

MILTON HERALD

Presidential candidate visits South Forsyth

Kenyan lawmaker examines plow

November 16, 2006

A presidential candidate in Nairobi and Kenya's 2007 election took a side trip to Forsyth County while visiting Atlanta recently.

Raila Odinga, a minister for Langata, Nairobi, was in Atlanta to lead a forum focusing on how Kenyans living in America can become agents of change and participants in Kenya's socio-economic growth and democratic development.

He came to South Forsyth with other Kenyan lawmakers to visit Dean Machinery, where owner Walter Dean is manufacturing the Plotmaster. The all-in-one multi-cultivator was designed specifically for low income areas in places like Kenya. It can be pulled by draft animals, small tractors or motorized vehicles.

Dean developed a program on his own with a western Kenyan community to test the plow. It reduced labor in the field by 60 to 80 percent compared to hand tilling and plowing. The efficiency allowed them to plant more crops.

Odinga expressed interest in the Plotmaster while visiting, Dean said.

The candidate was imprisoned for eight years without trial starting in 1980. His success in leading a rejection of a change to his country's constitution that favored its current leaders led to his dismissal as minister of Roads, Public Works and Housing.

Amadou Toumani Toure, president of the west African nation of Mali visited Dean Machinery last December. Ambassadors and other representatives of African countries also have visited the South Forsyth company to examine the Plotmaster.



Walter Dean of Dean Machinery, center, describes the benefits of his company's Plotmaster to Kenyan lawmakers, including presidential candidate Raila Odinga, third from right. - SPECIAL/Herald (*click for larger version*)