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**Media Contact:**

Joel Harris, Co-Director  
The Ag Startup Engine  
(319) 530-2757

[joeletharris@icloud.com](mailto:joeletharris@icloud.com)

**AG STARTUP ENGINE INTRODUCES NEW SPONSORSHIP LEVELS**

**HIGHWAY EQUIPMENT COMPANY BECOMES THE FIRST PLATINUM  
HARVESTER SPONSOR**

**AMES, Iowa, May 21, 2018** – [Ag Startup Engine](#) (ASE), at the Iowa State University ([ISU](#)) [Research Park](#), announced that it is welcoming their first Platinum Harvester Sponsor, [Highway Equipment Company](#). The Cedar Rapids company, in business since 1939, is excited to support ASE's efforts in early seed financing agricultural entrepreneurs and Iowan innovation.

The Ag Startup Engine effort was launched two years ago to help address two fundamental gaps that prevent agricultural startups and entrepreneurs from being more successful in Iowa: early, seed-stage investment and organized mentorship from renowned Iowan and Midwestern entrepreneurs.

"Now more than ever, we need entrepreneurs and innovators in the agricultural industry," said Rocki Shepard, President and CEO of Highway Equipment Company. "It's no secret agriculture is facing immense change, from pushes towards sustainability to meeting the demands of the world's ever-increasing population. We are very excited to support the ASE and its efforts to support and mentor the individuals who will help take our industry to the next level."

"The Platinum Harvester Sponsorship supports the operational efforts of ASE," said Joel Harris, co-director of ASE. "Including providing subsidized services like office space at the ISU Research Park to startups in the portfolio. We're excited to bring Highway Equipment Company into our processes for evaluating and assessing opportunities in agtech."

Other sponsor levels are available including *Silver Planter* and *Golden Grade*.

Over the next two years, the Ag Startup Engine hopes to add five-to-ten more agriculture technology startups to the portfolio.

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### About the Ag Startup Engine

The Ag Startup Engine (ASE) and Ag Startup Engine Fund are private entities with the goal of fostering problem solving and new ideas in the Agricultural Technology (AgTech) space. Learn more at [www.agstartupengine.com](http://www.agstartupengine.com)

### About Highway Equipment Company

Highway Equipment Company (HECO) is a family-owned business located in Cedar Rapids, Iowa and is the manufacturer of industry-leading **New Leader** crop nutrient applicators and **Hi-Way** deicing spreaders and road maintenance equipment. Since its inception in 1939, HECO has maintained one goal: to build the best. For close to eight decades, HECO has continuously achieved that goal through its commitment to innovation, integrity, and most importantly, well-being for all. For more information, visit [www.highwayequipment.com](http://www.highwayequipment.com).