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## **Tread-To-Tread Demonstration Shows Firestone Farm Tire Traction Superior To Michelin Entry**

**Des Moines, IA (Mar. 6, 2008)** – Firestone Agricultural Tire Company (FSAG), a division of Bridgestone Firestone North American Tire, LLC, today unveiled a demonstration video that reaffirms its position as the “leader in the field” when it comes to tractor tires.

“Firestone’s “Tread to Tread Traction Demonstration” is a direct response to Michelin North America claims that the traction of the Michelin® Agribib® R-1W is equal to or better than that of the Firestone® Radial All Traction 23 R-1”, said Ken Allen, Vice President of FSAG.

“The Firestone 23 degree R-1 tractor tire has consistently outperformed the 45 degree R1-W,” explained Allen. “When Michelin released a video challenging the superiority of Firestone tires and our 23-degree bar design, we decided to conduct a test to set the record straight.”

### **Fair and Equal Demonstration**

Prior to the demonstration, tractors of the same brand and horsepower were weighed, ballasted to compensate for weight differences and tested on a dynamometer for equal power. The rear tires also were inflated at the same pressure, among other measures.

“We took a scientific approach to this demonstration. Our primary goal was to make it fair and equal so we could objectively eliminate all potential for bias,” Allen said. “We wanted this to be a comparison of tire traction and nothing more.”

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In early November 2007, in a harvested corn field near Slater, Iowa, the Firestone Radial All Traction 23 R-1 went tread-to-tread with the Michelin Agribib R-1W. The tires competed in the same field, at the same time, with the same-sized tractors.

The demonstration involved two drive tractors and an anchor tractor. A cable was attached to the drawbar of one drive tractor, run through a pulley on the anchor tractor, and attached to the second drive tractor. Starting side by side, running in the same gear and at the same RPM, the two drive tractors pulled the anchor tractor along.

"In this configuration, each drive tractor pulls an equal load, yet can float in relation to each other, depending on the 'grip' or 'slip' of the tires they run on," explained Allen. "It's really a tug-of-war – the tractor with the most traction steadily gains more cable and pulls ahead of the other tractor. The difference in traction is measured by the distance between the two tractors at the end of the run."

To ensure a fair outcome, the Tread-to-Tread demonstration covered two quarter-mile runs, with the rear tires switched from one tractor to the other between the runs.

### **Results: Firestone Wins – Twice**

"The Tread-to-Tread Demonstration results were what we expected, based on competitive tests at the Firestone Test Center in Columbiana, Ohio," Allen said.

"After the first quarter-mile run, the tractor with the Firestone Radial All Traction 23 tires finished 37 feet, 4 inches ahead of the tractor with the Michelin Agribib R-1Ws. Despite being mounted on the other tractor for the second run, the Michelins didn't fare much better. The tractor fitted with the Firestone tires finished 36 feet, 8 inches ahead of the tractor with the Michelins.

"When we averaged the two runs, the Firestone tires out-pulled the Michelins by 37 feet – more than 12 yards – during a quarter-mile run."

Allen said the difference is important to the people who buy farm tires.

"Because farm operators have significant amounts of time, fuel and money at stake when they make their tire choices, we decided to conduct a controlled demonstration that compared performance of the two tires. We believe that our Tread-to-Tread Traction Demonstration does just that."

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## Tread-to-Tread Demonstration Video

A video report on the Tread-to-Tread Traction Demonstration is being distributed to all Firestone dealers. The video and supporting printed materials are available for downloading from the Firestone Agricultural Tire web site at [www.firestoneag.com](http://www.firestoneag.com).

### **About Firestone Agricultural Tire:**

*Firestone Agricultural Tire (FSAG), a division of Bridgestone Firestone North American Tire, LLC, is the largest manufacturer of agricultural tires in North America. FSAG's Des Moines, Iowa, facility is located in the heart of America's farm belt and is a leading supplier of the North American original equipment market and supplies about 40 percent of the replacement market with agricultural tires. FSAG also has approximately 50 percent of the market in harvesting and planting machinery. The FSAG testing facility, located in Columbiana, Ohio, is the only facility in the world solely dedicated to the development and testing of agricultural tires. In addition to agricultural tires, FSAG markets and sells forestry, ATV and construction tires.*

### **About Bridgestone Firestone North American Tire, LLC:**

*Nashville, Tenn. -based Bridgestone Firestone North American Tire, LLC (BFNT) is a subsidiary of Bridgestone Americas Holding, Inc., whose parent company, Bridgestone Corporation, is the world's largest tire and rubber company. BFNT develops, manufactures and markets Bridgestone, Firestone and associate brand tires. The company is focused on wholesale and original equipment markets, supplying passenger, light truck, commercial vehicle, off the road, motorcycle, agricultural and other tires to its customers in North America.*

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