



RAPID ASCENT

LANDSCAPER DOUBLES SIZE IN TWO YEARS

Jensen Gardens, a landscaping company based in Springfield, Nebraska, has experienced remarkable growth since its inception in 2004. Started by two brothers over 20 years ago, Jensen Gardens has steadily grown into a well-established tree farm and landscape company, offering design, construction, and maintenance services throughout Eastern Nebraska and Western Iowa.

What began as a small operation launched by Nate Jensen has blossomed into a thriving business with nearly 100 employees, 13 construction crews, and five maintenance crews.

Nate quit college and was already working as a landscaper when Nick decided to join forces with his brother in 2003.

“When I graduated high school, my parents were like: ‘Where do you want to go to college? What do you want to do?’” Nick recalls. “And I decided that I would

rather dig holes with my brother. I had a decent amount of money saved up from doing landscape work during my high school years, so we became partners.”

The company has evolved from a small operation with five employees to 97 today, while establishing a major presence in the greater Omaha market for both residential and commercial landscaping. Sales are projected to reach \$17.5 million this year, according to Nick, who serves as chief financial officer.

Jensen Gardens’ growth has been rapid and sustained, driven by a clear vision and a commitment to quality. In the early days, the company operated out of a small storage unit. In 2006, they purchased a new property, which enabled them to significantly expand their operations.

“More recently, we built a new facility and moved in two years ago. Operating from this larger office has been a big improvement and an integral part of our growth,” Nick says.

“Once we switched to track machines and saw how much better they were, we’ve never gone back,” and everybody loves the backup cameras on our newer machines.”

– NICK JENSEN, CO-OWNER
JENSEN GARDENS

Over the last two years, Jensen Gardens’ employee roster has doubled from about 50 to where they stand today. Despite the challenges that come with rapid expansion, Jensen Gardens has experienced continuous growth year over year, Nick says, adding that it’s a balancing act to properly manage the business.

“One of our biggest hurdles has always been hiring the right people,” he says. “The more we can have machines do things, the better off we are. But at the end of the day, you still need people to do the work and operate the machines.”

In 2020, long-term employee Eric Gustafson joined the ownership team. “It was a no-brainer to bring Eric into the ownership side of the business,” Nick says. “He’s been a huge part of our success.”

A legacy of excellence

Founded on the brothers’ passion for landscaping and a commitment to quality, Jensen Gardens has steadily built a reputation for delivering top-notch services. The company operates across various sectors, with nearly an even split between commercial and residential construction. Whether it’s

planting a single tree in a customer’s yard or managing a multi-million-dollar commercial project, Jensen Gardens brings the same level of dedication to every job.

With a 20-acre nursery and tree farm on-site, Jensen Gardens also manages the entire lifecycle of their plants, from planting to maintenance, ensuring the highest quality for their customers.

Jensen Gardens also installs fiberglass pools and paver pool decks. On those jobs, a large Cat® excavator is rented to lower the pools into the ground.

During the winter months, the company shifts gears to snow removal, utilizing its fleet of Cat machines to keep operations running smoothly. Jensen Gardens provides commercial snow and ice removal management services to many well-known commercial property owners,



JENSEN GARDENS

Location: Springfield, Neb.

Employees: 97

Dealer: NMC

Cat® equipment Spotlight: 252B3 Skid Steer Loader, 259B3 Compact Track Loader, 259D3 Compact Track Loader (19), 299D3 Compact Track Loader, 301.7 CR Mini Excavator, 301.7D CR Mini Excavator (2), 303.5 E2 Mini Excavator



Nick and Nate Jensen



corporate office buildings, retailers, shopping centers, industrial properties, governmental facilities, health care facilities, retirement communities and subdivisions throughout the greater Omaha metro area.

Cultivating a positive culture

A key element of Jensen Gardens' success is the company culture it fosters. Despite the rapid growth, the company has remained committed to creating a positive, energetic, and fun environment for its employees.

The company hosts regular events such as cornhole tournaments, and offers profit-sharing, and performance-based rewards. It shares financials with employees, and recognizes a "crew of the month" for highest productivity. This focus on transparency and teamwork has created a strong sense of camaraderie among employees.

"Rewind back to 2004, and if you told

me that in 20 years I would be talking about company culture all the time, I would have said just shut up and get to work," Nick says. "But it's an important part of what makes us successful."

Cat® machines indispensable

Central to Jensen Gardens' operations is its fleet of Cat machines, which have become indispensable tools in their day-to-day operations. With 21 Compact Track Loaders, four Mini Excavators, and a variety of other equipment, these machines play a critical role in everything from tree planting to patio excavation and construction. The company plants thousands of trees each year, and Cat machines are vital in making the process more efficient.

"We started out as a plant company, so our most used attachment is our Cat auger for planting trees," Jensen says. "We use our compact track loaders and mini excavators for the construction

side of things, including planting trees, grading, digging, and excavating."

The versatility of the Cat machines enables Jensen Gardens to tackle a wide range of projects. Their Cat 259 Compact Track Loaders are small enough to maneuver in tight residential backyards, but powerful enough to handle heavy materials like pallets of pavers and retaining wall blocks. The low ground pressure exerted by these machines ensures that the company can maintain high productivity even in challenging underfoot conditions.

"Once we switched to track machines and saw how much better they were, we've never gone back," Nick says.

"And everybody loves the backup cameras on our newer machines," he adds. "We tend to work in really tight spaces, such as small backyards enclosed by a fence. Our operators have to maneuver close to a house, stairs, or a raised deck, and when

you're doing as much work as we do, you're, something is bound to happen. But we have a lot less of those moments with the backup cameras on our Cat machines—they're super helpful."

A strong partnership

The success of Jensen Gardens is closely tied to its longstanding relationship with Nebraska Machinery Company (NMC), their trusted Cat dealer.

"I remember when we were just starting out and we only had one skid loader, and it got stolen," Nate Jensen recalls.

"We were devastated, as we had a large residential job planned that day. I called our NMC rep, Ryan Keiser, and he delivered a skid loader to the jobsite that morning. He basically saved the day for us. That's just an example of the depth the NMC team has on their bench. When one machine breaks down, we get a

loaner. Uptime is very valuable. And not a lot of places can accommodate that."

Adds Nick: "NMC has never given us a reason not to buy a Cat machine," Nick remarks, highlighting the exceptional support and service Jensen Gardens receives. Whether it's a quick phone call to order new equipment or resolving a warranty question, the relationship is built on trust and mutual respect.

"We don't have to negotiate price. They drop the machine off, and I mail a check. It's a non-issue," he says.

This seamless partnership has been crucial in enabling Jensen Gardens to focus on their work without worrying about equipment downtime.

"Ryan Morgan runs the shop now at NMC," Nick says. "He used to be the technician who would come out here

on the service truck. I've had his phone number ever since then. I've been around him for a long time—it's like we all kind of grew up in the business together. If I ever have a problem, I just call him, and he helps me resolve the issue."

Jensen Gardens' willingness to take on new challenges has been a driving force behind their growth. Whether it's bidding on large-scale projects or venturing into unfamiliar territory, the company is always ready to push the envelope. This fearless attitude has enabled them to tackle projects that others might shy away from, always with the confidence that they will find a way to get the job done.

"Our simple mantra is 'Just do it,'" Nick says. "We always find a way to complete the work and make our customers happy." **OTJ**

