

This week's Tulsa Farm Show is proving there is nothing old fashioned about agriculture.

Take a baler that is remotely monitored with an iPad app, new and more

environmentally friendly tractors, and all that latest research and technology in seeds and crop

yields. The Tulsa Farm Show, which opened Thursday at the River Spirit Expo Center

at Expo Square, wraps up Saturday. The show, in its 20th year, includes more

than 300 exhibitors, livestock management seminars and demonstrations, and competitions for high school students

But it serves primarily as a way for farmers and ranchers to connect with

agriculture industry suppliers, who offer new tractors, fencing, tools and other products, and their

expertise. After two rough, drought-laden years, Oklahoma crop yields returned to strong levels in

2013. Cattle prices are high again because of cyclical market conditions, and ranchers are

looking to increase their herds. "This has just been a fantastic year for us,"

said Tom Martin, who runs two Enlow Tractor and Equipment locations in the Tulsa

area. "We get a lot of people that aren't full-time farmers but are 'gentlemen

farmers,' or who run landscaping companies. Those areas have done really well." Federal environmental

regulations are forcing tractor manufacturers to produce more efficient engines with less harmful emissions,

Martin said. New generations of tractors, which are more comfortable for the operators as

well, are attracting agriculture professionals. Martin said the Tulsa Farm Show is one of

the company's best opportunities to meet thousands of farmers and ranchers in one place.

The show had heavy crowds Thursday and Friday, and organizers were expecting another strong

turnout for Saturday. A rebound in the residential construction market has helped Enlow's business

as well. But a good year for agriculture is encouraging farmers and ranchers to

spend, too. Vendors from across the Midwest bring their wares annually to the farm

show, coming from as far away as South Dakota to sell products such as

corrals and the newest fertilizer technology. But dozens of other vendors are selling everything

from pickup trucks and cooking equipment to trailers and tools. Rustie Smith with Brashear's

Concrete Feed Bunks said the Tulsa show's December date allows the company to reach

ranchers at a time of the year when they are investing in products such as food troughs. Pittsfield, Ill.-based Bale Bandit was showing off its new baler, controlled by an iPad app that can monitor production, change output rates and even adjust parts wirelessly. The show also has its share of agricultural nostalgia, with a display of tractors from the 1930s and '40s from the Oklahoma Antique Tractor Association. Chris Hilton of Stillwater Milling Co. said the agriculture industry in Oklahoma continues to grow, despite disruptions from weather and other impediments. "It was a good year for ranchers because of the rain we got, but the numbers of cattle on ranches is at a low, too," Hilton said. "Of course that makes cattle prices high, but no one wants to rush out there and increase their herds too fast." Hilton said input prices — feed and fuel — are still high for ranchers, putting pressure on the industry to be efficient and discouraging many from over-investing now because a dip in prices or even higher costs could be devastating. Kyle Arnold 918-581-8380

Tulsa Farm Show Where: River Spirit Expo Center at Expo Square, 4145 E. 21st St. Admission: Free Hours: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday Subscribe to Daily Headlines Sign up! * I understand and agree that registration on or use of this site constitutes agreement to its user agreement and privacy policy.