



Home-Built Planter Plants No-Till Or Conventional

Delaware farmer William Parker, of Harrington, designed and built his own planter for conventional and no-till corn and soybeans. The one planter can plant conventional, no-till, wide rows, or narrow rows."

His biggest home-built planter stretches out just over 25 ft. wide to accommodate eight planter boxes spaced for 38-inch corn rows. To convert it for soybeans, he attaches five more planter boxes, making it a 13-row planter.

The planter is equipped with International planter units mounted on a toolbar Parker built from scratch, a 500 gallon herbicide tank, and two 110-gallon tanks for liquid fertilizer.

Parker has a tractor and trailer equipped with a 2,500-gallon water tank, and a special set of pumps for filling up with chemicals and fertilizers in the field. "I can do a complete fill up and get back to the field in 10 minutes," he says.

Another feature of the farm-made planter is the simple hydraulic system that runs the row markers and the folding mechanism with the same cylinders. Says Parker: "We can

fold up to go through a gate or down a road, then unfold in the field without wasting any time."

For no-till planting the planter has rolling coulters to cut through trash, double disk openers mounted ahead of each planter box, followed by ribbed covering tires.

Parker, who has an agricultural engineering degree, designed his planter for efficiency. He can plant up to 100 acres a day, depending on the type of field, soil, and weather conditions. A lot of the time saving comes from the quick tank filling system and the easy folding mechanism.

By adding extra planter units on the toolbar, the machine is quickly converted for planting soybeans in narrow rows.

Parker crops over 2,100 acres and manages a 100-cow dairy herd. He's not interested in building his planter for commercial sale, but is willing to give tips to anyone interested about how it works and about no-till cropping in general. Contact: William Parker, Route 3, Box 138, Harrington, Del. 19952 (ph 302 398-3722).

Harvest Ear Corn With Your Combine?

A Minnesota dairy farmer has been harvesting ear corn with his combine for the last 5 or 6 years. It eliminates one piece of equipment and salvages a corn by-product, but there also are other benefits.

"This way, we get more bulk and fiber in with the grain, and that's important to heavy-producing dairy cows," explains Joe Stransky, of Owatonna. "The corn and cob mixture is more palatable, and we have less trouble with fat cows and twisted stomachs."

Stransky adjusts his combine so that he retains half of the cobs which are blown into the wagon with the shelled corn. The adjustment consists of: (1) speeding up the cylinder and moving it a little closer to the concaves so the cobs can't go through; (2)

removing the top sieve; and (3) opening up the bottom sieve. This breaks up the cobs and holds back about half of them.

Says Stransky: "Combining is faster than picking and shelling. We can combine 25 acres in the same amount of time that we can pick 10 acres. After we started doing this, we sold our picker."

Stransky's combine is a model 6600 John Deere, but he says it will work on other brands. This method could probably also be used with rotary types made by International, New Holland, White or Gleaner.

Stransky has a few other tips for farmers who would like to combine their ear corn:

The corn should be harvested at about 25-27% moisture. It is put through a roller mill before

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Some of the best new products we hear about are "made it myself" innovations born in farmers' workshops. If you've got a new invention or favorite gadget you're proud of, we'd like to hear about it. Send along a photo or two, and a description of what it is and how it works. Is it being manufactured commercially? If so, where can interested farmers buy it? Are you looking for manufacturers, dealers or distributors?

Harold M. Johnson, Editor

Octagonal Barn Easy to Build

"You can build it yourself without any of the special equipment needed to build a pole barn. It's attractive and, for smaller farmers, can make feeding livestock easier without going to the expense of automated equipment," says Ted Tucker, Lincoln, Mass., who de-

signed and built his own octagonal barn.

Half of the 30 ft. dia. barn is used to house his horses, and the other half is used for storage. Tucker also added a hay loft which holds 250 hay bales. The cupola at the top of the barn has glass windows. Tucker put pulleys on the windows so they can be easily opened or closed.

He built his octagonal barn from rough sawn lumber, using a telephone pole for the center support. The loft is designed so hay can be dropped directly into the horses' mangers. The basic design, he says, could be scaled up to whatever diameter desired.

Do-it-yourself construction plans for Tucker's octagonal barn are available for \$3.00 from: FARM SHOW Followup, Octagonal Barn, COUNTRY JOURNAL, 130 Main St., Battleboro, Vt. 05301.

being blown into a Harvestore. Stransky uses a distributor under his blower to keep the light cobs from separating to the outside of the structure.

Stransky says that this corn and cob feed could also be put up in a conventional silo, provided it can be fed out with a forage unloader with a sweep arm.

For more information, contact: Joe R. Stransky, Route 4, Owatonna, Minn. 55060 (ph 507 451-1181).