



2022 NATIONAL INVENTORS HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE

Born: July 10, 1894

Died: Aug. 19, 1980

Primary Connection:

- Valmont Industries (purchased the rights to Zybach's invention in 1954)

Education:

- No formal education beyond the seventh grade

Key Memberships/Awards:

- Nebraska Business Hall of Fame: Member, 2017
- American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers: Historic Landmark, 1993
- Irrigation Association Industry: Achievement Award, 1973

10 Things You Need to Know About

Frank Zybach

Inventor of Center-Pivot Irrigation

U.S. PATENT NO. 2,604,359

1. Zybach was born in 1894 in Lafayette, Oregon.
2. He learned blacksmithing and a love of metalworking from his father.
3. At an early age, Zybach began developing several inventions designed to lessen the manual labor required of farm workers.
4. His first patent application, in 1920, was for an automatic, driverless tractor guide.
5. Zybach also developed an automatic transmission for automobiles that came very close to being purchased by the Chrysler Corp.
6. He was a farmer in Colorado when he decided to work on a new form of sprinkler irrigation.
7. Zybach and a business partner sold the exclusive manufacturing rights to the center-pivot irrigation system in 1954 to the Valley Manufacturing Co. (now Valmont Industries).
8. When he created the center-pivot irrigation system, Zybach never realized how his invention's crop circles would transform the landscape of the Midwestern and Western United States.
9. He died in 1980 in Columbus, Nebraska.
10. Zybach had 10 U.S. patents.