

Ozzy ready for the world

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Two of the world's biggest multinational companies have expressed interest in distributing worldwide an agricultural machine designed and manufactured by an Innisfail company.

Australian branches of industry giants Mitsubishi and Marubeni have contacted IBS Engineering Supplies about future exports of the Ozzy 400, an all-weather, all-terrain 4-wheel drive power ladder.

IBS manager, Mr Bill Seawright, said negotiations with Marubeni are in the early stages, with interest shown from company branches in Kuala Lumpur, Costa Rica, North America, Chile, Spain and Columbia.

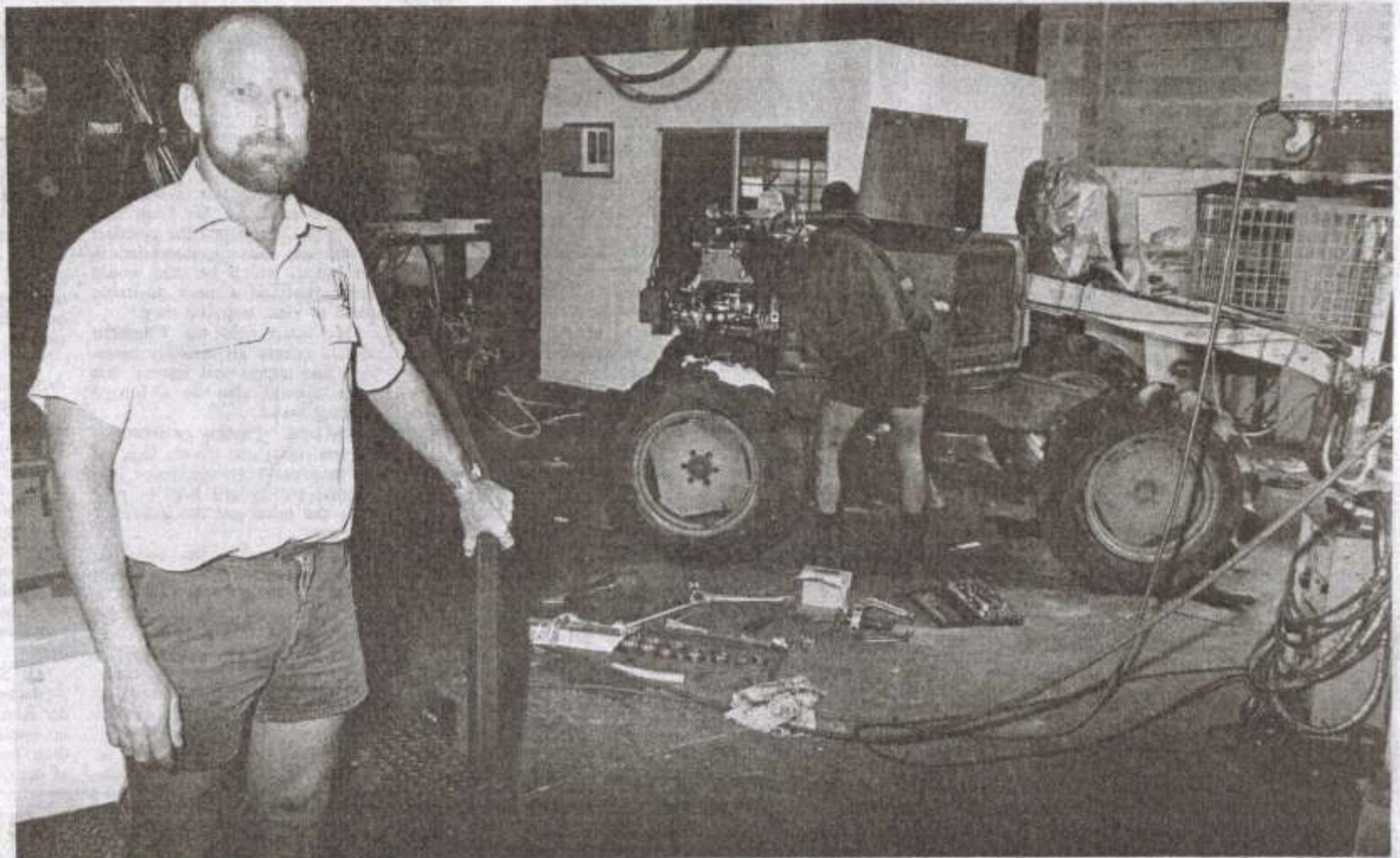
He said distribution deals with Mitsubishi had been put on hold for six months while the parent company in Japan dealt with the effects of the Kobe earthquake.

Mr Seawright said he had not expected international interest in the product.

"We haven't gone looking for a market because there is such a big demand locally, which we are having difficulty keeping up with," he said.

"It will be even harder to keep up with an international demand, so we have started to develop new production methods and a production line," Mr Seawright said.

Developed for the regions banana industry by Mr Seawright and another two locals, Larry



• *Surging ahead . . . IBS Engineering Supplies have gone from selling one bearing in their first week of business to possibly sealing international distribution deals of the Ozzy 400 (early model in background), and manager Bill Seawright acknowledges the task ahead if the company is to keep up with local and international demand.*

Green and Alex Seawright, the Ozzy 400 has taken off locally with 23 machines out in the field and another 18 on order.

Mr Seawright said IBS put out 12 units every three months, which was not enough to satisfy

local demand. "We will have to look at expanding and setting up a production plant if we are to cater for international distribution," he said.

"IBS will conduct a local and national market survey to gauge the de-

mand for the Ozzy 400 in the near future, but until now the company has had to look no further than locally for the demand," Mr Seawright said.

The Ozzy 400 was designed in 1993, with the first prototype com-

pleted in December of that year. By December 1994, 17 had been sold to local banana farmers, and a further 24 were sold to March this year.

The machine is ideal for bagging bananas, and operates similar to a cherry picker. The Ozzy

400 is just one of the agricultural machines IBS manufacture, with others including a granule applicator for bananas and a fruit picker which won Mr Seawright the Inventor of the Year award in 1988.

He is currently work-

ing on a new project for the agricultural industry.

Mr Seawright started the business with his father in 1979, and sold one bearing in his first week of business.

Since then, the company has diversified into manufacturing.