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## INTEGRA PLASTICS INCREASES WORKFORCE AND SPACE

By Emmeline Elliott,  
Contributing Writer

A restaurant will always need utensils, a greenhouse will always need pots, and, as Royce Quamen says, grain will always need tarps.

That necessity is one factor that helped Integra Plastics, Inc. meet the economic challenges brought on by the recession.

Integra Plastics provides geosynthetic products, services and equipment. It manufactures goods such as pond liners, grain covers and secondary containment for above ground storage, which is placed around fuel and fertilizer tanks, said vice president Quamen.

Several of Integra Plastics' customers put their orders on hold to wait out the recession, Quamen said, but some items couldn't be put off.

"A lot of our sales are in agriculture and that dropped a little bit, but you always have to cover grain," Quamen said.

Integra Plastics handled the recession in a number of ways, such as decreasing the inventory in a way that still fulfilled customer demand, Quamen said.

"We've seen customers looking at the competition more, so pricing got more competitive," Quamen said.

"We've been pretty lucky in being able to satisfy our customer base and still provide enough jobs," Clark Lee said, director of new business development at Integra Plastics.

The workforce at Integra Plastics had to be tightened for a time due to the recession, Quamen said. Twelve people were laid off in January 2009. Since then, all of those positions have been refilled, Quamen said, and an additional three more people have been hired. Integra Plastics now has a total of 55 employees.

The company has been looking to expand in other areas as well. The plant's office space will soon be remodeled to double in size so it can be merged with the Integra Plastics office that is currently located in the Washington Plaza, Quamen said.

Integra Plastics is also working on building up their new construction film business again, which they had started doing at the beginning of the recession, Quamen said.

"We're exploring expansion plans as we speak, but other than that the growth is going to hover in the 10 percent range" for the next couple of years, Integra Plastics president Mick Green said.

Lee said Integra Plastics may look into providing non-plastics related services and products that could be used by their same customer base.

Integra Plastics' confidence in their future plans is bolstered by the past support received from the Lake Area Improvement Corporation and in knowing they will continue to have the LAIC's support, Lee said.

"LAIC has been pretty key in allowing us to expand in different areas," Lee said.

And soon the company will have more to celebrate beyond its expansion plans. Integra Plastics will mark its 20th anniversary this December, Quamen said.

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Over the past few months we've been able to witness several positive economic developments take place in Lake County. Secure Banking Solutions (SBS) is planning to make their move out of the Heartland Technology Center where they had started their business just a few years ago and into a brand new 7,000 square-foot facility being built adjacent to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Diner. SBS has grown from a handful of entrepreneurs to a rapidly growing business that aims to employ up to 35 or more employees within the next few years.

Recently we were fortunate to be able to celebrate the South Dakota Associations of Rural Water Systems' open house and ribbon cutting as they have officially moved into the former Heartland Consumers Power District building downtown. This organization made Madison their new home and is very pleased with their new building and new location.

Last year we watched as the Industrial Park sprung up and added tenants such as James River Equipment and Heartland Consumers Power District, and now we're grateful to see that Lake County International is in the process of expanding their operations.

Of course, Prairie Village had another outstanding year. The Montongator Joe's Country Music Festival continues to grow along with the annual Threshing Jamboree held each August.

Another year and another record year for enrollment at Dakota State University. Combine the enormous enrollment increases over the past several years and the #1 ranking that the University has received 5-years consecutively and I would say that DSU is thriving.

These are just a few of the many areas that Madison has seen grow over the past few months and years. Given the undeniable fact that the nationwide recession has made economic growth near impossible, I am optimistic that once a return to economic "normalcy" returns that Madison will be poised for even greater growth and vitality.

Dustin Williams, LAIC President

## **POSITIVE OUTLOOK FOR 2010 HARVEST**

By Emmeline Elliott , Contributing Writer

The 2010 harvest is under way and a good change in the weather has improved the outlook.

With heavy rain subsiding and sun and wind drying out crops, producers had more opportunity to get in the fields recently. There were 6.4 days suitable for fieldwork for the week ending Oct. 3, according to the National Agriculture Statistics Service weekly crop weather report. That's a significant increase from the 3.6 workable days in the previous week.

Farm Service Agency farm loan manager Mark Stearns said soybeans are coming out dry with a mixed yield rate of average to above average.

According to the NASS report, farmers have harvested 25 percent of the soybean crop, compared to last year's 14 percent harvest at this time.

The same report said corn harvested for grain is 7 percent complete, whereas last year 2 percent of corn had been harvested. Ninety-one percent of corn silage has been harvested, up from 68 percent in the previous year.

"Most of the corn appears to be mature," Stearns said. He noted that the corn is drier now than it ever was during last year's harvest.

Farmers are harvesting at a normal to above-normal rate, Madison Farmers Elevator manager Mark Stoller said. They are working in much better conditions than last year, he said, and everyone is going at a fast rate with the good weather.

Stoller said beans should be done by Oct. 15. Much of the corn harvest will be done in October and should be finished in November, he said.

Some farmers are still contending with muddy or underwater fields. Stearns said drowned-out spots in the northwest part of the county are hurting averages in those fields.

Marcia Bunger, Farm Service Agency county executive director, said drying crops won't be a major issue if the weather continues to be nice, so farmers won't need to use as much propane as they did last season.

F & M Cooperative manager Paul Schultz doesn't expect a spike in demand for propane like what was seen last year. He said growers had a full crop season and corn should come out dry.

Scott Mundt, Dakota Ethanol general manager, said corn this year should be drier with higher test weights and lower levels of mold, unlike the lower quality of crops last year.

An early harvest such as this year will give farmers more time to do fall tillage and apply fertilizer for next year, said Helena Chemical Co. branch manager Jody Bergheim. He said spreading and tilling fertilizer in the ground is the best application method because it prevents runoff.

Mustang Seeds Inc. president Terry Schultz said the extra time will let farmers plan sooner for the 2011 crop and prepare for spring planting. Seed orders are coming in at a good rate, he said.

Farmers Ag Center has done strategic planning for the upcoming 2011 season and is looking at new seed varieties, agronomist Ryan

<b>Lake County Unemployment Percentage</b>				
2009	Labor Force	Employment	Unemployment	Rate
MAR	6,760	6,405	355	5.3%
APR	6,975	6,535	440	6.3%
MAY	7,000	6,520	480	6.9%
JUN	6,910	6,380	530	7.6%
JUL	6,780	6,365	415	6.1%
AUG	6,775	6,350	425	6.3%
SEP	6,765	6,375	390	5.8%
OCT	6,940	6,460	480	6.9%
NOV	6,770	6,370	400	5.9%
DEC	6,630	6,265	365	5.5%
2010				
JAN	6,445	6,055	390	6.0%
FEB	6,560	6,185	375	5.7%
MAR	6,630	6,250	380	5.7%
APR	6,680	6,370	310	4.6%
MAY	6,740	6,425	315	4.7%
JUN	6,475	6,160	315	4.9%
JUL	6,510	6,185	325	5.0%
AUG	6,525	6,195	330	5.1%

Source: Department of Labor website <http://dol.sd.gov/>

<b>Statewide Unemployment Numbers</b>				
2009	Labor Force	Employment	Unemployment	Rate
MAR	443,450	419,480	23,970	5.4%
APR	445,315	424,010	21,305	4.8%
MAY	448,315	424,010	21,305	4.9%
JUN	455,780	433,480	22,300	4.9%
JUL	457,660	436,415	21,245	4.6%
AUG	453,295	432,115	21,180	4.7%
SEP	445,590	425,950	19,640	4.4%
OCT	447,315	427,075	20,240	4.5%
NOV	444,275	423,175	21,100	4.7%
DEC	439,025	417,915	21,110	4.8%
2010				
JAN	435,375	411,745	23,630	5.4%
FEB	436,625	413,530	23,095	5.3%
MAR	440,030	416,635	23,395	5.3%
APR	443,800	423,965	19,835	4.5%
MAY	445,760	426,010	19,750	4.4%
JUN	451,925	432,735	19,190	4.2%
JUL	453,685	434,330	19,355	4.3%
AUG	450,670	430,985	19,685	4.4%

Source: SD Dept. of Labor at <http://dol.sd.gov/>

<b>City of Madison Building Permits</b>	
Month	Total cost
2010	
JAN	\$251,800
FEB	\$71,351
MAR	\$1,311,982
APR	\$1,754,278
MAY	\$4,786,700
JUN	\$473,754
JUL	\$309,470
AUG	\$212,050
SEPT	\$215,038

Source: City of Madison

<b>Lake County Building Permits</b>	
Month	Total cost
2010	
JAN	\$40,000.00
FEB	\$527,760.00
MAR	\$1,266,600.00
APR	\$844,322.00
MAY	\$1,753,503.00
JUN	\$1,010,100.00
JUL	\$1,761,501.00
AUG	\$501,218.00
SEPT	\$711,451.00

Source: Lake County Drainage and Zoning Department

Year	<b>South Dakota Taxable Sales</b>	
	Madison	Lake County
2006	\$118,599,046.72	\$143,640,842.55
2007	\$125,750,734.98	\$144,080,056.05
2008	\$148,626,228.84	\$159,181,770.17
2009	\$138,138,456.35	\$147,741,384.89
2010		
JAN	\$10,977,191.29	\$11,859,229.15
FEB	\$ 9,921,941.86	\$10,369,430.61
MAR	\$ 8,548,163.21	\$ 9,302,118.19
APR	\$ 9,010,415.58	\$ 9,710,740.92
MAY	\$10,025,779.13	\$10,819,999.63
JUN	\$10,024,654.99	\$10,915,006.90
JUL	\$10,173,581.69	\$11,326,282.07
AUG	\$10,680,333.00	\$11,819,624.91

Source: <http://www.state.sd.us/drr2/>

**NEWSLETTER GOING ALL DIGITAL FOR 2011**

Starting with the LAIC's next issue, the newsletter will be produced in .PDF format only. Currently available in .PDF online at <http://www.MadisonWorks.com> under the "LAIC News" tab, the October/November/December issue of the newsletter will be published in January 2011 and available online. All issues of the newsletter are currently available online.

We will also be sending the newsletter out via e-mail. If you would like to be added to the LAIC's newsletter mailing list, please e-mail Kari at [Kari@MadisonWorks.com](mailto:Kari@MadisonWorks.com).

Keppenman said.

Besides the good weather and harvest, crop prices are also looking up right now. "Prices are pretty strong considering we're at harvest time," Stearns said. Typically, prices are lower at harvest.

"Right now it appears the farmers should have a pretty good year financially," Stearns said. "It should be a positive year for ag suppliers."

"When the farmers have a good year, they spend their money in the community," Bergheim said. "It's good for all the area businesses."

That sentiment was echoed by many others in the ag supporting industry. "If they have a good year, everyone in town benefits from it," Campbell Supply Co. manager Les Bulick said. "Farmers are very important to the town of Madison."

With the results of a good harvest, some businesses will stock more inventory, while others may keep seasonal employees for a longer period of time. A few businesses have already built additions to meet consumer demand.

Stoller said it was a good thing the Madison Farmers Elevator made an investment in expanding its operation to better serve the customers and keep up with higher yields. Two 500,000-bushel bins were built this year, one in Madison and one in Ramona. The Ramona elevator also built a new receiving pit to increase the dumping capacity to 15,000 bushels per hour.

Jeff Bloom, co-owner of Lake County International, said the business is in the middle of a major expansion to completely remodel the facility. They are doubling the size of the building by adding 11,250 square feet to the service department and showroom.

"We'll have more inventory on hand to better serve the farm producers in Lake County and the surrounding area," Bloom said.

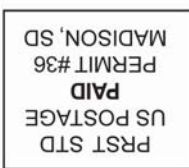
They will be looking to hire additional qualified service technicians as well, he said.

Bloom said Congress has reinstated tax incentives that, along with a great harvest, will "help farmers justify spending a few more dollars" on items that are part of raising crops.

Mustang Seeds anticipates selling more product for the 2011 crop. Terry Schultz said large numbers of acres didn't get planted this year due to rain, mostly in the northcentral and central parts of the state, and that land should be open for planting next year.

"We're going to see a significant increase in seed sales," Terry Schultz said.

All in all, the good weather brings a positive harvest outlook. Expect to keep seeing those combines rolling through the rows.



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Lake Area Improvement Corporation

