



By Russ Pankonin

The Imperial Republican

Stan and Phyllis Jones of Benkelman announced this week they have sold their Top Hat Ag aerial spraying operation in Imperial to Rob and Rebecca Aslesen.

Aslesens took over the day-to-day operations of Top Hat in both Imperial and Benkelman in mid-May. They are currently leasing the Benkelman location from the Joneses.

The couple has named their business Aerial Farm Services.

In 2006, Top Hat Ag sold their fertilizer and ag chemical division to Helena Chemical Co., and contracted with them to do their aerial spraying. The Joneses' son, Shawn, manages the Helena operation.

Rob has been associated with Helena for the past five years and is familiar with both business. He is an aerial ag pilot and will be joined again this summer by Tony Neal, who has worked with Top Hat.

Aerial Farm Services purchased two of Top Hat's jet turbine airplanes, with are equipped with GPS guidance.

The Joneses will continue to man Aerial Farm Services' Benkelman office. When needed, Stan Jones will provide aerial backup with a third turbine plane they retained ownership of.

Aslesen graduated from the University of North Dakota last year with a degree in finance. The couple were married recently and will be making their home in Imperial.

Phyllis Jones said this week they are exciting to have a young couple come in to take over the business.