

Build A Planter The Way You Want It

At the recent Ohio Farm Science Review show, Precision Agri Services, Inc. and Harvest International teamed up to demonstrate that farmers can often save money with custom-built planters specifically designed for precision agriculture.

At the show several different colored row units, each representing a different manufacturer, were mounted on a Harvest International toolbar. The row units included ones made by Deere, Case IH, Kinze, and A-M-E.co.

"We are a dealer for Precision Planting Inc., and also handle Trimble and Ag Leader products, so we can mold different technologies to suit your planting needs," says Bill Lehmkuhl, Precision Agri Services, Inc. "We help farmers build their planter to fit their management style, depending on a number of factors including different row spacings, tillage methods, row unit attachments, etc.

"When you buy a new factory planter, you're often paying for components you might not want to use. As a result, many farmers start taking components off the

toolbar and modifying the planter to suit their needs."

Lehmkuhl says they ask a lot of questions to learn what each farmer wants. "We let you start with a clean toolbar and then add components onto it, such as electric drives, row cleaners, and different closing systems, until you've got a planter that's set up the way you want it."

A-M-E Co. — it stands for American Made Equipment — describes itself as a "premier manufacturer of planters with an emphasis on choice, performance, and quality" (ph 515 650-3911; www.A-M-E.co). The company builds its own toolbars, row units, wheel assemblies, and other planter components. An open design construction allows use of off-the-shelf attachments and accessories so you can get your planter set up exactly how you want. They offer 7 different base models that can be configured in 72 different ways.

Harvest International (ph 712 213-5100; www.harvestauger.com) says its toolbars accept most popular brands of tillage and planting attachments. They offer several different toolbar styles, including single



A Harvest International toolbar was fitted with colored planter row units at a recent show, each representing a different manufacturer. Precision Agri Services says farmers can save money with custom-built planters designed for precision agriculture.

or double bar, strip till, and narrow fold transport models that have only a 13-ft. 11-in. transport width. Toolbars up to 60 ft. wide are available. Harvest International is also bringing a row unit to market next spring.

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Wilson Land and Cattle Co. wanted to farm with fewer inputs, so they sold their corn picker and combine and now let cattle graze corn during the winter.

Pennsylvania Grazer Replaces His Corn Harvester With Cows

By Becky Gillette

"We sold our corn picker and combine, and that forced us to feed our livestock more cheaply. We're just a small farm with 205 acres, so it didn't make sense to own that equipment," says Russ Wilson, Tionesta, Penn.

Wilson Land and Cattle Company in Pennsylvania pastures multiple species of animals including cattle, sheep, hogs and poultry. Their goal is sustainable farming using innovative techniques, such as reducing inputs by using livestock as harvesters and keeping soil covered year round for better soil health.

Wilson has made a number of presentations to share what he's learned from grazing corn and winter crops during the winter, and explains why it makes sense: it saves time and money; it produces better feed and more pounds per acre of feed; it results in healthier livestock; and soil health is improved.

The bottom line is particularly impressive. With 9 1/2 acres of corn planted to cover

crops last winter, Wilson saved \$5,744.49. That doesn't count the nutrient value added to the soil by the cover crop, which an agronomist has estimated at \$2,197.

"In order for small farms to survive, we need to farm with fewer inputs," says Wilson.

Some people question how many ears of corn get tramped into the soil. But Wilson says cows are very good at harvesting all the corn. He once offered visitors \$100 for every ear of corn left by his cows, but none were found.

He's pleased with the overall body condition and health of his cattle. "We've had no health problems, and our cattle maintained or gained weight while grazing standing corn and cover crops," he says.

He avoids pesticides and herbicides on his farm, and recommends others who do use them to always check the labels. Some herbicides require waiting 60 to 90 days after herbicide application before the land can be grazed.

Pointed Shovel Easier To Use

The Earth Talon shovel is equipped with a 2-in. long point and extra wide foot rests so no matter which side of the shovel you step on, all the force goes onto the point. The design allows the shovel to penetrate easier and dig deeper, says Curry Tool Works, Chino Valley, Arizona.

The Earth Talon is available with either wood or fiberglass handles and both sell for \$39.95 plus S&H. A short-handled shovel is also available and sells for the same price.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Curry



A 2-in. long point and extra wide foot rests allow shovel to penetrate easier and dig deeper.

Tool Works, 2899 W. Conestoga Court, Chino Valley, Arizona 86323 (ph 928 237-3531; www.earthtalon.com).

Rebuilt Sharpshooter Shovel

"I wasn't satisfied with my commercial sharpshooter shovel so I replaced the shovel's original wooden handle with a longer one made of oil field sucker rod. The longer handle provides more leverage and added weight so it makes digging easier," says Michael Pounds, Corona, N. Mex.

The original sharpshooter shovel came with a thin, serrated shovel head and a riveted-on, 3-ft. long wooden T-handle. Pounds replaced it with a 5-ft. long one made from 1-in. dia. sucker rod.

"I use it to start fence post holes. Once I've set the post in the hole, I use the bell

end of the tool to tamp and pack the soil back into the hole," says Pounds.

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Shovel's long metal handle provides more leverage and added weight for easier digging.

Serrated Shovel Great For Many Jobs

The Kombi garden tool is a wedge-shaped shovel with 3 serrated cutting edges on each side.

"It's less labor intensive than other garden tools on the market," says Richard Fugel, Clarkesville, Ga. "It works great to cultivate, edge and weed flower beds, vegetable gardens, walkways, driveways, etc. You can also use it to cut brambles and light brush, and to dig holes for planting bulbs, seeds and plants."

Fugel's father invented the original Kombi back in the early 1990's and they've added different models over the years to make the shovel even more versatile.

All Kombi shovels are designed to be used in a sliding back and forth movement parallel to the ground. The shovel can be slid on top of the ground to shear off brush or used to cut weeds under ground level. It can also be used as an edger.



With 3 serrated cutting edges on each side, the wedge-shaped Kombi garden tool can be used for many jobs.

All models are available with either wooden or fiberglass handles. Wooden-handled models sell for \$32 plus S&H; fiberglass sell for \$50 plus S&H.

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