

"Owner's Report" On Best, Worst Planters

Are you satisfied with your corn-soybean planter? How could it be made better? What steps have you taken to cut down on the number of trips through the field? Have you modified your planter in any way? What methods have you come up with to simplify filling seed, fertilizer and insecticide boxes?

These are some of the questions we asked planter owners in an effort to highlight those planters that perform with flying colors, and to pinpoint the "lemons" that fail because of poor performance, or failure of the dealer or company to provide service.

Here's how the survey shaped up:

"It penetrates better than the Deere 7000 it replaced," says Daryl Alger, Palmyra, Penn., pleased with his 1987 **New Idea** 900, 6-row 30-in. spaced planter. "The staggered disc openers for fertilizer are also a big improvement over the Deere. Overall the planter does everything we expected of it but it is a little unhandy to change the vertical position on the no-till coulters. We do about 30% no-till, 30% once over and plant, and 40% twice over and plant."

Jimmy Barnes, Glen Allan, Miss., is happy with his **Deere** 7100 12-row planter. "I have eliminated most tillage trips by using chemical burndown and planting right into it. I disk once if there are combine ruts, but I disk early so the seedbed will be firm."

"We're generally satisfied with our **Deere** 1240 plateless planter but I have had some trouble with seed pickup units freezing up and shearing pins. Also, it's hard to tell from the tractor when one of the planter units stops working," says Luther Buhite, Reynoldsville, Penn.

"There isn't much to improve on our **IH** 295 6-row planter. However, I did make a modification on the press wheel frame so bearings can be changed easier. I simply made a notch in the frame below the bearing," says Richard Morrison, Lumpkin, Ga. He says his next planter will be either a **Deere** Max-Emerge or a **KMC**.

"Our **Case/IH** 800 4-row is the best planter on the market except perhaps for the new 900 series the company recently introduced," says Larry Breech, Danville, Penn. "It plants excellent whether in conventional till, minimum till or no-till. Final stands vary only 100 to 400 plants from the planter seeding rate. Does everything well, including seed placement, population, fertilizer metering, insecticide placement, and so on. Works so well we don't have to overplant like with some planters. The nice thing about this planter is that you fill one hopper and it lasts 70 acres and fertilizer fills only take 3 min. to complete. We no-till 95% of our ground. Our only modification was to install staggered closing discs from **Case/IH** that stop stones from getting stuck between discs."

Stuart A. Glover Jr., Wilson, N.C., is happy with his **Deere** 7000 Max-Emerge 4-row. "I've never owned a planter that planted so uniformly. I can't think of a single improvement."

"Our 1979 **Deere** 7000 6-row was a big improvement over our old shoe-type planters. Perhaps newer models have been improved but our planter needs a better no-till fertilizer coulters and new seed cups for better soybean placement. We also had to add marker weights for no-till work," says Paul Garrett, Easton, Md.

"I've planted all no-till since I bought our **White** 5400 Plant-Aire 4-row in

1974. Depth control, seed placement, and seed population are all very good. The only thing it's needed is added bracing on the dry fertilizer hoppers," says Charles J. Flynn, New Milford, Conn.

"Our **International** 400 Cyclo 4-row planter works great just the way it is. I wouldn't change a thing," reports Harold Ashley, Brownsville, Kent.

Abe Willems, Paris, Ark., owns a **Deere** Max-Emerge 7100 6-row. "Does a good job planting and produces a good stand but it could have a more variable range of planting speed and amounts. We have a lot of black gumbo. The **Deere** V-wings we added move the clods so you have firm soil to plant in."

"It sure beats the **Deere** Max-Emerge in terms of initial cost and operating maintenance," says Tom Hofferber, Fairmont, Neb., about his **International** 800 8-row. "We're very satisfied with the simplicity and ease of maintenance, easy filling, adjustments and floating wheels. Our biggest complaint is that it does a poor job spacing corn. That's the only crop that causes trouble. Not certain if it hurts yields or not. Also, to add rolling Orthman cutters and get more depth control, we added a 4 by 7-in. bar to the front of the planter. Works great and can

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also be used for no-till or ridge-till attachments. Another improvement we made was to put an axle through the brush rollers. They last longer and work more accurately. We fill the planter hoppers with a Speed King conveyor belt that attaches to a 165 bu. hopper trailer. Runs on tractor hydraulics and lets one man fill in 10 min. or less. We fill the hopper trailer by dumping seed sacks into a tractor loader bucket and then dumping into the trailer."

"You just can't wear out these old **Deere** planters," says Frank Schreiner, Greensburg, Ind., about his **Deere** 1240 4-row with liquid fertilizer attachments. "It plants evenly and it's easy to change depth settings. We mount a harrow ahead of the planter to plant corn or beans."

"Our **White** 5100 6-row is very accurate and has good depth control. We're pleased but the depth control adjustment could be improved. I pull the planter behind a Howard Rotovator behind a bridge hitch. Lets me put down chemicals and incorporate with one trip over the field. Works great," reports Harold Melton, Sebree, Kent.

Frederick Paulus, Trumbull, Neb., owns a 1982 **Deere** 7100 6-row Max-Emerge planter. "We're satisfied with it although seed spacing could be improved.

I made my own row furrow openers for ridge till by using two sets of discs bolted to the front of the planter. The first set of discs are spread out in a wide 'V' to knock off the top of the ridge. The second set of discs mount vertically to cut off the sides of the ridges. Both sets adjust independently. I have used them 3 years and they work well. I also built a stabilizer frame that runs from the 7-in. toolbar to the back of the planter where I fastened a disc from a Lilliston cultivator which acts like a rudder. Helps stay on the row. Also, when I apply anhydrous ammonia, I carry liquid fertilizer in the saddle tanks and apply it with the ammonia using a double tube on the fertilizer knife. Some experts say it's more beneficial to place both fertilizers together."

"We're pleased with our 1985 **International** 8-row Cyclo 6-row planter except for the fact that it's a surface planter that has trouble with erosion. Furrow depth should be independent from seed depth. The way it is now, the more you increase seed depth, the more likely you are to have little or no protection from water erosion on hillsides," says Max Rumold, Hope, Kan.

"Our 1975 **White** 4-row 543 is well-built, sturdy, very easily adjusted and it has many optional accessories available. It has some trouble in loose soil conditions but I just hydraulically lift the machine. I plant direct into spring-plowed ground thanks to a spike tooth harrow pulled behind the plow," says Burton Graves, Sandusky, Mich.

"I use my 1983 **International** 800 Cyclo 6-row air planter to plant cotton, grain sorghum, mung beans and peas. Works excellent in my sandy loam to silt loam soils. I use fertilizer coulters from Yetter for deep placement," says Richard Waters, Hydro, Okla.

John Goeuke, Augusta, Kent., operates a 1980 **Allis Chalmers** 600 no-till planter. "Does a good job in most all conditions. We moved the fertilizer tubes to inside the disk openers. Works 100% better on hillsides."

"I've had very little trouble with a 1975 **International** 400 air planter I bought used. The only change I made was to convert it from dry to liquid fertilizer, which is more convenient to use. Works well," says Tom Housh, Hay Springs, Neb.

"If they'd put on a larger handle it would be easier to adjust depth control," says Dave Schwaderer, Alliance, Neb., otherwise pleased with his 1981 **Deere** 7100 Max-Emerge 8-row. "We're very happy with it and plan to buy a new one in 1988."

Don R. Wilkinson, Barnes, Kan., owns an **International** 400 Cyclo 4-row. "It's the best planter I've ever seen in corn but I don't feel there's a big advantage over plate-type planters in soybeans and I'm very disappointed with the planter in sorghum. I guess the 800 series has greatly improved depth control and seed placement. We added a liquid fertilizer pump and manifolds and tanks for application of low acid starter fertilizer in row. The pump and manifold work great but we have a small problem with plugging up rows with mud created by the liquid fertilizer. Chains that keep seed from blowing out build up with mud."

"We're satisfied with our 1980 **Deere** 7000 Max-Emerge 12-row. We take good care of it by doing all regular maintenance and upkeep. We installed a Fillborn fold kit (Reynolds John Deere, Box 218, Fishers, Ind. 46038 ph 317 849-0810) to convert it to end transport. It increases planting capacity by 20% by letting me move into and out of transport position in a fraction of the time required by the conventional system," says Brad Starr, Connersville, Ind.

Andy Veenstra, Sherston, Ontario, has had good luck with his 1980 **Deere** 7100 12-row planter. "Can't think of any way to improve the planter itself. To go to minimum tillage we installed minimum tillage tine attachments and Acra-Plant V-knives."

"We're generally well-satisfied with our **Deere** 7000 6-row Max-Emerge bought in 1980. Does an excellent job on both corn and soybeans. Works great but I have a couple suggestions for improvement. The two depth wheels on each seed unit should operate independently. We added Yetter Dry Fertilizer placement disk openers, which should come from the factory. The planter also needs quick disengage for drive chains for highway travel. And a folding tongue would save time when we have to load to move. We added a 'splitter' to plant 15-in. rows. Works well. **Deere** has since come out with their own. We also added liquid fertilizer attachment to place liquid in the row while the dry goes below row," says Bob Shipp, Radcliff, Kent.

"Good seed opener penetration and good seed placement but not the best fertilizer opener for no-till. We installed a Yetter no-till coulters for proper placement of dry fertilizer. Works very well," says Arthur Schmitt, Carleton, Mich., about his **International** 800 6-row planter.

"I owned a **Deere** 7000 planter before I bought my **Case/IH** 800 4-row in 1986 and this planter plants much more evenly in beans. It also has a better covering and seed packing system and a better ability to cut through trash for no-till. The seed monitor on my **Deere** never worked in over three years even though I repeatedly sent it back to the dealer for repairs. The seed monitor on the **Case/IH** works but the alarm isn't loud enough. I plant on a tractor without a cab. We reworked the markers so they're both electric and hydraulic and installed Harlan Mfg. fertilizer openers. They had 16-in. ripple coulters which push trash down rather than cutting it so we bought 20-in. smooth coulters to replace them," says Harold Wedgewood, Tekamah, Neb.

Herschel W. Jenkins, Wallace, N.C., runs a **Deere** 1240 4-row planter. "I bought it in the mid-70's and it's the best planter I've ever used. It's great that it's as old as it is and does such a great job. Always get a good stand. I plant on ridges and put a board on the front of the planter to knock off part of the seedbed. Works fine."

"We're happy with our **Deere** 7000 4-row planter but they should make it easier to switch from wide 38-in. rows to 30-in. rows. We had to cut the frame," says John A. Hamish, Lampeter, Penn.