



NAME: Heath Anderson

TITLE: General manager, Construction & Agriculture Division

COMPANY: Fairchild Equipment

LOCATION: Bloomington, MN

HOMETOWN: Palmer, Massachusetts, and currently residing in Minneapolis

YEARS IN PRESENT POSITION: Two

PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT: General manager, national accounts, for Crown Equipment Corporation

SCHOOLING: Northland International University with a Bachelor of Science degree in elementary education

ACTIVITIES/ORGANIZATIONS: Volunteering time and resources within nonprofit organizations in the Twin Cities

FAMILY: Wife, Heather, and twin 16-year-olds, Heston and Hattie

HOBBIES: E-biking, kayaking, and traveling with family

Above: General manager of Fairchild Equipment's Construction & Agriculture Division, Heath Anderson says, like Wisconsin's potato and vegetable growers, the second-generation materials handling company is also family oriented. Anderson remarks, "To see different generations making an impact while carrying on the family name really motivates our team to help where we can along the way."

INTERVIEW

HEATH ANDERSON

general manager, Construction & Agriculture Division
Fairchild Equipment

By Joe Kertzman, managing editor, *Badger Common'Tater*

Though Heath Anderson is only in his second year at Fairchild Equipment, he was familiar with the company "as they were a Yale dealer when I started with Crown Equipment Corporation back in 2008."

"I handled the Green Bay market along with the Upper Peninsula [U.P.] portion of Michigan," Anderson relates, "and Fairchild Equipment was

a major presence in those markets."

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and agricultural equipment dealerships in the Midwest, serving Wisconsin, Minnesota, Northern Illinois, North Dakota and the U.P. of Michigan.

It has grown from a five-person operation to currently having over 300 employees, now under the leadership of Gary Fairchild's son, Chad, who is open to the possibilities for growth and expansion while maintaining operations as a family-owned business.

Heath, can you give me a little history of the company in your own words? Our founder, Gary Fairchild, handled some select accounts when I was in the northern Wisconsin and U.P. of Michigan territory, and in talking to customers, I was always impressed with their loyalty to Fairchild Equipment.

They expressed the fact that Gary would always do the right thing for the customer, whether it was addressing service needs or working through equipment specifications that needed adjustments.

That's how he was able to grow the company from a five-person operation to over 300 employees serving customers in five states and representing over 50 trusted equipment brands, along with bringing the right people into the right positions within the company, departments, and locations.

Above and Right: When it comes to brands like JCB, Fairchild Equipment not only offers tractors, skid steers, backhoes, forklifts and telehandlers, but also parts and service in support of the machinery.

What is your own background, history and progression within Fairchild Equipment? I started in the education field and was a middle school teacher of social studies and math.

While I enjoyed the teaching portion and opportunity to impact students' lives, the politics of working through red tape of administration agendas

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and the lack of interest from some teachers in critical roles made me decide to look for other potential opportunities.

I had a close friend who was able to get me into a sales role in the electrical distribution industry and from there I was hooked on potential opportunities within the sales field. I ultimately ended up in the material handling industry.

I worked for Crown for over 14 years and spent most of that time in the national accounts group, starting as a national account representative, followed by a national account manager role, and I then finished my time up as general manager of national accounts, with most of my team based out of the Midwest.

As I started looking for some more opportunities to be involved in volunteering and seeing what my

wife, Heather, was doing with her nonprofit organization, the timing was right to look for options that would decrease travel and allow me to be involved in some more diversified areas.

Chad Fairchild and I talked briefly about some opportunities, and the more I talked with Heather regarding it, the more I became excited about the potential to join Fairchild Equipment.

I ended up coming on board in March of 2023, completely new to the construction and agriculture industries, but I have been surrounded by some extremely strong people in all our departments.

They have patiently let me get up to speed in each category so I can understand where our true needs are as we continue to grow in the market.

Above: In addition to tractors, skid steers and other equipment under the Mahindra line, Fairchild Equipment carries attachments such as mowers, tillers, and other accessories growers need.

What has convinced you to stay and make a career of it? I've known Chad Fairchild, Fairchild Equipment's CEO, for over 25 years. We played soccer against each other back in the day and we also share a lot of mutual friends from soccer and from the Green Bay area.

When I was talking with Chad, he really sold me on the growth opportunity for these industries through sales, rental, parts, and service.

I think the fact that we share the same family values and have a passion to create a positive culture within the company were the biggest reasons that pushed me over the



Above and Right: More than 200 of Fairchild Equipment's 300 employees are strategically located across the state of Wisconsin so that the company can provide field service throughout the state. The Stevens Point team is photographed on location in 2024.



edge to join Fairchild Equipment and jump into the construction and ag markets.

I'm extremely happy where I am now and plan to finish my career working here at Fairchild Equipment.

Are JCB and Mahindra the main brands you offer to Wisconsin potato and vegetable growers and associated businesses, or if others, what manufacturers?

JCB and Mahindra are the two main manufacturers we work with for construction and agricultural equipment.

While they do offer a wide selection of equipment, we also partner with some other strategic attachment and implement brands such as Erskine, MDS, and Berlon.

Fairchild also carries the Polaris Commercial ProXD line of utility vehicles, which some of our construction and agricultural

“Like any great football game, we’ve stayed committed, tackled every challenge head-on, and given it our all—values instilled by our founder, a former Cardinals football player, Gary Fairchild, and carried on by his son, Chad, who now leads the company.”

– Heath Anderson

customers also use. Plus, we have over 40 other brands of material handling equipment available through our industrial equipment division.

What types of agricultural equipment do you offer growers under the brands? In our Wisconsin market, under the Mahindra and JCB equipment lines are a variety of types of equipment, from tractors and skid steers to wheel loaders,

excavators, and more. We also offer many types of attachments to go with them—mowers, tillers, and any other accessories that growers would need.

Talk about manufacturing quality, and why you take pride in what Fairchild Equipment offers. We take pride in offering brands like JCB and Mahindra, which are known for their manufacturing quality.

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Then, after the sale, our product support teams take pride in quickly resolving any issues that not only satisfy the customers' needs but also meet the standards that Fairchild Equipment expects from our employees and vendors.

One of our core values is "Customers for Life"—we want to know if there is an issue because we will fix it, and that's why our customers become partners for life.

Fairchild Equipment specializes in forklifts and material handling equipment, but is the agricultural umbrella wider than that, and with what implements? Tractors?

Fairchild Equipment has a long history of success in the material handling equipment field, especially with forklifts, though the range of material handling equipment offered is much broader, including rail car movers, yard spotters, professional floor cleaning equipment, industrial vacuums, and more.

The agricultural umbrella has been experiencing significant growth, which we expect to continue. Implements offered under our agricultural umbrella include tractors, skid steers, backhoes, telehandlers,



The Mahindra Model 8090 utility tractor with a 4-cylinder turbocharged, intercooled diesel engine and air-conditioned cab is mainly used for agricultural applications.

and more.

Because of this growth, we've been able to add dedicated space at several of our branch locations to show our available agricultural equipment, stock more parts, and provide more in-shop equipment service work, which has been very exciting for us.

We expect this growth to continue as we work to bring on more technicians and product support team members

throughout our footprint.

Do you offer both new and used equipment, and is equipment rental a part of the operation?

We offer all three of these options. While new equipment tends to be a large percentage of these options, we do run into a lot of low usage needs where used equipment makes more sense for our customers from a cash flow standpoint, so Fairchild maintains a large inventory of both new and used equipment.



Heath Anderson (second from left) is shown with 2023 Monster Jam World Finals champion Tristan England (center) in front of the JCB Digitron monster truck. The truck was designed in conjunction with the JCB engineering team and inspired by the company's iconic construction equipment.



From left to right, Jeff Martens, Dave Fox, and Matt Smazal golfed for Team Fairchild Equipment at the 2023 Spud Seed Classic, a fundraiser for the Wisconsin Seed Potato Improvement Association.



On the rental side of the business, we usually see seasonal needs as a large part of our customer requests and try to understand what we should keep on hand in our branches to satisfy the requirements of our customers and their applications.

Does Fairchild service equipment, and go out into the field for growers if they have problems, and if so, how important is that aspect of the business? Service is the

cornerstone of our business from my perspective. Our field technicians are the face of Fairchild Equipment to our customers, and I view them as key players in making us successful as a company.

While the field technicians are integral to the hands-on portion of customer service, we also have an extremely strong group of knowledgeable people at our branches who are capable

Above: Is it a coincidence that Mahindra tractor models are barn red? Perhaps not, as the agriculture segment is a large part of the company's (and Fairchild Equipment's) business.

of troubleshooting items over a phone call. This can potentially save time and money for our growers who value uptime during their busy seasons.

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How has Fairchild Equipment been able to expand and still retain a family atmosphere? From our humble beginnings in 1985 as a team of five offering a single forklift brand in Green Bay, to now serving five states with a range of world-class material handling brands, the journey hasn't always been smooth.

But, like any great football game, we've stayed committed, tackled every challenge head-on, and given it our all—values instilled by our founder, a former (St. Louis) Cardinals football player, Gary Fairchild, and carried on by his son, Chad, who now leads the company.

They've stayed true to the company's founding values: Family, Safety Always, Customers for Life, Employer of Choice, and Active in our Communities.



Fairchild Equipment general manager of the Construction & Agriculture Division, Heath Anderson says, "One of our core values is 'Customers for Life'—we want to know if there is an issue because we will fix it, and that's why our customers become partners for life."

Where are most of the company's 300 employees located? More than 200 are strategically located across the state of Wisconsin so that we can provide field service throughout the state where our customers are located.

How big a part of the business is agriculture, and what other businesses do you serve? Agriculture is a sizable part of our operation, especially in Wisconsin. With such a wide variety of equipment available, we serve a range of businesses, from home builders to landscaping companies, warehouses, and retail companies, to name a few.

What does Fairchild Equipment offer that maybe similar competitors might not? We offer a unique combination of brands and types of equipment compared to our competitors, with an ability to serve all types of implement needs, whether it is purchasing, leasing, renting, training, servicing or parts that our customers require. We provide parts and service for many

brands of agricultural equipment.

What do you enjoy about servicing the Wisconsin potato and vegetable growers? Our customers give us an opportunity to be employed daily. The farming community is a hard-working group, to say the least, and always enjoyable to do business with.

We are interested in hearing about how their season is going and enjoy the opportunity to be part of it, whether it is providing the parts they need to maintain equipment or helping provide maintenance or repair services for them.

The agriculture community is also very family-oriented in many cases, like we are, so to see different generations making an impact while carrying on the family name really motivates our team to help where we can along the way.

What do you most enjoy about your position? I think the most enjoyable part of this position has been the ability to assemble a team and refine our offerings to even better serve the

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needs of our customers and what I would like to see as representation for Fairchild Equipment.

We had some exceptional pieces in place already when I came on board, and it has been exciting to fill in the remaining pieces that can move us to the next level.

Are you mechanically inclined, and if so, do you get to keep your hands dirty? I don't think I've ever heard my name in the same sentence as "mechanically inclined." I do consider myself a very hard worker, though, and I am probably the person who you see behind the scenes getting the grunt work done or cleaning up after the mechanically inclined and skilled workers have completed their tasks.

What do you see as Fairchild

Equipment's position, or how has the company positioned itself in the ag industry? I feel that we have really positioned ourselves to be a key vendor to our ag customers.

With that being said, we will continue looking for opportunities to increase the number of technicians and product support team members we have on hand, as we know there are always new potential customers in our territories that we want to be ready to serve.

Where else would you like to see the company expand or improve? I would like to see us continue to grow within the agricultural industry by staying committed to our company values and focus on serving all our customers' needs—having the

Above: The JCB 3TS-8T track skid steer is a compact loader with a telescopic boom for reaching high and far, thus accessing hard-to-reach areas.

right piece of equipment for their requirements, whether they are looking to purchase or rent, and then supporting them with parts and service.

What do you hope for the future of Fairchild Equipment? My goal for our group is to continue bringing on the right people and really focusing on the culture that makes us a great resource for our customers and a great place to work.

A strong team within our sales, rental, service, and parts groups along with a heavy customer service focus is what I view as success. **BCT**



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