

Combines require specialized service in the off-season

By **BRENNA WIEGAND**
For the Capital Press

Many more things are involved in maintaining a combine than a tractor.

“There are a lot of mechanical parts inside a combine that are wear items,” said Carl Laux, Papé Machinery’s South Willamette Valley sales manager. “Specialty items on a combine that need to be looked over include the threshing rotor, concave, feeder house and threshing shoe.

These are joined in recent years by new fuel systems that meet federal emissions standards and, like many other newer machines, the need for regular software updates.

“Twenty years ago we would never have thought of such a thing,” Laux said.

Papé’s winter service package encourages customers to schedule checkups and repairs during the winter when both parties are not as busy and to head off untimely breakdowns next season.

Laux said winter service involves an extensive check-



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Papé Machinery service coordinator Mike Gerard removes safety shields on a John Deere 9650 combine. With their specialty parts and innovations, combines require more involved maintenance than most other machines.

list — about four pages of different items.

“There are a lot of different things we do with those combines,” Laux said. “A combine goes out and does

all the grass seed, grains, small greens — all the specialty items we have in Oregon. Our biggest crop is grass seed, then the clover and then there are just a ton of specialty seeds. We’ve done sugar beet seed, coriander, flax, it’s an endless list of all these small specialty crops. We’re very different from the Midwest that grows corn and soybeans.”

There’s maybe 400 acres of coriander in the valley and 200 acres of spinach between Eugene and Portland,” Laux said, “but we have to go combine them with these machines.

“The older the machines are, the more expensive they are to repair,” he added. “That’s why as dealers we encourage farmers to trade their equipment often and avoid some of those larger repair bills as those machines age.”

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