



Gillen built a frame for a Cyclo air seeder and fitted it with disc openers off a Deere 750 no-till drill. When finished he painted the 8-row planter Deere green.

NO-TILL RIG USES IH CYCLO AIR UNIT

Home-Built Planter Fitted With Deere Drill Openers

You've never seen a planter quite like the one Curt Gillen built last winter.

The White Lake, S. Dak., farmer's planter centers around an old Cyclo air seeder. However, rather than mounting it directly onto an existing no-till drill like other innovative farmers have done in recent years, Gillen built his own frame and fitted it with disc openers off a Deere 750 no-till drill.

"It all started a couple years ago when we decided to switch our corn from 38 to 22 1/2-in. rows for the earlier canopy and



Instead of conventional press wheels, Gillen used new Deere rotary hoe wheels. He cut the points off and mounted them at a slight angle.

better weed control that narrow rows offer. We'd been using a Deere 7000 four-row planter but the ripple coulters we'd added ahead of its double disc openers threw a lot of mud at us in wet years. Plus, hair-pinning was a real problem in some of the heavy wheat stubble we plant into," Gillen explains. "We could have mounted a Cyclo unit on our Deere 750 drill like some no-tillers, but we would have been wearing two thirds of the openers needlessly if we'd blocked off two of three openings to get the 22 1/2-in. spacings we wanted. Plus, we would have been stirring up more soil and possibly causing more weeds to germinate than we do this way."

Gillen built a 180-in wide frame for the 8-row planter out of 4 by 6-in. tubing. He added gauge wheels off an International corn planter to the front.

He found an old 400 Cyclo and salvaged its air delivery and metering system as well as its 16-in. dia. rear drive wheel. He bought used 750 drill units for it.

Instead of conventional presswheels, Gillen used new Deere rotary hoe wheels. He cut the points off and mounted them at a slight angle so they'd knock down the furrow sidewall as they cover the seed.

Gillen's planter worked great last year, planting 21,000 to 24,000 seeds per acre and applying 7 to 8 gpa of 10-34-0 liquid fertilizer at speeds of up to 8 mph, he says. "The best thing was seed placement," he says. "It put seed exactly 1 in. deep where we like it."

Gillen's out-of-pocket expenses were about \$8,500.

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The 6-row planter plants two rows 7 in. apart on top of ridges and is equipped with a single blade Orthman automatic guidance system on back.

MADE FROM PAIR OF IH CYCLO AIR PLANTERS

Twin Row Ridge Planter For Soybeans

Brad Link, Renville, Minn., wanted the yield increase benefits of higher soybean plant populations, but he couldn't plant them in narrow rows because he farms on ridges. He solved the problem by converting a pair of International Cyclo 6-row air planters into a "twin row" planter that plants two rows 7 in. apart on top of ridges.

"I tried it for the first time last year and had a 1 1/2 bu. per acre yield increase over conventionally-planted beans on ridges, but I think it has the potential for even greater yield increases. The planter cost only about \$3,000 to build," says Link.

He paid \$450 for a used 6-row planter which was equipped with one seed hopper and blower. He mounted a seed hopper and blower off another Cyclo planter that he already owned and powered both with the planter's original pto-driven hydraulic pump.

He removed the herbicide and insecticide boxes and added six additional row units. The add-on row units mount on separate brackets behind and 7 in. to the side of the original row units. Behind the row units he mounted new 3-in. wide, 13-in. dia. single rib press wheels designed for a Great Plains drill. He mounted new Yetter row cleaning wheels on front of the planter, moving the wheels back on the existing mounting brackets so that each pair of wheels clears a strip wide enough for two row units. He also mounted a single blade Orthman automatic guidance system on back.

"Some ridge till farmers in my area use grain drills to plant twin row soybeans by plugging up the seed cups. However, I feel my twin row planter places seed much more accurately," says Link. "Also, I didn't have to spend \$15,000 or so for a new 15-ft. drill. The automatic guidance system keeps the planter from falling off the ridges. Corn



Add-on row units mount on separate brackets behind and 7 in. to side of original row units.

rootballs from the previous year run between the twin rows and aren't a problem. One advantage of twin row soybeans over conventionally drilled beans is that there's 23 in. of space between the twin rows which allows enough air movement to prevent white mold disease. Drilled soybeans do provide a quicker canopy that reduces weed problems. However, on ridges the soil warms up faster in the spring allowing earlier planting.

"I think my twin row planter will also work for planting corn. I plan to try it this spring."

Link made his own brackets for the press wheels that allow him to adjust depth control by simply changing the position of a couple of cotter pins. "I used grain drill press wheels because they make a groove in the soil where the soil later cracks, allowing the seed to pop up easily," says Link. "I staggered the row units 6 in. apart so that mud and trash won't plug them up."

He paid \$1,500 for the guidance system, \$40 apiece for the press wheels, and \$140 apiece for the row clearing wheels.

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Link mounted new Yetter row cleaning wheels on front of planter. Each pair of wheels clears a strip wide enough for two row units.

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