ASK THE FARMER WHO OWNS ONE

"Owner's Report" On Corn, Soybean Planters

Are you satisfied with your corn-soybean planter? How could it be made better? What steps have you taken to cut down on the number of trips through the field? Have you modified your planter in any way? What methods have you come up with to simplify filling seed, fertilizer and insecticide boxes?

These are some of the questions we asked planter owners in an effort to highlight those planters that perform with flying colors and to pinpoint the "lemons" that fail because of poor performance, or failure of the dealer or company to provide service.

Here's how the survey shaped up:

"Deere should have put replaceable brass bearings on the gauge wheel arms," says Terry Stangohr, Howard, S. Dak., about his 1978 **Deere** 7000 planter.

• Lonis Vaessen, Sublette, Ill., is pleased with his 1993 **White** 6100 planter. "It has low maintenance and accurate seed placement. One improvement would be to make the air pressure adjustable from the cab of the tractor. When filling the planter with seed, I use a gravity box with a 55-gal. drum - cut in half - hung under the side chute, sticking straight out from the side. I left one end of the barrel in so I have something to scoop my 5-gal. plastic pail against. For one-pass planting, I pull the planter behinds a 15-ft. Dyna-Drive."

• "Seed placement could be better but I'm satisfied otherwise," says Donald W. Holland, St. Joseph, Mo., about his 1994 **Deere** Max-Emerge II air planter. "It does a good job no-tilling in bean or corn stubble without any fancy coulters."

• "I've had good luck with my 1990 **White** 5100 12-row although the monitor could be better," says Roger Franklin, Eldon, Iowa. "I put a liquid starter fertilizer system on it and also added trash clearing wheels. I plant on ridges so I don't do any field work in the spring."

• Mitch Jackson, Hazel, Kent., owns a 1995 **Deere** 7300 for planting corn and a 1994 **Deere** 750 no-till drill for beans. "I get good penetration with the 7300 planter in no-till ground because of the adjustable down pressure springs. The 750 drill also penetrates well for no-till. We plant in 7 1/2 in. rows. One improvement on the drill would be to connect the front set of openers, seed tubes, and wheels with the back set so that the front is more rigid when it is in the up position and with a lot of down pressure.

"If I was going to do corn and soybean planting with one machine, I'd use a Black Machine toolbar with Kinze units because I like the way you can plant 12-rows or 30-in. corn or 15-in. bean rows, and all units are on the ground all the time."

• "My 1994 **White** 6100 delivers seed gently and accurately, and does an especially good job spacing seed in the row. My only suggestion for improvement would be to make it easier to empty out the planter, such as on the Case-IH air planter where you only have one seed box," says Leo Panning, Napoleon, Ohio.

• "Our 1990 **Deere** 7200 is especially good for planting beans. We now plant in seeds per foot rather than pounds per acre, and seed size is no longer a problem as it once was. In the past, small seed was planted too thick and large seed too thin. Small seed actually reduces costs per acre," says Paul T. Nelson, Vermillion, S.Dak. "They could improve the V-press wheels. I've had many bearings go out and have tried to change the amount of down pressure applied to the press wheels but that doesn't seem to make much difference.

"To eliminate a trip through the field with my sprayer, I changed from placing a 15-in. band to 100% broadcasting of grass herbicides. I just raised the bander and then adjusted the angle, and installed new spray tips."

• "The snap-locking pins on the depth wheels on each row sometimes come loose when planting in standing corn stalks. Otherwise, we've been happy with our **Case-IH** 900 planter," says Gerald Vande Kamp, Kellogg, Iowa.

• Robert Frantz, Warsaw, Ind., owns a 1991 **Deere** 750 drill. "It penetrates well but grain runs out in the ends of the hopper first so there should be sensors hooked to the end rows. I modified the drill with a chain affair that goes from the center top yoke on my 3-pt. hitch down to the tongue of the drill that I can lift a little to help get through soft ground. I like it.

To load seed, I bought an auger that attaches to the back of the drill and runs off the tractor hydraulics. It's made by Auger systems, 5626 N. St. Rd. 301, Craigsville, Ind. 46731 ph 219 597-7309. It works good."

• "Vacuum seed placement is very accurate and the planter is built heavy," says Mark Schlaud, North Branch, Mich., pleased with his 1993 **Deere** 7240 8-row. "I added a Rawson 3-coulter no-till system. We have dry fertilizer and liquid fertilizer mounted on it. I added a cross auger for dry fertilizer. We make one pass through the field with this planters. It's the best no-till planter we've worked with."

• "I modified the gear ratio drive locks for faster gear changes on my **Deere** 7000 3-pt. hitch planter," says Donald Burton, Glen Arm, Md. "Some days I change gear ratios 6 to 8 times per day as I change to different type seed. I can change ratios in just 30 seconds now. We use this planter for conventional tillage, min-till, and no-till."

• "Our 1991 **Case-IH** 900 does a good job in nearly all conditions. Seed placement could be better but we've made no major modifications except to add Martin row cleaners for no-till," says Robert Lionberger, Middletown, Mo.

• J. Byron Kinsinger, Cambridge City, Ind., likes his 1981 **Deere** 7000. "It's done a good job every year. I rebuilt it about 3 years ago with new bearings, disc openers, fertilizer coulters, and drive clutches. We use a hopper wagon with a Parker auger on it to fill fertilizer. We replaced the flighting on the auger last year with a new cupped auger, also from Parker, so it can be used on bulk beans with no damage. We've used the auger since 1975 with no rust. We clean all our equipment completely after use and they spray with oil or keep them painted and in the shed. Greatly improves equipment life."

• Gary & Justin Eden, Iowa City, Iowa, have a **Deere** 7200 12-row vacuum planter mounted on a Black Machine 15/30 toolbar. "This one planter plants 30 or 15-in. spaced rows and you can change spacing in minutes. You can mount almost any planter units on it and do an excellent job in either no-till or conventional tillage. We've owned both White and Deere planter units and wish the Deere we have now was a pressure system rather than a vacuum system. We feel air pressure keeps the planter units operating clean. With the White system you don't have to use seed talc powder in the box.

"We've added 1-in. wide, 12-flute coulters and also Schaffert seed closing wheels to help close the seed slot in wet conditions. They work well and improve stands. We've been no-tilling corn for 15 years.

Also, we designed and sell the E-Z Fill seed handling system. It's a 100 bu. hopper on wheels (larger sizes available) with a hydraulic-drive, bristle auger that folds back for transport. Features a spring shut-off for downspout and long hydraulic hoses to make hookup easy. (Gary Eden, E-Z Fill, 5465 Taft Ave. S.E., Iowa City, Iowa 52240 ph 319 351-5845).

If we were looking for a new planter, we'd probably buy another Black Machine but I understand Case-IH is coming out with a new multiple row spaced no-till planter. Deere has a new 15/30 planter, also. Narrow row beans are here to stay, and so is reduced tillage."

• "We put a catwalk on back of our 1985 **IH** Cyclo air planter so we can back up a truck to the planter and walk right onto the planter. We also installed no-till coulters on the planter," says J.William Verdun, Odell, Ill.

• "I'm well satisfied witih my 1993 **Deere** 7200 6-row planter. It plants consistent with accurate seed placement. I'd buy another one," says Ernest A. Swift, Bath, N.Y.

• Don Wesch, Arcola, Ill., uses a 1992 **Kinze** 2200 for beans and a 1981 **Deere** 7000 for corn. "I'm satisfied with both. Deere should put the hoses and cylinder markers outside of frame so they're easier to maintain. Also, we added a chain drive

"The **Crary** Piggy Back Planter conversion kit I used last year to plant corn and sunflowers with my 1991 Deere 750 no-till drill isn't perfect but it works well," says Paul Mahoney, Appleton, Minn. "The system consists of planter boxes that attach to the back of your drill and a Crary air delivery system. You disconnect the drill's drive and connect it to the add-on planter units.

"In planting 600 acres of corn and 100 acres of sunflowers in 30-in. rows, I found that seed depth placement in no-till was absolutely ideal. However, it's not as accurate in a modified tillage situation, because so much downpressure on seed boots is required. Also, seed spacing was inconsistent.

Nevertheless, I believe the system is going to take off for a couple of reasons. First, it offers the flexibility of no-till or minimum till in one piece of equipment without a major purchase. What's more, this year I plan to use the system to plant two soybean varieties - one solid seeded, one rowed - in the same field. Researchers say that's one way to overcome iron chlorosis and phytophthera problems which are rampant in my part of the country. If this system can take care of those, it'll be worth every penny of the $500-per-row conversion cost." (Contact: Crary Co., P.O. Box 849, West Fargo, N. Dak. 58078; ph 800 247-7335).

New Monitor For Planters, Drills

"Our new state-of-the-art seed monitor for planters and drills is more versatile than any other monitor on the market," says Rich Follmer, Progressive Farm Products, Hudson, Ill.

The computerized monitor can be used to sense seed populations on up to 70 rows at a time. It also lets you monitor populations of individual rows. A graphical display can be used with the monitor, allowing you to easily read seed populations on a bar graph.

"It tells you how much seed you're planting in each row and allows you to compare populations among all the rows, unlike conventional seed monitors which show only one row at a time," says Follmer. "The graph provides an instant view of all rows at once and lets you watch the seed populations move up or down by row.

"The monitor has a key pad that allows direct data entry, allowing you to make adjustments. For example, you can set high and low seed populations on the monitor so that it will beep whenever you plant too much or too little, even if you haven't run out of seed. You can also block the monitoring capability of individual rows so that if you're planting point rows and remove seed from some of the row units, the monitor won't beep. Or, if one sensor isn't working, you can block the monitoring of that row so that you can continue to plant without having to listen to the beeping noise."

The monitor also is available with optional integrated hydraulic drive capability and optional integrated flow meter capability.

The monitor sells for under $3,000. The graphic display fits 8, 12, 16, and 24-row planters and sells for under $800.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Progressive Farm Products, Inc., Rt. 1, Hudson, Ill. 61748 (ph 309 454-1564).