

## FARMERS "SOUND OFF" ON SLOPPY ENGINEERING

We asked randomly selected farmers to "tell it like it is" in pinpointing machinery design changes or improvements they'd like to see.

by Harold M. Johnson  
Editor

# Message for Manufacturers

... Your factory warranty setup favors large operators and isn't fair to smaller farms.

... Put zerks on all hard-to-get-at sealed bearings.

... Show list prices on all new machinery and equipment you display at fairs and shows, and in your advertisements.

... All tractor cabs should have a door on each side.

These "messages for manufacturers" are from randomly selected farmers scattered throughout the U.S. who responded to our FARM SHOW questionnaire. It invited them (1) to cite personal experiences involving "sloppy" engineering which made it difficult or impossible to operate or service a recently-purchased machine; and (2) to make suggestions on what individual manufacturers could do to improve specific pieces of machinery and equipment.

In some cases, design changes farmers suggested are already showing up in new models. For example, several farmers complained about poor cabs on their International Harvester tractors. The problem has been corrected on the recently-introduced IH line of Pro-Ag tractors for '77. And there were conflicting opinions. One farmer, for example, asked manufacturers to make tractor cabs taller so

"I'd like to see more grease banks used," says Ralph Strong, Union City, Mich. "A lot more checking and care of putting together at the factory would make farmers more ready to spend these large prices for machinery. I think it's about time those people who go on strike to get big money for putting machinery together put some pride in their job."

Here are complaints and suggestions which farmers responding to our survey directed to all manufacturers in general:

Frank Moriak, Clayton, Wis.: "I'd like to see the list price on all machinery that is on display at fairs and farm shows. It would be helpful

**"Some honest help would be helpful."**

for farmers and city persons as well." Several other respondents asked manufacturers to list prices of products in advertisements.

Wayne William, Triadelphia, W. Va.: "Factory representatives have two lines — either the piece of equipment is too old for them to stand behind (my problem tractor only had 2,400 hours on it) or, if it's a new piece of equipment, they spend their time convincing you that you're the only person who ever had this problem. I have been had so many times I sit on equipment rather than trade on new. Some honest help from manufacturers would be refreshing."

Jack Williams, Faison, N. C.: "All engineers should be required to do maintenance on equipment before selling it. Some repair and service work is very hard to get to. For example, it takes two men to put transmission fluid in my IH 966. The dip stick is poorly designed. And, you have to take a section of hood off to check, clean or change the air filter. The batteries are hard to remove. Most dealers I have ever bought a tractor from only deliver it. They do very little in explaining features of the tractor, adjustments, etc. Combines should have grease fittings you could service on a weekly basis instead of daily. All shafts should be coated with heavy grease at the factory so removal of bearings would be easier. I always coat shafts with grease when replacing bearings. Thus, when I have to replace that bearing at a later date, it is much easier to remove."

Paul Brubaker, Mt. Joy, Pa.: "All tractor cabs should have a door on each side."

Rolland Amundson, Newfolden, Minn.: "Quit making things to look good only. Make things easier to work on. Make manual chokes available on trucks and pickups. I would gladly pay extra for a manual choke on a new unit, plus they save fuel. I wish hydraulic pumps and valves would be easier to service and remove for repair. I like the AC idea of locating the pump on the outside for

the driver can stand up. Another asked for shorter cabs so new tractors will clear the doors on older machine sheds.

Biggest single gripe involved greasing problems in general, and "greaseless" bearings in particular.

"All greaseless bearings should be equipped so they can be given a small amount of grease once a year," says Frank Peter, Mt. Carmel, Ill.

Adds Harold Crawford, Potomac, Ill.: "My 16½ ft. Glencoe Soil Saver is next to impossible to grease."

"My complaint is with my Gleaner F combine," reports Marion Stover, Berrien Springs, Mich. "The zerks in the spline shaft on the drive axle are located in such a way that they can be greased only in one position. This is virtually impossible in a one-man operation."