

## **Birchdale Harvesters Win ‘Logger of the Year’ Award**

Hasbargen Logging has been named “Logger of the Year” by the Minnesota Sustainable Forestry Initiative® Implementation Committee (SIC).

The award was presented to the three brothers of the Birchdale-based company at the Minnesota Logger Education (MLEP) Conference April 12 in Tower, Minnesota. The Logger of the Year Award recognizes outstanding independent logging contractor performance.

The foundation of Hasbargen Logging is the three brothers who own and operate the company: Kit, Clarence and Denton. The company had its roots with the brothers’ great-grandfather near Menasha in central Minnesota. In the mid-1939s, the family moved to the Birchdale area, along the banks of the Rainy River on the Canadian border. Kit, Clarence, and Denton purchased the company in 1986 from their father.

The brothers represent the 4<sup>th</sup> generation involved in the logging industry; members of the family’s fifth generation currently work for the company!

“The Hasbargen Logging operations not only ‘talk the talk,’ but ‘walk the walk’ of the standards set forth by Minnesota’s logging profession and the SIC,” said Ben Bagdon, coordinator of the Duluth-based Minnesota SIC and director of forest policy with Minnesota Forest Industries.

Sustainable forestry practices have been a hallmark of Hasbargen Logging for its half-century of existence, long before the term even became a buzzword for practices that preserve ecological diversity in the woods - and even before Minnesota established its Voluntary Site-Level Forest Management Guidelines in 1999. The company has been diligent in conducting its timber harvests with sensitivity to forested areas along lakes and rivers, wildlife habitat, historic and cultural resources, and soil productivity.

The brothers’ commitment to the land is evidenced by the number of private landowners, consulting foresters, and forestry agencies alike requesting Hasbargen Logging to conduct their forest harvest activities. It is not unusual for the company to return to a private landowner woodland to assist with building hiking trails or habitat for deer and other wildlife, when requested.

The company operates a variety of logging equipment, including three feller bunchers, three stroke delimiters, as well as several grapple skidders and loader/slashers. The right mix of equipment, combined with the experience and expertise of the company’s woods crew enable Hasbargen Logging to carry out the

right harvest prescription for each harvest job, balancing high production with a keen eye on sustainability.

Hasbargen Logging is not only committed to sustainable forestry practices; it is committed to the business world of timber harvesting and to the local communities in which they do their business. The company is a member of the MLEP which promotes excellence in logger training and practices; Kit has served as the organization's president and on its board of directors.

MLEP Executive Director Rachel Peterson lauded the company's operations and commitment to public and private forests. "Hasbargen Logging's attention to sustainable harvest practices, to the safety of its employees, and to the people of the communities in which they work and live are testimony to the brothers' commitment to Minnesota's woodlands," said Peterson.

Kit Hasbargen is also a member of the Minnesota Timber Producers' Association, serving on its board of directors, executive committee, and as president. The brothers also represented Minnesota loggers on the committee that generated the 2014 Report on the *Competitiveness of Minnesota's Primary Forest Products Industry* which is being used by the governor, state legislature, and state agencies to guide their decision-making in regards to forest policy.

All three brothers have served on the local volunteer fire department and are active in local business community affairs, including speaking to the general public about forestry and logging, and to school groups. The company hosts students at their logging sites.

**Kit Hasbargen, one of three brothers who own Hasbargen Logging, accepts the Logger of the Year Award from Roger Johnson, chair of the Minnesota Sustainable Forestry Initiative® Implementation Committee.**

