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CNH plant in East Moline to be demolished this month

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EAST MOLINE -- This month, the CNH Global Case-IH plant in East Moline will begin to come down, brick by brick.

CNH Global said Monday it has contracted with Champion Environmental Services to demolish the building over the next 14 months, making way for new development.

"That was something we'd asked them to do once they decided not to stay here," said Steve Verdick, East Moline city administrator. "This is 150 acres of riverfront property we see as having very good potential for development. Really, we're looking to the future."

The 2.4-million-square-foot complex at 1100 3rd St., East Moline, covers 156 acres, including 54 acres under roof. The building is too small to accommodate future manufacturing, Mr. Verdick said, and there are also asbestos problems.

The original facility was built in 1927 to house Farmall tractors made in Rock Island until they were shipped across the U.S.

At its peak, the CNH Global Case-IH plant employed 4,300 workers on three shifts, producing 40 to 50 combines a day. Other implements produced included corn pickers, grain headers, farm elevators, corn heads, corn shellers, field choppers, blowers, forage harvesters and mowers.

In 1999, Case and New Holland merged to form CNH Global. In June 2000, CNH officials said they would close the East Moline plant and transfer the combine assembly to Grand Island, Neb. In August 2004, the last combine rolled off the East Moline assembly line.

CNH will probably do a market analysis of the area, which is bordered by residential- and manufacturing-zoned



Photo: Gary Krambeck

The CNH Global Case-IH plant (in back) in East Moline will be demolished sometime this month. The 2.4-million-square-foot building will be removed to make way for future development.

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parcels. Then the land will be marketed by a real estate company and sold, probably in smaller parcels, Mr. Verdick said.

The area is zoned for manufacturing, but could be changed. "Believe me, if the right project comes along, that won't be a problem," he said.

He said the city is open to possibilities for the area. "We'd like to see some new jobs here, good-paying jobs," he said. "We'd like to see some retail operations. Certainly there's an opportunity for residential. There's lots of ideas out there."

"We still have a long way to go, but this is a great first step," Mr. Verdick said.

Champion plans to use concrete in the plant for aggregate fill, and sell the steel, copper wiring and infrastructure equipment in secondary markets.

[back to top](#)

