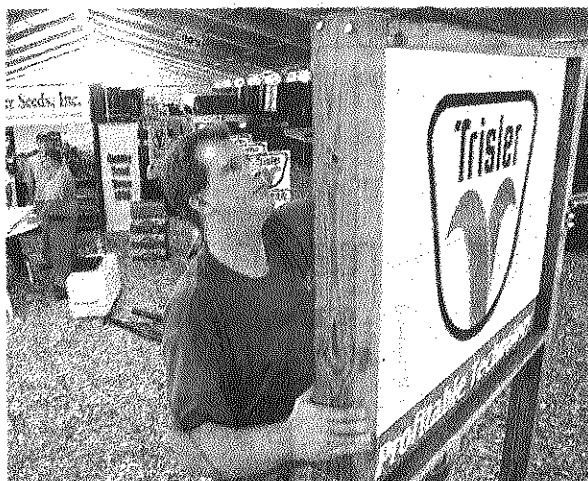


ELD THAT REAPS



boines at the Farm Progress Show in Decatur, Ill. Marketing companies find farmers expect a so-
edge about equipment. Photos by Kelly J. Huff | Lee News Service

FARMING IS CYCLICAL, BUT IN A BAD YEAR FOR THE ECONOMY, AGRIBUSINESS IS STILL DOING WELL.



Eric Suits, of Trisler Seeds Inc. of Fairmont, Ill., ad-
justs his sign at the Farm Progress Show.

based in Creve Coeur.

"We've been real fortunate to have a good specialty," said Osborn. "That specialty is booming right now."

A 2006 survey by Chesterfield-based trade publication AgriMarketing found companies spending \$615 million a year promoting products and services for agricultural producers. Spending on marketing rose 15 percent in 2007, with growth of 10 percent to 15 percent anticipated this year, estimated publisher Lynn Henderson.

Down on the farm, incomes are spiking. The Agriculture Department projected that net U.S. farm income would reach an all-time high of \$87.5 billion in 2007, up 48 percent in one year. "The farm economy was strong" in 2005, Chuck Conner, deputy secretary of agriculture, said in a recent interview. "Obviously, it's

Old bank, and grow with U.S.

Wells Fargo turns around Horace Greeley's advice in crossing the country.

By Jerri Stroud
ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

St. Louis' history may be tied to westward expansion, but Wells Fargo, a bank known for pioneering business in the West, sees it differently.

"The Arch for us isn't the gateway to the West," says Paul D. Kalsbeek, executive vice president for the southeast region of San Francisco-based Wells Fargo. "It's the gateway to the East."

From a handful of people about eight years ago, Wells Fargo's presence in St. Louis has grown to about 260 employees, with more than 1,000 in Missouri. The bank occupies an upper floor of the Interco Tower in Clayton and needs more space. Other St. Louis-area offices are in Chesterfield and St. Peters.

Wells Fargo has 1,943 employees in 69 Illinois communities, with the biggest concentrations in Chicago and Springfield.

But you won't see the Wells Fargo name on a bank branch here. In contrast to other big banks that have dotted the area with retail branches in recent years, Wells Fargo is going after businesses and other wholesale customers.

Kalsbeek was among the first hires when Wells Fargo began developing a St. Louis office about eight years ago. At one point, part of the office was being run out of Larry Kirschner's living room in Ladue. Kirschner, a senior vice president, helps companies manage their exposure to foreign currencies.

Kalsbeek, formerly with Commerce Bank, manages a group of bankers who focus on serving middle-market companies, which can include some of the