

Title:

A Trip Back In Time To The Roots Of Farming

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Summary:

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Article Body:

Those who want to explore this country's roots may want to visit a group of destinations that showcase the role of agriculture-yesterday, today and tomorrow.

In 1836, John Deere, a blacksmith from Vermont, set up shop in the small Rock River town of Grand Detour, Ill. Convinced the sticky Midwestern soil required a special kind of plow, he forged one in 1837. His "self-polishing" plow grew in popularity and, as it did, so did the company that bears his name.

Today, visitors to the John Deere Historic Site can watch a blacksmith at work in a replica of the blacksmith's shop where Deere fashioned his historic plow. The site also features the home John Deere built, a gift shop and an archaeological exhibit that shows the site of John Deere's original blacksmith shop.

The John Deere Pavilion located in Moline, Ill. is considered one of the top five tourist attractions in the state and has welcomed guests from all 50 states and dozens of countries. It offers vintage and modern-day equipment and interactive exhibits devoted to the development of the company and agriculture around the world.

One exhibit answers a child's question about where food comes from, while a 40-inch touch-screen display offers visitors a vision of the future of agriculture and the challenges of feeding the global population of tomorrow. A feature film called "Anthem: A Song of the Land" salutes the dedicated work of farm families worldwide.

The adjacent John Deere Store is a one-of-a-kind retail shop offering hundreds of unique, officially licensed John Deere products.

Also in Moline, the John Deere Collectors Center is the primary resource for enthusiasts and collectors interested in the history and heritage of the company and the collection of John Deere tractors, equipment and memorabilia.

It includes a living history exhibit that replicates a 1950s era dealership, complete with a customer service department to answer questions about parts and manuals for vintage equipment. The Center also hosts auctions and seminars and has an active tractor restoration area.

Recently, these destinations instituted a facility rental program, opening up the attractions to those looking for a unique location to hold a special event, such as a reception or company meeting.

The company also offers event planners and local caterers who work with groups to plan parties. Other sites to visit include the Deere family homes and Deere & Company's World Headquarters.