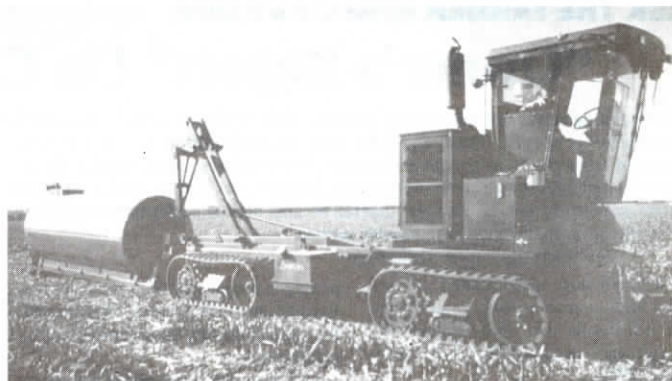




Deere is offering new rubber tracks designed for its 9500, 9600, and CTS combines.



Articulated "power unit" has four "positive cog drive" tracks. Rear tracks support hydraulic arm and shuttle system that loads equipment on or off frame.

## Rubber Tracks For Deere Combines

Deere is offering a new package of high flotation systems that includes rubber tracks designed for its 9500, 9600, and CTS combines, as well as 50-in. wide flotation "logger" tires, high flotation steering tires, and new wide-spaced duals.

"Our customers are concerned about soil compaction and field mobility and we're responding to that," says spokesman Dave Rock.

The new track design features an air bladder suspension system and pivoting bogey wheels.

The 32 in. wide tracks mount in place of the drive wheels. The final drive is relocated outboard and the track assembly is attached to it. The bogey wheels are designed to move up and over obstructions, easing shock loads to the combine's frame and operator. The 4-pivot point design of the tracks allows them to conform to the ground surface for better traction and a smoother ride.

The tracks have 1 1/2-in. deep lugs allowing the tracks to grip sidehills and maintain directional stability with full grain tank loads. Ground speeds are comparable to tires (15 to 16 mph). Large rubber cogs on the underside of the belt help maintain positive drive traction and less belt slippage as tension is applied. An on-board accumulator on each track, along with a hydraulic cylinder, assure proper belt tension is automatically maintained.

The track undercarriage was designed with help from Waltana, an Australian company that specializes in rubber track systems. Deere will have them manufactured in the U.S. The company recommends that the tracks be mounted on combines equipped with power rear wheel assist for easier steering and faster turning. The tracks can be used with single-reduction or planetary final drives and have a list price of \$32,500, not including installation. "If you order a new combine, you get credit for the value of standard equipment tires and wheels," says Rock.

Available quantities will be limited in 1995.

The high flotation logger tires measure 68 in. high and 50 in. wide. They were originally developed for the logging industry to reduce machinery sinkage into the forest soil. "They offer over 50% more footprint



Four pivot points allow rubber tracks to conform more closely to soil surface for better traction and ride comfort.



High flotation tires reduce field rutting.

than the typical 30.5 by 32 drive tires," says Rock. "The big footprint provides maximum flotation in soft ground without deep rutting of the soil. With only 15 psi of inflation pressure they also help reduce soil compaction. Our new 28.L by 26 steering wheels are designed for use with power rear wheel assist. They work great with the high flotation tires or the rubber tracks for moving loaded grain tanks and large headers over soft, wet, or muddy ground."

Optional new 20.8 by 38 and 20.8 by 42 radial wide-spaced duals offer greater ground flotation capabilities than the 18.4 wide duals. The 13% wider duals also offer excellent traction for harvesting with wider heads (8 to 12-row corn heads, 25-ft. to 30-ft. platforms) and transporting full grain tanks across fields. "They offer perfect tracking on 30-in. rows and eliminate stubble damage in 30-in. rows for longer tire life. They also increase combine stability on slopes," notes Rock.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Deere & Co., John Deere Road, Moline, Ill. 61265.

## New Rubber-Tracked "Farm Power Unit"

One of the hottest new products at farm shows this fall has been a new rubber-tracked "farm power unit" built by Byron Enterprises, Byron, N.Y.

It's the result of a joint venture between Byron and Goodyear Tire Co. The articulated, hydrostatic drive "power unit" is equipped with four 30-in. wide, "positive cog drive" rubber tracks. The front tracks support the engine and cab (designed for a New Holland combine), and the rear tracks support a hydraulic arm and shuttle system that loads various equipment on or off the frame. A drawbar mounts on back and a 3-pt. hitch on front. Power is supplied by a 250 hp, 7.6-liter turbocharged and intercooled Deere diesel engine. The entire unit is 28 ft. long and 8 ft. 4 in. wide.

"We designed it as a multi-purpose power vehicle with both carrying and pulling capacity," says Paul Dow, vice president of manufacturing and engineering. "It's more cost efficient than fitting tracked undercarriages to each piece of pull-type equipment because you can use it with a variety of equipment all year long. It'll carry manure spreaders, spray equipment, air seeders, bulk seed bags, etc., or pull tillage and planting equipment, liquid manure tanks, or grain carts. It's comparable to a 200 hp 4-WD tractor for tillage work. The tracks dramatically reduce soil compaction compared to conventional wheeled tractors. It applies

less than 5 psi to the field when empty and 10 psi with a load.

"The unit we demonstrated at farm shows this fall has 350 hours on it, yet track wear is minimal. The direct-drive track undercarriage keeps the drive wheels from slipping inside the tracks and provides tremendous traction. Each track 'footprint' is 63 in. long and rides on a pair of wheels equipped with steel spokes that direct-drive lugs with 180 degrees of contact. The idler wheel is in front, and the rear drive wheel is powered by a variable displacement axle drive motor. The hydro-mechanical drive system has good low-end torque, yet the low wheels turn fast enough for good road speed - up to 24 mph. The low drive wheels provide plenty of room for hauling wide equipment on the rear frame.

"The hydraulic arm and shuttle system lets the operator load and unload equipment without ever leaving the cab. The shuttle arm is raised or lowered by a hydraulic cylinder and pulls equipment forward onto the rear frame."

The power unit is expected to sell for about \$150,000. A pull-type rubber tracked undercarriage is also available for \$21,500.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Byron Enterprises, Inc., 7275 Batavia-Byron Road, Byron, N.Y. 14422 (ph 716 548-2665).

## Three More Rubber-Tracked Tractors

Rubber-tracked tractors are springing up all over. Here are three more we've spotted recently in farm magazines from both France and England.

- **Gregoire** - Built by Gregoire Tracteurs Polyvalents in Cognac, France, the Gregoire is powered by a 160-hp. Deutz 6-cyl. diesel. It's fitted with 2-ft. wide tracks with an 8 1/2 ft. long "footprint" against the ground. It has a hydrostatic transmission with speeds up to 15 mph and is fitted with both front and rear 3-pt. hitch. Contact: Gregoire Tracteurs Polyvalents, 89 Avenue de Barbezieux, 16100 Cognac, France (ph 45 82 23 49; fax 45 82 32 56).

- **Morooka** - Built in Japan, the Morooka rubber-tracked crawler is available in 14 different models from 30 to 325 hp. Tomen America, Norcross, Ga. (ph 404 399-8091), is taking preliminary steps toward offering the tractors in the U.S. The

tractors are being tested in various crops in California, especially on rice. The Morooka line, with a front hydrostatic sprocket drive, is said to be able to operate in paddy water without problems from mud and without damaging the soil. The tractors are expected to sell for about 15 to 20 percent less than Caterpillar Challengers of comparable size.

- **Waltana** - Built in Australia and fitted with Goodyear rubber tracks, the Waltana has been on the market since the late 1980's and is fitted with a positive drive system that's been used by other manufacturers who say it works better than friction drive systems. In fact, Waltana's drive system is being used for Deere's new add-on track system for combines.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Waltanna Tractors, Glenelg Highway, Tarrington, Victoria 3301 Australia (ph 055 733392; fax 066 733327).