

Smörgåsbord



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**Deere Unveils New
Air Planter, Combine**

Deere has finally introduced its long-awaited air planter. Billed as the Max-Emerge 2, it's equipped with an optional vacuum seed dispensing mechanism, designed and developed by Deere.

"It'll solve the problem some Max-Emerge owners have experienced with overplanting on steep slopes," one Deere dealer told FARM SHOW. Another felt it will be especially popular with soybean growers who feel it's important to get uniform spacing between individual seeds.

The new Max-Emerge 2 will also be available with the conventional finger-type mechanical seed dispensing system used on the original Max-Emerge. Other minor improvements on the new



model include narrower seed boxes which can be lined up side by side to plant 15 in. rows without having to remove the lids, a gear-driven fertilizer-insecticide dispensing system which turns on or off at the flip of a lever so you don't have to monkey with chains, a new screw-knob, dial adjust assembly for fast, easy adjusting of the output rate on fertilizer-insecticide hoppers, and quick-adjust levers for raising or lowering the furrow openers. Deere reportedly will be in full production of the Max-Emerge 2 by the summer of 1986.



Also new from Deere is the 4425 combine, which replaces the 4420. "Deere officials decided it wasn't economically feasible to mass produce two similar size combine models so they elected to drop the 4420," a Deere dealer told FARM SHOW.

"They opted for the 10-year-old 4425 which is a bigger seller in Europe than was the 4420 in the U.S.," explained the dealer, who felt that going with a 10-year-old model was "a giant step backward. Doesn't even have hydrostatic drive. Thankfully, it'll be the only model 25. There won't be any more, we're told, such as a 6625 or a 7725."

The 4425, manufactured in Mannheim, Germany, is powered by a 359 engine, positioned about 8 ft. behind the cab. The cab is mounted dead center over the header.

Ford Courting New Holland — Ford and New Holland officials have been quietly talking merger for more than two years. Former New Holland officials let it out of the bag.

Benson Lamp of Ford Tractor and H.G. McCarty from New Holland were mum on it at a recent summer ag engineering meeting. Neither denied the rumor.

The marriage makes sense. New Holland has a respected equipment line. Ford has a respected tractor. A merger could mean a bigger share of the ag market for both. (Pennsylvania Farmer.)

The Shakeout

From an anonymous source we learn that the population of this country is 200 million. Eighty-four million are over 60 years of age, which leaves 116 million to do the work. People under 20 years of age total 75 million, which leaves 41 million to do the work.

There are 22 million who are employed by the government, which leaves 19 million to do the work. Four million are in the armed forces, which leaves 15 million to do the work. Deduct 14.8 million, the number in state and city offices, and you're left with 200,000 to do the work. There are 188,000 in hospitals, insane asylums, etc., so that leaves 12,000 to do the work.

Now it may interest you to know there are 11,998 people in jail. So that leaves just 2 people to do the work and carry the load. That's you and me — and brother, I'm getting tired of doing everything myself. (From California Farmer.)

Self-Heating Food — A new British company called Hotcan is introducing self-heating food to the world of convenience. The canned meals heat themselves when the "cook" depresses a small plunger on the can. The principle behind the heating process is quite simple: when limestone and water are mixed, the reaction produces heat.

Hotcans are constructed of two cans, an inner one that holds the food, and an outer one that contains water and limestone in separate areas. When the plunger is depressed, it forces water into the limestone. The resulting heat warms the food adequately within 10 min. Hotcans will come in four varieties initially: beef and chicken casseroles, Irish stew and turkey curry.

Surveillance — Some marijuana growers have sought legal protection against aerial surveillance, claiming in court that their Fourth Amendment rights against illegal search were being violated. Last year, California's appellate court overturned a lower court's conviction of a man who had allegedly grown marijuana near his house in a fenced-in enclosure. He contended that his enclosure had been observed by air without benefit of a warrant. A review by the U.S. Supreme Court is pending.

Relief For Diesel "Lemon" Owners — Hundreds of owners of "lemon" diesel cars and trucks have won damage awards — or have even had their problem cars repurchased — thanks to several class action lawsuits and the activities of "watchdog" groups around the country that have successfully negotiated settlements with General Motors for their members.

GM's diesel engine troubles began back in 1976 when the company first installed a 350 cu. ft. diesel engine in various models of their cars and trucks. The engine, which many mechanics contend is simply a rebuilt 350 cu. in. gas engine, soon began to cause problems. In 1980, the Federal Trade Commission issued a complaint against GM, charging that three components in the diesel cars and trucks — the transmission, camshaft and fuel-injection system were faulty. After extended negotiations, GM agreed to set up a customer arbitration program to handle complaints.

Administered by the Better Business Bureau, the program has been in operation for the past couple years. Any owner of a GM diesel can go to arbitration — no matter when repairs were made, and no matter the age or mileage of the car — even if they aren't the original owner. Hundreds of diesel car and truck owners have settled under the program, receiving part or all of the costs of specific repairs. In many situations, GM has repurchased defective vehicles for the original purchase price.

Problems with the BBB arbitration program have cropped up recently, however. According to recent reports, there is a huge backlog of unresolved cases as well as complaints about the difficulty in getting arbitrators to visit smaller communities. As a result, many disgruntled consumers have turned to independent groups (like those detailed below) to obtain settlements.

For more information, contact a local Better Business Bureau office or call toll-free 800 228-6505 or 703 276-0100.

In addition to the government's agreement, many independently formed private groups have been able to mount successful campaigns against GM. Usually the groups were started by one or two individuals angry over problems with their own defective car or truck. After banding together with other owners, many groups now number several thousand members. They operate under names like "Lemons On Wheels", "Consumers Against GM", "Dissatisfied Owners of General Motors Automotive Diesels (DOGMA)", and "Disgruntled Diesel Owners Group". Some of the groups settled class action lawsuits and subsequently disbanded while others are still in operation, settling cases one by one. They charge a minimum membership fee that covers the cost of providing a dissatisfied owner with the information needed to pursue a claim against GM.

Disgruntled Diesel Owners Group in Vienna, Va., was started several years ago by Joyce Arndt who owned a lemon Chevrolet pickup with a 6.2L diesel. Her group has grown to more than 8,000 members and to date has settled claims worth more than \$6,000,000 for more than 6,700 owners. That doesn't include the cost of many "freebee" repairs and parts. Here, according to Arndt is how the group operates:

A disgruntled owner sends in a membership fee of \$20 (which can increase to a maximum of \$55 if the case requires extra personal attention) and fills out a data sheet detailing his problem. This case history is then submitted to GM and a settlement offer is made to the owner, based on past settlements with other members of the group. Officers of the group then review the decision and advise the owner as to whether or not he should accept. Settlements have so far ranged from a couple hundred dollars for miscellaneous repairs to over \$30,000 to one individual who owned several lemons. Any car or pickup with a diesel engine is eligible for settlement. In some cases, owners have received settlements for legal bills, car rental, lost wages and so on.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Disgruntled Diesel Owners Group, 316 Dominion Road, Vienna, Va. 22180 (ph 703 281-1601). Or, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Consumers Against General Motors, 2442 N.W. Market St., Suite 88, Seattle, Wa. 98107 (ph 206 363-3221). (Mark Newhall, editor)