

Revolutionary Hemp Harvester

Release Date: 11/8/2019

The Wright Brothers had Kitty Hawk and Thomas Edison had Menlo Park. The hemp industry may well look to Olathe, Colorado as the birthplace of modern hemp harvesting. Toby McCracken, a 36-year-old inventor has agricultural equipment and innovation in his DNA.



Figure 1 Hemp Harvester Inventor, Toby McCracken

Toby's grandfather, Ted McCracken, a life-long farmer, worked for the Allis Chalmers Dealer in Montrose, Colorado. Toby's dad, Doug McCracken, owned Olathe Machine and Supply, and farmers from hundreds of miles would travel to Colorado to have a McCracken figure out how to fix or invent a solution to a vexing farm equipment problem.

In 2018, Toby began working with Mike Meyer, a life-long entrepreneur who began working in the hemp industry in 2016. The pair travelled to southern Oregon to visit established hemp farms and learn best practices for growing and harvesting hemp. It was during this trip that Toby, running his fingers through a branch of hemp first conceived of the idea of "stripping" the bud off the plant in the field. When Toby returned to Olathe, he built several stripping machines that included an 8-station hand-bucking machine and a rotary brush stripping machine. However, it was the fingers on his hand that inspired the revolutionary hemp harvesting machine.

Toby designed a series of combs that could strip the flower off the plant and along with Vietnam veteran and life-long steel fabricator Bobby Isom, built a prototype of a vertical header that resulted in a provisional patent and a non-provisional patent application. The inventors called the machine the Revolutionary Hemp Harvester and RHHE, LLC was born.

Most agricultural combines use a horizontal header that works great for wheat and grains but do not work well with hemp. The vertical header can strip up to 90% of the bud and flower off the plant leaving stalk and stem in the field.

Toby and Mike arranged for a demonstration of the vertical header for leaders of Oxbo International, a world-wide leader in specialty harvesting equipment. Brian Maul, Chris Schloesser, and Curt Schaben travelled to the western slope and immediately understood the genius of the invention. Oxbo agreed to build a three-header prototype to be powered by an OXBO 2430 corn harvester power chassis.

The prototype was delivered in Colorado on September 3rd and immediately went to work, harvesting maturing hemp crops on the

western slope of Colorado. The header stripping the flower, without stalk, filling the hopper with beautiful, finished bud. Toby and the Oxbo team continued to improve stripping efficiency, discharge of harvested material, and ideal operating speeds and standards throughout the harvest season.

Figure 2. Revolutionary Hemp Harvester pouring freshly harvested flower into the hopper.



By late October, with Toby driving the hemp harvester, he was able to harvest up to 40 acres per day with just one other person in the field. The three-row header fills the Oxbo 2430 hopper with beautifully stripped bud. The freshly



3 Harvesting three rows at a time.

harvested hemp is transported to their 34,000-sf drying facility in nearby Delta, CO. The harvested flower is placed on a conveyor where quality control team picks out any stems and debris as the biomass goes into the proprietary drying system which can dry 60,000 lbs. per day.

A large Utah grower, driving into a field that was being harvested with the Revolutionary Hemp Harvester got out of his car staring at the stripped stalk and stem with a look of astonishment. He asked Mike, “What machine did this?” Mike pointed to the OXBO with the Revolutionary Hemp Harvester running and said, “There is the machine and the man that invented it.” In that moment, he said, “I am looking at the future of the hemp industry. You guys have solved the most

expensive and difficult problem in the hemp industry.”

Toby and Mike have shown the machine to several large growers. The concept has generated significant interest for purchasing in 2020. Looking to 2020, RHHE and Oxbo are working to determine the best way to bring their Revolutionary Harvester and drying methods to the hemp industry. The innovation of the RHHE header coupled with the legacy of Oxbo in specialty crops harvesting business creates a solution unmatched in the market today. But the capital, management team, and manufacturing capacity needed to build the number of machines the industry needs are the next challenges. Looking to 2020, RHHE is working to determine the best way to bring their Revolutionary Harvester and drying methods to the hemp industry.

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About RHHE: RHHE develops original agricultural equipment and solutions for the hemp industry. The Revolutionary Hemp Harvester and best in industry drying methods combine to make RHHE a leader in hemp farming automation. Based in western Colorado, RHHE core values are rooted in honesty, innovation, and finding solutions to the industry's biggest equipment challenges.

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