



AGCO

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The King of Collection

By: Glenn Farris, Global Marketing Manager, AGCO Biomass Solutions

Little known to our dealers and for many of our employees is the fact that our large square baler, the 2170XD and now the 2270XD, is recognized as the “King of Collection” for the baling of corn stover and wheat straw for the fledgling cellulosic ethanol industry. For over 5 years, AGCO has been working with both leading industry and university associates to develop an economical biomass feedstock supply chain. Now our balers are the centerpiece of the supply chain critical to the success of the first 3 major projects for the industry. These three projects are Abengoa’s Hugoton, KS project; Dupont’s Nevada, IA project; and POET/DSM’s project in Emmetsburg, IA. Each one is making ethanol from corn stover. Taken together these projects will require over 1,000,000 dry tons of material or roughly 1.8 million bales of which over 1.5 million will be large squares. With the corn harvest lasting only 6-8 weeks, to say there is intense activity for the baling of corn stover is a huge understatement.

Whether collecting this material for his or her self or having a professional harvester do it, this is a source of additional income for our farmers. Data has also shown an additional benefit resulting from this undertaking of residue management. With corn yields continually increasing, our farmers are producing rising amounts of corn stover as well. In fact so much residue is available after harvest that leaving it all on the field is not providing the same benefit it has in the past. The evidence is clear that removing some of the stover results in better yields in a corn on corn rotation. Uniformity of seed placement and depth, faster soil warming, less nitrogen fixing and less disease all help increase yields from 5-10%; this with the added benefit of less tilling.

Last year, during the 2013 corn harvest we had over 100 of our 2170’s and 2170XD’s at work making over 1,000,000 bales of corn stover for the ethanol industry. This amounted to over 90% of the large square balers working in this market. AGCO is working through product development to continue to improve our large square baler to support this dynamic new industry and our farmers. Better densities; data acquisition, management and evaluation; all helping to improve the operators of our equipment; and producing the most reliable and efficient large square baler in the market. This makes it easy to understand why our large square baler is considered the “King of Collection”.

