

Remembering John Buhler: Founder, Philanthropist, and Family Man

Winnipeg, MB – The Buhler family, Buhler Industries family, and community are mourning the loss of John Buhler, a beloved entrepreneur and philanthropist, who passed away on December 21, 2024, at the age of 91. His legacy as a hardworking businessman, visionary, and philanthropist who transformed both industry and community will be cherished for generations to come.

John Buhler's remarkable journey began in 1969, when he purchased Standard Engine Gas Works in Morden, Manitoba. Renaming it Farm King Ltd., he began the process of building what would become a significant force in the agricultural machinery industry. His vision and dream of building farm machinery—particularly tractors—came to fruition as he slowly but steadily expanded the company.

A pivotal moment in Buhler's career came in 2000 when he purchased Canada's last remaining tractor-manufacturing plant, renaming it Buhler Versatile. His entrepreneurial prowess was evident as he transformed his humble beginnings into a manufacturing empire, establishing Buhler Industries, a name that became synonymous with innovation in the agricultural sector. In 2007, after nearly four decades of growth, Buhler made the decision to sell a majority stake in his company to Russia's Rostselmash Ltd. for \$195 million, marking the end of one chapter in his business journey.

Grant Adolph, Chairman of Buhler Industries remarks, "I and many others had the pleasure of knowing and working for John at Buhler Industries. I remember his enthusiasm and drive fondly, as well as his caring and conscientious nature. John was pivotal in building and maintaining the incredible impact of ag manufacturing in Manitoba and Canada, including being solely responsible for saving the Versatile brand and factory or we would not exist today. He will be greatly missed."

Although he stepped back from the day-to-day operations of Buhler Industries, his impact on the company and Canadian agriculture remains undeniable. Throughout his career, Buhler became known as much for his community spirit as for his business acumen. Together with his wife, Bonnie, John Buhler dedicated himself to philanthropy, supporting numerous institutions and causes across Winnipeg. Their charitable donations to hospitals, post-secondary institutions, and human rights organizations has shaped Winnipeg, inspiring countless others to contribute to their communities.

John Buhler's achievements did not go unnoticed. He was inducted into the Manitoba Business Hall of Fame in 2014. In 2012, he was appointed a Member of the Order of Canada, and the year prior, he received a degree for distinguished achievement from the University of Manitoba. His honors were a testament to the profound impact he made on both the business world and the community he loved.

Buhler Industries extends our heartfelt condolences to his family and friends. The Buhler family and the community have lost a remarkable man whose impact will be felt for generations to come. John Buhler's memory will live on in the institutions he helped build, the lives he touched, and the dreams he inspired.