FARMER SPENT $400 TO REWORK NEVER-BEEN-USED, $30,000 PLANTER

He "Narrowed Up" New 12-Row Planter

The first thing Ken Cotton did last year after buying a new $30,000 Deere 12-row Max Emerge planter was to get out a cutting torch to reduce the planter's width by 3 ft.

Ken and his brother, Howard, bought the planter set up for 22-in. rows, which is standard in sugar beet production and is becoming more popular in corn. A 30-in. planter comes equipped from the factory with the transmission drive and gearbox assemblies mounted between the row units. However, a 22-in. spaced planter comes with the transmission drive and gearboxes mounted on each end of the toolbar which adds an extra 1 1/2 ft. to each side. "The extra 3 ft. of width makes it more difficult to get through some bridges, gates, or through our 24-ft. shop door," says Cotton.

He cut the transmission drive and gearboxes off each end, then remounted them within steel frames that he mounted on top of the planter toolbar above the depth gauge wheels, which were modified to serve as drive wheels. He lengthened the shaft coming out of the transmission and connected it to a jackshaft that drives six row units. Ratchet sprockets are used to keep the gearboxes from turning whenever the planter is backed up.

"It works quite well - if I bought another planter I'd do it again," says Cotton. "I spent only about $400 on parts."

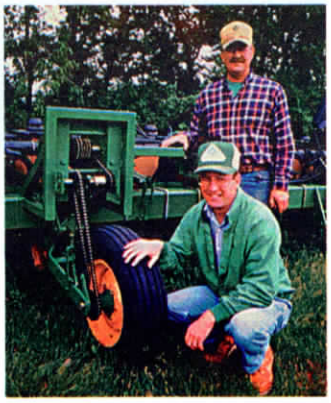


Photo courtesy The Farmer Magazine

Ken and Howard Cotton moved transmission drive and gearboxes to the front of planter toolbar to reduce planter width.

Cotton also modified the row markers so that they fold vertically instead of backward and aren't in the way as much, allowing him to plant closer to field edges and fence rows.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Ken Cotton, 316 5th Ave. S.E., Hillsboro, N. Dak. 58045 (ph 701 436-4153).

Freier's 2-way cultivator is fitted with a row of shanks fitted with sweeps and a row fitted with straight shanks.

Rotating Tool Bar For Compact Tractors

If you have a compact utility tractor, you'll like this new 2-way rotating tillage tool that eliminates the need to hitch and unhitch.

"It lets you change implements easier and quicker than ever before" explains inventor Jon Freier, of Appleton, Wis.

Freier's 2-way cultivator is fitted with a row of shanks fitted with sweeps and a row fitted with straight shanks. To switch from one to the other, he simply pulls pins, slides the toolbar back, and rotates it on a center shaft. Other implements could be adapted to the system.

Freier uses the patented system on his Deere 750 MFWD. He's looking for a manufacturer.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Jon Freier, Freier Fabrications, 9121 Center Rd., Neenah, Wis. 54956 (ph 414 836-3714).

Toolbar rotates on center shaft to switch from sweeps to shanks.

Propane torch burns full blast at end of a pair of welded-together steel barrels that bolt onto bin's aeration fan.

AERATION FAN SUCKS HEAT OFF TORCH

He Uses A Cutting Torch To Dry Grain

Like many other farmers, David Peters, Morden, Manitoba, uses liquid propane to dry grain. However, he does it like no one else, using a propane torch instead of a batch dryer.

His torch burns full blast at the end of a pair of welded-together steel barrels that bolt onto the bin's aeration fan. A steady flow of propane is fed to the torch by a trailer-mounted LP tank.

"It lets me put grain into storage without having to run it through my batch dryer first, which speeds up harvest. It also reduces handling damage to my confectionary sunflowers," says Peters, who uses his propane torch method to dry grain in two 1,650-bu. bins equipped with aeration floors.

He cut the ends out of two 45-gal. steel barrels and welded them together, then welded in a 15-in. dia. disc blade off a tandem disk inside one of the barrels to act as a flame deflector. The torch mounts in the center of the barrel opening, clamped to a bracket screwed to the sides of the barrel. He bolted the other end of the double barrel to the aeration fan.

"I've used it to dry sunflowers at 17% moisture down to 7 or 8% at the bottom of the bin and 9.5% on top. The per bushel drying cost is about the same as with a batch dryer, but there's a lot less work," says Peters. "I dump grain into the bin then dry it when I have time without having to remove it. I use a meat temperature probe in the aeration fan to check air temperature going in.

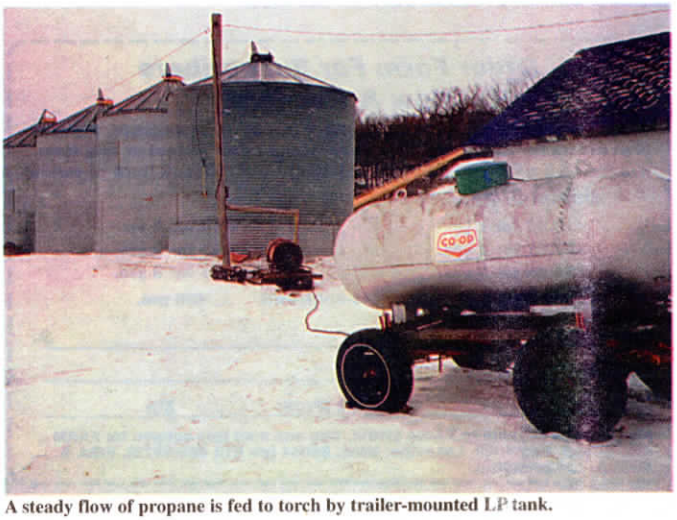
"The flame deflector disc is about 18 inches from the torch and about 5 ft. from the fan. It keeps the fan from sucking the flame in. The fan creates a lot of air movement around the disc. I was concerned that it might put out the flame, but it hasn't been a problem. With all the air movement the flame really shoots out and provides a very steady heat - if the outside temperature rises a few degrees, the thermometer shows it right away. I keep the air temperature at 80 to 90 degrees by adjusting the torch. Too much heat could cause the fan motor to burn out.

"If grain is dry at the bottom of the bin but still wet on top, I can reverse the fan to suck warm air down through the grain.

"I got the idea because I grow confectionary sunflowers and wanted to dry them without putting them through my batch dryer - the extra augering and movement of sunflowers through the dryer can damage them. The only disadvantage is that compared to a batch dryer it takes longer to dry the grain.

"By unbolting the barrels from the aeration fan I can move it to my other aeration bin."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, David Peters, Box 234, Rt. 2, Morden, Manitoba, Canada R0G 1J0 (ph 204 822-3305).



A steady flow of propane is fed to torch by trailer-mounted LP tank.