growth. This is a high-growth division," said Robert Laveau, marketing manager for the John Deere Vehicle Group. "The objectives are increased efficiency and manufacturing flexibility."

According to John Deere's annual report, sales of its Gator utility vehicles rose 25 percent in 1999. The new ProGator and TrailGator models have been big hits for the company, but the problem has been keeping up with demand.

John Deere launched the ProGator from its turf-care facility in North Carolina, but will eventually move production to the new facility in Virginia.

"It is an indication of how quickly this business is moving for us. That facility [in North Carolina] is only 3 years old and we used it for a launching point for the new factory. It is already an older sibling," said Laveau.

All of the Gator models will be produced at the Williamsburg factory. "We will produce both existing products and extensions to the product line and new products out of this facility," said Laveau. "The location will also be the headquarters for engineering, marketing and support functions."

According to Laveau, the facility will have a campus-like feel and workers will be grouped into comingled teams.

"It will be a cross-functional work environment, a concept that we have been using and building on for the past four years," he said. "Teams will include design, manufacturing and performance engineers, marketing staff, supply managers, design coordinators and decision processors."

The Williamsburg facility's design draws upon the best practices of preceding factories. "We have learned from each new facility," said Laveau. "This one has optimized layout and more dock doors and improved access for just-in-time delivery of materials."

John Deere has created a "lean enterprise system," a version of flow manufacturing that keeps inventory and overhead low, Laveau added.

The factory also features state-of-the-art glass paneling that provides daylight throughout the facility, a cardiovascular fitness center for employees and a fully wired video conference room.

Construction on the factory began in June 1999 and production is set to begin this summer.

Laveau is ready to get cranking. "The business has grown steadily and we see it ramping up," he said. "We are serious about this business and we are going to do some exciting things." ▽



E-Z-GO's new WorkHorse ST 480.

E-Z-GO's ST 480 takes on the tough jobs

The WorkHorse ST 480, the newest addition to the E-Z-GO WorkHorse ST family, provides enough power and hauling capacity to handle the toughest off-road utility jobs.

With an 800-pound payload capacity and a 48-inch bed, the ST 480 is the ideal vehicle for rough grounds maintenance applications. The ST 480 is powered by a

16-hp, 4-cycle 480-cc twin cylinder Vanguard V-twin engine — largest in the WorkHorse ST line and capable of reaching a maximum speed of 17 miles per hour — and also features a locking rear differential for added versatility. In addition, the ST 480 provides a heavy-duty multiple-leaf spring suspension with hydraulic shock absorbers and self-compensating single-reduction rack-and-pinion steering.

For more information, contact 706-798-4311 or www.ezgo.com.





The Jake Hauler comes in both electric and gas models.

GOLF CARS & UTILITY VEHICLES

Haul it with the Hauler

The Jacobsen Hauler is a rugged utility vehicle designed for the hauling and towing demands common to golf course maintenance.

Two models are available. The gas-powered 1110 Hauler features a 2-cylinder, 4-cycle engine that produces 11 hp and the electric Hauler has a 2.5-hp, 36-volt motor powered by six, 6-volt deep-cycle batteries. The gas model offers 1,200 pounds of total

capacity and up to 1,000 pounds of cargo capacity. An automatic CVT drive-train provides forward and reverse gears. The Electric Hauler features heavy-duty storage batteries with high-efficiency, solid-copper windings. The electric model has 1,000 pounds of total capacity and up to 800 pounds of cargo capacity. The 13.3-cubic-foot cargo bed includes removable side panels for loading convenience. For more information, contact 888-922-TURF.



The Mule 2510 Diesel.

Kawasaki adds diesel option

Kawasaki introduces the new flagship of the Mule line-up, the Mule 2510 Diesel.

The 2510 Diesel power plant is a liquid-cooled, 952cc three-cylinder diesel engine that produces high torque at low engine rpm. The continuously variable belt-driven transmission transfers power to a dual-mode differential in the rear and limited-slip differential up front. On-demand four-wheel drive is standard as well as a two-speed transfer case that allows the operator to shift from high down to low range for maximum pulling power in severe conditions. It can carry 1,100 pounds in its steel cargo bed and 1,200 pounds with its optional trailer hitch. The chassis is a ladder-type frame that rides on a semi-independent rear suspension featuring leaf- and coil-type springs and hydraulic shock absorbers. MacPherson struts handle front suspension duties, while rack and pinion makes steering light and maneuverable over rough terrain. Stopping power is provided by four hydraulically operated, self-adjusting drum brakes that are sealed to protect them from water, mud and other debris.

For more information, contact 949-770-0400.

PowerMaster offers speed control

Columbia ParCar introduces the PowerMaster electronic speed-control system for its electric golf cars. The system gives operators automatic speed reduction going downhill, allowing for extended brake life. It also offers a "controlled roll-away" speed that prevents an unattended vehicle from rolling away at a speed of more than 2 mph. PowerMaster features three downhill speeds provided by the shunt-wound DC traction motor, patented armature sensor and electronic control module. Use of the system for downhill movement continues to provide uphill torque. The PowerMaster electric ParCar is comparable to gasoline vehicle performance. For more information, contact 800-222-4653.

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