

# BUILDING **PROFIT**®

SUMMER 2016

## Energy-efficient Health Club Complements Neighborhood

Growing Building Supply Company Expands to Serve Community

Farm Equipment Dealership Satisfies Sustainability Goals

Campus Training Center is a Marvel of Efficiency



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**BEL-CON**  
DESIGN - BUILDERS LTD



# Farm equipment dealership satisfies sustainability goals

*New building is a one-stop shop for everything from toy tractors to million-dollar machines*

On any given day, customers visiting Green Tractors Inc., formerly Clow Farm Equipment, might include a mom picking up a toy tractor for her child's birthday, a suburban homeowner comparing new lawn mower models or a large-scale farmer checking out specs for a million-dollar crop harvester. Regardless of who they are or what they're looking for, every customer gets the same warm welcome and great service found at this John Deere dealership's new 15,000-square-foot facility in Kingston, Ontario, Canada.

The new building is a source of pride for the family-owned business that Oakley Clow founded back in 1962. Today, Oakley, along with his wife, Shirley, and their son, Doug, manage day-to-day operations and couldn't be happier with their new structure and the process that went into it.

The new building consolidates all the farm equipment dealership's functions under one roof — a big improvement

over the multiple buildings and hodgepodge of additions constructed over the past 50-plus years. The older buildings were inefficient and no match for the energy savings, customer appeal and worker comfort found in a modern and efficient Butler® building system.

"After making the decision to build, we started researching options and toured other John Deere dealerships to get ideas and advice," Doug Clow said.

As the Clows visited facilities throughout eastern Canada, one stood out — a Butler building system that inspired the new Green Tractors dealership design.

Bel-Con Design-Builders Ltd, a Butler Builder® in Belleville, Ontario, helped bring that inspiration to life,

*(Above) Green Tractors prioritized year-round energy efficiency and comfort for its new location, with the goal of combating frigid winters and humid summers.*

PHOTOGRAPHY BY TOM GUNSINGER

*“We wanted to invest in a building that would help make our business economically sustainable for the long term.”*

*DOUG CLOW, GREEN TRACTORS*

partnering with Ernest Cromarty of Ernest A. Cromarty Architect Inc.

“The local economic development corporation first put us in touch with Tom Gunsinger at Bel-Con,” Clow said. “We liked the idea of working with a local builder, and we liked what we had seen in Butler buildings during our dealership tour.”

The family already had a new building location, 29-plus acres along a major highway, purchased 20 years earlier with an eye on future growth and higher visibility for the dealership.

With the construction site selected, Bel-Con worked closely with the Clows to clearly identify design needs. The checklist included energy efficiency, low maintenance and a positive environment for both employees and customers.

### **Extreme energy efficiency**

Faced with frigid winters and hot, humid summers near the Lake Ontario shore, Clow sought year-round energy efficiency and comfort in the new location. Gunsinger recommended several building system options from Butler Manufacturing™ all aimed at producing a structure with low maintenance and extreme energy savings.

- **MR-24® roof system.** This weathertight steel surface covers the entire Green Tractors building with superior protection. Specifically designed moveable clips accommodate roof movement as Ontario weather changes from heavy snow and cold to blazing sun and heat.
- **ThermaLiner™ insulation system.** The ThermaLiner system pairs with the MR-24 roof system for superior energy efficiency with effective accredited R-values as high

## **PLANNING FOR SUCCESSION**

About two-thirds of family businesses fail to transfer successfully to a second generation.<sup>1</sup> But the owners of Green Tractors are on the way to beating those odds, with Doug Clow fully engaged in the business alongside his parents, Oakley and Shirley.

Succession planning is one reason it was so important for the Clow family to think of their new building as a long-term investment.

For projects like Green Tractors, construction accounts for only 10 percent of the building's overall lifetime costs. Operation after construction — lighting, heating, cooling and maintenance — account for 90 percent. As the Clows were planning for succession, it was important for them to consider those long-term operating costs.

Bel-Con Design-Builders Ltd helped Doug and his parents make smart choices that will pay off in energy efficiency and low maintenance over their new building's lifetime.

<sup>1</sup>Facts and Figures. Family Business Alliance website.

[http://www.fbagr.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=117&Itemid=75](http://www.fbagr.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=117&Itemid=75). Accessed March 2016.

as 38.7. In addition, the finished interior ceiling panels contribute to an appealing customer-facing showroom.

- **eShadowwall™ wall system.** With panels, thermal spacer blocks and fiberglass blanket insulation, this exterior wall system delivers accredited R-values up to 21.3, along with an architecturally pleasing exterior.
- **SunLite Strip® daylighting system.** By bringing more natural light into the building, the SunLite Strip daylighting system reduces electrical lighting costs and creates a more pleasing environment.

The net result of the design is an energy-efficient building that is pleasant for both workers and customers, now and for the decades ahead.

### Sustainability for the future

Long-term value was another reason Butler building systems were a perfect fit for Green Tractors.

“Going into this project, we focused on environmental sustainability, but my mindset was to achieve overall sustainability as well,” Clow said. “We wanted to invest in a building that would contribute to our profitability and help make our business economically sustainable for the long term.”

Low maintenance was also a top priority in the design process.

“Green Tractors is in the business of selling and repairing farm equipment — not repairing buildings,” Gunsinger said. “With a low-maintenance building, they can concentrate on what they do best.”

### Multi-function spaces

Besides serving a wide range of customers, the new Green Tractors building design needed to accommodate a variety of functional spaces — showroom, parts department, service shop and offices for accounting and other business functions.

Green Tractors displays its largest John Deere farm tractors and planting and harvesting equipment on a sizeable outdoor lot. The indoor showroom showcases smaller machines, implements and lawn mowers,



## GREEN TRACTORS INC.

**Butler Builder®:** Bel-Con Design-Builders Ltd

**Architect:** Ernest A. Cromarty Architect Inc.

**Size:** 15,015 square feet

**Butler® Systems:** Widespan™ structural system, MR-24® roof system, Thermaliner™ insulation system, eShadowwall™ wall system, SunLite Strip® daylighting system

along with a popular farm toy department. In addition, the service and repair area brings in all sizes of equipment, from small push mowers to massive 200-plus-horsepower farm tractors.

The Widespan™ structural system from Butler Manufacturing provided ultimate flexibility to design spaces to meet all these dealership needs.

For the 50-by-90 showroom and 30-by-90 two-story office area, clearspan modular framing gave total layout freedom with no intermediate columns. In the shop, Bel-Con was able to design separate areas for repairing large and small equipment.

The builder creatively and efficiently used the available square footage by placing the parts department on a mezzanine between the main floor and roof.

“We saved interior floor space by moving the parts department up,” Gunsinger said. “The versatile Butler structure could easily accommodate the addition of a 1,200-square-foot mezzanine.”

*The Butler SunLite Strip® daylighting system brings more natural light into the building and reduces electrical lighting costs while creating a pleasing environment.*

*“It was nice to be able to talk to people face to face and be welcomed to ask questions. Tom was always there and willing to talk through every step with us.”*

*DOUG CLOW,  
GREEN TRACTORS*

**SATISFIES SUSTAINABILITY GOALS****Meticulous detail**

Throughout the design-build process, Clow remained involved with every detail and relied on Gunsinger and his crew to exceed all his expectations.

"It was nice to be able to talk to people face to face and be welcomed to ask questions. Tom was always there and willing to talk through every step with us," Clow said.

After completion, the new building created plenty of buzz around Kingston.

"We've been overwhelmed by the community support. The building was packed during our grand-opening open house. And we're gaining new customers who stop in as they are driving past," Clow said. "They see the beautiful building and are curious about what's inside." ▲

*"The SunLite Strip system is a great solution to bring both quality light and energy savings into the building design."*

*TOM GUNSINGER, BEL-CON DESIGN-BUILDERS*

## KEEPING IT NATURAL

If you feel happier in the sunshine, you're not alone. Research shows that people exposed to natural light during working hours sleep better, are more active and enjoy a higher quality of life compared to workers without light exposure.<sup>2</sup>

Mechanics in the shop area at Green Tractors appreciate the natural light that comes with the SunLite Strip® daylighting system, because they often work under and behind immense farm equipment.

"In our area, light quality is just as important as energy efficiency, because we don't get as many daylight hours as other latitudes," said Tom Gunsinger of Bel-Con Design-Builders. "The SunLite Strip system is a great solution to bring both quality light and energy savings into the building design."

Based on prismatic acrylic domed technology, the SunLite Strip system adds up to three times the amount of light earlier and later in the day, compared with translucent panels. And, when integrated with lighting control systems, the SunLite Strip system can reduce lighting costs by up to 70 percent.

<sup>2</sup>Boubekri, M., Cheung, I.N., Reid, K.J., Wang, C.H., & Zee, P.C. Impact of windows and daylight exposure on overall health and sleep quality of office workers: a case-control pilot study. *J Clin Sleep Med.* 2014;10(6):603-611  
<http://www.aasmnet.org/jcsm/ViewAbstract.aspx?pid=29503>

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