



# Wisconsin Farm Technology Days 2007 – Green County

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Old Time Farming - Horse and Mule Demonstrations**

Clint Zettle probably won't mind if you call him an old timer. In fact, he's likely to be especially proud of that moniker if it is made in reference to his passion for farming the old-fashioned way.

During the Wisconsin Farm Technology Days show in Green County on September 18 - 20, the old time farming demonstrations by Zettle and other members of the Northern Illinois Draft Horse and Mule Association will provide a sharp contrast to the giant technology-enhanced machinery being shown off in the Field Demonstrations nearby.

Throughout the 3-day show, various types of heritage farming demonstrations will take place, including threshing, plowing, and discing, all powered by teams of horses or mules.

Several types of plows will be shown, including a walking plow (the operator walks behind to guide through the furrow), a sulky plow (pulled by 2 – 3 animals and plowing one furrow at a time while the operator rides on the seat), and a gang plow (pulled by 5 – 6 animals and plowing two furrows at once, also ridden by the operator).

Zettle predicts that the threshing (process of separating the oats from the straw) demonstration will be very popular. He notes that the machine itself is made of wood and has no engine. "It takes 6 teams to operate it, whereas today's are run by tractor," Zettle said.

The group will have about 25 to 30 horses and mules with them throughout the 3-day show, which takes place on Plainview Stock Farm near Albany. Visitors to the show can expect to see several breeds of draft horses, including Belgian, Percheron and Suffolk), plus some mules. (Side note – a mule is the offspring of a female horse and a male donkey, and mules themselves are always sterile.)

Zettle, a resident of Brooklyn, Wisconsin, often has to drive a considerable distance to take part in the demonstrations with the group, so he was especially pleased to have the opportunity to show off his hobby near home. Plus, he jumped at the chance to offer people the opportunity to compare the old time equipment with the high tech machinery of today.

"I grew up in the horse age, whereas people today grew up in the motor age. We like to use horse and mule power to keep Grandpa's day alive," says Zettle, "and we look for places to show it off."

So if you see an old-timer on an old disc pulled by two black mules and two red mules, you found Clint and his male team of Dewy and Jiggs, and the female team of Kitten and Kitty. Zettle says if the mules notice him pulling the trailer they are ready to jump in and go off to a show. They enjoy working, and they also enjoy treats. "Watch out if you have a sweet roll," warns Zettle.

The old time farming demonstration schedule is as follows: Tuesday - threshing from noon - 1 p.m., plowing from 3 – 4 p.m.; Wednesday and Thursday – threshing from 9 – 10 a.m., threshing from noon – 1 p.m., and plowing from 3 – 4 p.m.

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