



Follmer's 15-row, 15-in. double toolbar planter features seven row units on front and eight on back. A cultivator mounted ahead of the planter eliminates tracks.

"LETS ME FILL FRONT SEED BOXES FROM THE REAR"

Double Toolbar Planter Filled By "Grain Leg" Cart

Manufacturer Rich Follmer, Hudson, Ill., is known as an innovator in the farm equipment market place through his company, Progressive Farm Products. He also builds innovative equipment for use on his own farm that's not for sale.

For example, Follmer couldn't find all the features he wanted in a planter so he built his own 15-row, 15-in. double toolbar planter equipped with Kinze row units spaced 30 in. apart. The front toolbar has seven row units and the rear has eight row units. The planter is supported by four 7.50 by 20 wheels located between the front and rear toolbars and to the side of the front row units. A cultivator equipped with four rows of S tines mounts ahead of the planter in order to eliminate tractor wheel marks.

"It cost less to build than a conventional planter, but I didn't build it to save money," says Follmer. "I built it because I couldn't find what I wanted on the market. The problem is that too many engineers at farm equipment manufacturing companies don't work on farms, and too many manufacturers just copy each other's ideas instead of doing their own thinking. We're one of the few companies left in ag manufacturing where the owner still farms."

Follmer's planter has a rectangular steel frame with the front row units bolted on just behind the front part of the frame and the rear row units bolted on just behind the rear part of the frame. "It's such a simple idea that I'm totally amazed no one else has thought of it," says Follmer. "There's enough room between the rear row units that I can walk between them and fill the front row units without having to walk around to the front," he says. "On other double toolbar planters steel framework between the rear row units gets in the way, forcing you to walk around to the front."

"Because the planter support wheels are located between the front and rear toolbars and to the side of the front row units, I don't have to drive on any rows that I've already planted. Also, the row units are close enough together front to rear that when I go around a corner or make a turn with the planter in the ground, the openers can gently work their way around without breaking."

Follmer also built his own wheel lifts and low-profile, flat-fold markers equipped with 18-in. dia. notched discs. "It's the lowest

hanging marker in the industry," says Follmer. "When it's folded parallel to the planter bar it's only 18 in. above the top of the frame."

Home-Built Seed Cart

Follmer uses a home-built 200-bu. seed cart to fill the planter. It's equipped with a miniature "grain leg" specially designed for gentle handling of soybean seed. The leg has a 6-in. wide rubber belt on which are mounted 5-in. wide, 3-in. high plastic buckets spaced 6 in. apart. The leg is powered by an orbit



Follmer uses a home-built 200-bu. seed cart, equipped with a "grain leg", to fill the planter with soybean seed.

motor mounted on top of the leg. The motor is turned on or off by an electric solenoid valve with the switch mounted on the end of a 4-in. dia. plastic telescoping spout. The spout telescopes from 8 to 14 ft., allowing Follmer to fill all of the planter's seed boxes from one location.

The cart is divided into two compartments, each with small round inspection windows. There's an electric flood light on the side of the cart to assist in night filling.

"In the rush to bring bulk seed handling onto the market, no one has thought of using a bucket elevator on a seed cart. It makes sense because that's what seed companies use to clean and package seed," says Follmer. "It's much simpler than using augers or rubber conveyor belts. Belts shoot seed out too fast and are too heavy to lift. Augers equipped with steel or brush flighting tend to damage the seed."

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Brown converted the pto-driven silage bagger into an engine-powered unit, allowing him to unload out of rear-unloading trucks.

LETS HIM USE DUMP TRUCKS INSTEAD OF FORAGE WAGONS

Rebuilt Silage Bagger Fitted With Own Engine

Jim Brown, Oto, Iowa, converted a pto-driven Eberhardt silage bagger into an engine-powered unit that allows him to unload directly out of rear-unloading trucks.

The silage bagger was originally designed to be loaded only from the side by front-unloading silage wagons. Brown used the original machine for a number of years before deciding to convert it for use with dump boxes.

He kept the rotor and tunnel from the bagger and added parts from a Bearcat grain mixer and Winnebago motor home, as well as the engine off an International combine. The 220 cu. in., 6-cyl. gas engine belt-drives the bagger's rotor which packs the silage. Brown made a new 8-ft. wide, 10-ft. long feed table that's operated by an orbit motor off the reel of an old Massey combine. The feed table can be hydraulically raised or lowered.

The bagger still has the original hydraulically-powered cable rewind system that determines compaction pressure of feed inside the bag. The cable is connected to a "backstop" at the end of the bag and to a brake drum on the machine. Brown uses a truck to load the bagger.

"It does everything a commercial model will do yet cost only a fraction as much to complete," says Brown. "I paid \$9,000 for the original bagger and spent \$5,000 to convert it. A new bagger like this of comparable capacity would cost much more. I built it



Brown added parts from several machines to the bagger, including a 220 cu. in. 6-cyl. gas engine off an International combine, which belt drives the bagger's rotor.

because I wanted to use a truck instead of self-unloading forage wagons, which have many moving parts and require much maintenance. Trucks are also easier to back up.

"Whenever I build something I have a contest with my kids and offer them a reward for whoever comes up with the best name. I call it my Silomaster 8200 because it makes 8-ft. dia., 200-ft. long bags. I used it last fall to fill four 200-ft. long bags. Altogether it has filled more than 50 bags for me. The feed table has a metal bottom with sides made from rubber belting. I used chains and sprockets to gear the feed table down so that it doesn't run too fast."

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Bagger still has the original hydraulic-powered cable rewind system.