

"Best & Worst" Trash Wheels

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them so they remove residue without moving soil."

"Depth setting is very important when planting corn into corn to prevent plugging," says Bruce Glick, Hartsville, Ind., about the **Martin** row cleaners on his Deere 7200. "On Deere planters, I strongly recommend using Deere or Yetter's cast boot for liquid fertilizer placement rather than the standard tube, which allows a lot of splash on the row cleaners causing dirt to stick and making adjustment difficult. We've run the trash wheels only one year and are fairly impressed with the durability. We had some difficulty installing them since clearance was tight on the planter. However, once installed they did provide better seed-to-soil contact by eliminating trash. The row cleaners were very impressed with the way the row cleaners moved clods out of the way on min-till ground."

• Gary Schroeder, Blandinsville, Ill., fitted his IH 800 Early Riser with 1990 **Yetter** trash wheels. "I'm satisfied but in 1993 we experienced the need for the first time for a quick adjustment. But we didn't need it enough to pay the price Yetter asks for that option. One improvement they need to make is to make the center bolt easier to remove. I have two wavy coulters mounted ahead of the 7 by 7-in. toolbar to fracture the root zone."

• "We were impressed with how well our 1992 **Martin** row cleaners worked in rocky ground on our Kinze 8-row planter," says Kintzle Farms, Inc., Coggon, Iowa. "They

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made an update in 1992, replacing the dust caps on the bearings because rocks were knocking off the original ones. They made the change at no cost to me. I've used the row cleaners in ridge-till, no-till and conventional-tillage. They work best planting no-till in soybean stubble and ridge-till on old corn rows."

• Chuck Ulitch, La Moille, Ill., has used **Dawn** trash wheels on his Deere 7000 6-row narrow planter for two years. "I use them mostly to plant no-till corn after soybeans. They work well. I know my stands have been better and more consistent since I started using them. The first year I used them I made a yield comparison and found I had a 10 bu. per acre boost. You couldn't see it from the combine, but it showed up on the scale. However, they don't always work so well on untouched corn stalks on narrow rows. Also, I have to adjust them so they don't dig too deep and gouge out the soil."

"I've also had problems with residue balling up on the drive chain. Some of my neighbors made shields to solve the problem. The company has come out with staggered wheels which may help."

"I don't use any coulters with my row cleaners but I replaced the disc openers on my planter with Acra-Plant units. They are notched and are always cutting and making a seedbed. I understand Dawn has new coulters attachments to apply liquid starter

fertilizer. I might try them."

"Last year we did a side-by-side comparison of corn planted with and without row cleaners," says John Pagenkopf, Neilsville, Wis., who mounts **Martin** row cleaners on his Deere 7000. "For our test, we planted into sod that had been killed down with Roundup. Corn planted using trash wheels yielded 67.8 bu. per acre while corn planted with no-till coulters in the same field - with the same fertilizer and herbicides - yielded 61 bu., a 6.8 bu. (11%) yield advantage. In a second test on another field, corn planted with trash wheels yielded 129.4 bu. per acre compared to 121 bu. with no-till coulters, a yield increase of 8.4 bu. or 6.9%. That made our average advantage for trash wheels 7.1 bu. per acre, or 7.8%. The trash wheels helped corn get established earlier and I'm impressed with the way they clear away residue and allow better corn growth in heavily manured areas."

• "They do an excellent job," says Wayne Borgic, Pana, Ill., pleased with **Lanpher** row sweeps mounted on his Deere 7000 planter. "In order to mount the trash wheels, I had to add another bar to the front of my planter and lengthen the planter tongue since the fertilizer bar on my planter was already full with two openers. One suggestion for improvement is that the lift spring needs a bolt adjustment. It has a chain link adjustment now and one link is too short, the next link too long."

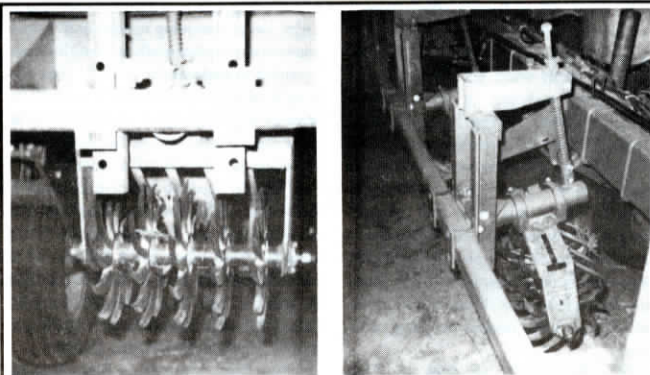
• "They do the job and adjustment is easy," says Samuel Ellis, Chrisman, Ill., pleased with the **Dawn** trash wheels mounted on his Deere 7000 planter.

• Allan Brooks, Markesan, Wis., has 1991 **Yetter** row cleaners mounted on his Deere 7200 12-row vacuum planter. "Yetter's Residue Managers are clearly superior to row cleaning discs and tines. However, compared to other trash wheels like **Martin** and **Dawn**, they leave something to be desired. They spear residue and wrap up. They're not strong enough on stoney ground and will bend. They also pick up small stones. I have two **Martin** row cleaners on my planter and 10 rows of **Yetter**. When I get a new planter, I will have 12 rows of **Martin** and no **Yetter**."

• Rich Follmer, Progressive Farm Products, Inc., Hudson, Ill., thinks no-till row cleaners are overrated. "They do a good job moving residue out of the row, but they don't do it until planting so the crop is still planted into cool, wet soil. We need a way to peel back residue over the row before planting in order to speed up early growth. We're currently testing a 'strip-till' toolbar that would create 8-in. wide strips while knifing in anhydrous ammonia plus P and K fertilizer. It could be used in the fall or early spring and would be sized to match your planter so you could plant directly into the cleared strips."

• "We're happy with **Lanpher** residue rakes. They lightly brush residue out of the way but don't disturb the soil," says Troy Runck, Lambertson, Minn. "We use them in both no-till and min-till and have had a 10 percent increased stand and better plant spacing in side-by-side comparisons with corn planted without trash wheels."

• "We mounted **Martin** row cleaners on two 13-row Deere 7100 planters two years ago. Performance is excellent in moving clods and residue and the construction of



Row Cleaners Made From Old Lilliston Cultivator "Rolling Baskets"

Rolling baskets off old Lilliston row crop cultivators work great for converting conventional planters to no-till, says David Schroeder, Coon Rapids, Iowa, who mounted individual gangs - each containing five tined wheels - in front of row units on his Deere 7000 8-row, 38-in. planter.

Schroeder bought a 4-row Lilliston cultivator at a farm sale for \$100. The cultivator was equipped with 8 rolling baskets, two per row. He cut the baskets off the gang they were mounted on and clamped them on the front bar of the planter, keeping the original mounting brackets and springs that applied down pressure on the baskets.

"They work great," says Schroeder. "We've used them for three years, planting 1,500 acres per year. We plant on top of old soybean rows where the soil is drier. We run the wheels about 1/2 in. deep to throw trash off to the side without removing a lot of soil. All five wheels are mounted in a row side by side just like they were on the cultivator. The wheels all turn together and are spaced about 2 in. apart. I can use a wrench to adjust the angle of each basket and can loosen a set screw to adjust the spring down pressure. Part of the original mounting brackets are mounted on vertical brackets that I made from angle iron. The vertical brackets clamp onto the bar

and have holes in them at different heights so that I can raise or lower the baskets for different field conditions. I set them lower in heavy corn stalks and higher in bean stubble.

"I had been using Deere no-till wavy coulters in front of the row units, but I didn't like how they worked in soybean stubble. The coulters just slit a groove in hard, dry soil, pushing stubble down into the furrow. The press wheels couldn't seal the furrow so seed that fell on the stubble popped out of the furrow. I looked at commercial intersecting trash wheels but couldn't justify the cost. I think our cultivator wheels do a better job than commercial trash wheels because they provide a cleaner, wider seedbed. Makes our herbicides work better."

"So far we haven't seen any yield difference between our planter equipped with rolling baskets and a no-till drill. We're now testing the baskets to see how they work for planting beans into standing corn stalks. I think the baskets could be adapted to any planter if you made different mounting brackets. My father-in-law put them on his Deere 7200 planter which doesn't have a front bar."

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these cleaners is excellent. We have 20-in. row spacing on our planters except for 30-in. spacing where the wheels run. The cleaners tend to push residue into the middles where it rolls over and tends to wrap around the center post of the brackets. I told **Martin** that they needed to include a coulters out front of row cleaners to help slice trash and green weeds, like **Yetter** and **Dawn** have on their new units. They assured me their wheels would not wrap but they can. We've also had some trouble getting the trash wheels to penetrate in hard ground. Our planters are heavy but the weight isn't in the right place," says Joe Dupree, Newport, Ark.

"The tougher the conditions, the better they work," says Harry Dixon, Belvidere, Tenn., who mounted **Martin** row cleaners on his Deere 7200 conservation planter in 1992. "We've used them successfully in no-till, min-till and conventional. My only suggestion is that the depth adjustment could be improved somewhat so they could be moved more easily and quickly."

"We've no-tilled for 6 years and we've tried bubble coulters, wavy coulters, and **Martin** trash wheels and we find the trash wheels to be superior. I've used them in bean stubble, corn stalks, and old alfalfa

stands that were first killed down with Roundup but were not completely dead yet. We've never had any trouble once the units were adjusted properly. The soil, however, should not be too wet," says Ted Shutwell, LaHarpe, Ill., noting that on wet bottom ground he sets the units to just brush residue out of the way without working the soil. "These units are well-made with Timken bearings and they show no wear after two years of use on my Kinze planter, putting in about 320 acres a year. We haven't modified them at all but this spring we put V-shaped closing wheels ahead of the press wheels to help close the slot. Wet conditions made it hard to close the furrow without these wheels."

"We put six sets of **Martin** trash wheels on our 12-row planter in 1992 and they worked so well, we put six more on in 1993," says Maurice Heard, Rockfield, Kent. "They give us a nearly perfect stand. The '93 models were improved over the '92 models. The dust caps don't fall off anymore. In 1991, I tried **Yetter** trash wheels but they were too light and didn't last. They also choked up with residue."