

ROOTED IN TRADITION

Hubner Industries Harvests Quality, Kindness

Symone C. Skrzycki

Established in 1972 and family owned, Hubner Industries is a leader in the seed production, treatment, packaging and distribution industry. With a workforce of approximately 100, it has production fields in western Indiana (headquarters: West Lebanon) and eastern Illinois (Fairmount and Muncie).

“We’re a contract seed production business,” explains marketing and community outreach lead Michayla Hubner. “We produce corn and soybeans. We plant the corn, detassel it and then harvest, treat and bag it (prior to) shipping it off to the farmer to plant.”

“What’s really neat is – our business is very seasonal. During the winter, we’re inside getting corn ready to go out to the farm. And then spring comes and we’re about to start planting. Some of us get to go out to the field and plant corn or beans and be involved in that process. We have the detasseling in the summer going on in the field, but also rebagging and retagging and stuff like that happening at the plant. Employees’ jobs change and no job is the same throughout the year. I think a lot

of employees enjoy that.”

Hubner Industries’ in-house lab can independently test each production lot to monitor seed quality, with inspections taking place at every stage of processing.

“Our lab quality is very important to us,” Hubner emphasizes. “We want to make sure that the farmer is getting high-quality product, and we are testing throughout the whole process of production.”

Among capabilities are tetrazolium testing to identify issues associated with damage from mechanical, insect, freeze, heat, seed coat check, disease, immaturity and sprouting.

The organization’s commitment to quality is matched by its dedication to local communities.

“What makes it so special is the people,” Hubner asserts. “We love helping out our community and getting our employees involved.”

Cultivating talent

Hubner Industries has on-site storage capacity for 315,000-plus square feet of temperature and humidity-controlled warehouse space for finished products and 58,000 square feet of cold storage across its three sites.

Nurturing the next generation of agricultural professionals is a priority. Its internship program is open to high school juniors and seniors as well as college students.

Interns get a taste of life in the

agricultural field through tasks such as lab testing, planning various events, contributing to an internal newsletter, hosting facility tours for elementary and high school students and attending career fairs.

“Now, if it’s a really busy time of year, we’re trying to ship seed out to the farm,” Hubner notes. “They’re helping pull loads and get corn ready to go out to the farm or stacking bags and things like that. They’re helping with anything that needs done.”

Hubner gained experience at the organization as a college intern prior to joining the team. She’s not the only intern-to-employee success story.

“That makes me so excited when that happens,” she declares. “One we just hired started with us his senior year of high school. He worked for us through college. We got to see him grow in his career and now he’s graduated and working here full time.”

A sense of belonging

Hubner Industries has always been family oriented.

The business was founded 54 years ago by Michayla Hubner’s great grandfather, Robert L. Hubner, and his son, Robert Lee Hubner. Today, the latter owns the business with his children, Doug Hubner and Rhonda Berry.

The West Lebanon site in Warren County, which employs approximately 45 workers, continues the tradition of families working side by side.

“We have two fathers and sons that work here,” Hubner reflects. “The dad has been here for 15 years. When his son graduated high school, he came here. We’ve got our production manager – his son interns for us and really enjoys it. It’s so neat to see people bring their kids (into the business).”

The notion of family extends beyond blood. Holiday parties, employee appreciation events and more create camaraderie. There’s even a popcorn machine at all locations – made with Hubner Industries’ own products – for snacks.

Community endeavors help unite the team. One example involves partnering with Hope Springs Safe House in Attica.

“They’re a domestic violence shelter for women,” Hubner notes. “They help put women and their children in a safe place and help them get jobs. It’s near and dear to our



Summer interns explore future careers while gaining hands-on experience.

heart that we help them.”

Every fall, Hubner Industries participates in Hope Springs’ pie-baking event.

“They have a big fundraiser in November and take volunteers to help make pies,” Hubner comments. “They cut the apples and home make the crumble topping. It’s a whole assembly line. We go there and help bake the pies. Anybody in the community can buy a pie and that money goes back to Hope Springs.

“We buy a pie for every single one of our employees for Thanksgiving.”

And team members often buy presents during the holidays for children in need through the Salvation Army’s Angel Tree program and the Toys for Tots initiative.

At the fair and on the field

Hubner Industries supports aspiring athletes and their families by sponsoring baseball and softball teams. In addition, the company donates its popcorn to a local Warren County high school to sell at its concession stands at



A tour at Hubner Industries gives students a taste of the farming industry.

sports events ranging from football and swimming to tennis, basketball and others.

4-H is another powerful platform. Hubner Industries supplies T-shirts for various 4-H fairs.

“That’s one of the biggest things we do,” Hubner remarks. “At the Purdue Extension office (in Warren County), the 4-Hers design the front of the shirt and our logo goes on the back of the shirt. Every (Hubner Industries) employee in their family gets a shirt as well, so we get those orders together and submit it to a local T-shirt place. The week of the fair everybody gets to wear their 4-H T-shirt.

“We also have a booth we set up at the fair and talk to people in the community about what we do.”

Employees are encouraged to pursue personal passions in giving back.

“If somebody comes to us and wants to volunteer at something, we’re more than happy to let them do that. If things are going on in the community, I’ll advertise them in our employee newsletter and (tell them) if it’s something they’re interested in to let us know.

“We love giving back to our community in any way we can.”

RESOURCE: Michayla Hubner, Hubner Industries, at www.hubnerindustries.com

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