

Illinois Shop Customizes New Generation Deere Tractors

"I started customizing Deere 6030 tractors – and other New Generation Deeres – about 10 years ago, and it's grown into a substantial business," says Brad Walk of Sigel, Ill. "I never dreamed when I bought my first 6030 from Montana, sight unseen, that I'd be doing this almost full time a few years later." Today Walk's business, known as my6030.com, has a national reputation for producing outstanding quality customization.

Walk started working on 6030s because it was the most powerful two-wheel drive tractor of its time from 1972 through 1977, and is one of the most sought after collector tractors of its era. Adding to its value is the fact that just over 4,000 were built. Many of them are still working today.

The 6030 is set apart from other New Generation tractors because it was offered with a choice of diesel engines. It could be ordered with a naturally-aspirated 141 hp. diesel or with a larger turbo and intercooled 175 hp. powerplant. About 80 percent of the tractors were sold with factory cabs. All the options offered on the previous big body model 5020 applied to the 6030, which weighed almost 16,000 lbs.

"Most of the people I refurbish tractors

for want them to look original, but they want options they can't find in the marketplace," Walk says. "They usually don't want a cab, so we take that off. They want an open station with fenders, a nice canopy, and nice paint. We can do all of that of course, and also install larger wheels, new air cleaners and exhaust pipes. We rebuild the tractor exactly the way a customer wants it. If they want it to look brand new, everything is painted to an original factory finish, so we're giving people a tractor that looks and runs like it just came from the factory."

Walk says he buys and sells several 6030s a year from across the U.S. and Canada. "I don't go to auctions or buy off the internet. I have people calling me offering their tractors for sale."

He has 3 full time employees who completely clean, disassemble, sandblast, refurbish and re-assemble old iron. They repair leaks, remove dents and dings, and send the tractor to specialists for overhauling and more technical work if that's needed. "Every tractor that leaves here is in like-new condition," says Walk. Many are sold to farmers from across the U.S., and he's also sold a few to France, England and the



Brad Walk buys used Deere 6030 tractors and restores them to like-new condition, often removing the cab and installing new wheels, tires, muffler and air system.

Netherlands.

Two of his 6030s are very special and will never leave his farm. "I'm fortunate to own the very first and the very last 6030 ever built," Walk says. He acquired number one from a farmer in Ohio, and the last one from a large construction company. "It took me two years to locate the last one built," says Walk, "and another two years to play the poker game to get it bought." The adventure included waiting 90 minutes for a decision-

maker in a large Alabama corporate office, bringing custom pork sausage from his farm, then waiting another month while the company's board of directors approved the sale. "It was worth the wait," Walk says, "because now I've got bookend 6030 tractors for my two sons."

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Mist Sprayer Mounted On Skid Loader

When Chuck Hardenburger, Haddam, Kansas, bought a new Big John 3-pt. mounted mist sprayer, he immediately converted it to use on his skid loader.

"I raise cattle on a rotational pasture grazing system and use the sprayer's big directional fan to blow herbicide onto brush and weeds," says Hardenburger. "The sprayer was designed to be pto-driven, but I'm using a hydraulic motor that operates off the skid loader's hydraulics. I also installed a flow divider and control valves on the sprayer."

"I made the conversion because I didn't want to drive a tractor in my pastures and tear up the grass. Also, a skid loader has a lower center of gravity, which makes it more maneuverable and safer to use on hilly ground. I also have a better view from the cab."

The sprayer hooks up to the 3-pt. hitch off a Belarus tractor. Hardenburger modified the 3-pt. so he could attach it to the skid loader's quick-tach brackets.

"I use a switch in the skid loader cab to turn



Chuck Hardenburger converted a new Big John 3-pt. mounted mist sprayer to use on his skid loader.

the hydraulic motor on and off, and another switch to change the direction of the fan. The system is set up so I can keep the fan blowing while changing position of the fan. I haul the skid loader and sprayer down the road on a flatbed trailer behind my pickup," notes Hardenburger.

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"Down Low" ATV Sprayer

An Indiana farmer rigged his sprayer to apply chemicals with minimal exposure to the operator.

Dennis Brooks mounted a 15-gal. Demco poly tank on a home-built aluminum frame that slips into the receiver hitch on the back of his 4-wheeler. Chemicals are applied through nozzles strung across a 3-ft. boom. A handheld spray wand with a 10-ft. hose is carried by a tray at the back of the frame. Cotter pins secure the hoses.

Brooks' friend John Goddard fabricated the aluminum frame for him. "I use it to spray thistles and other weeds on several acres. The boom covers a 5-ft. wide area and, by using the handheld wand, I can cover an area about 10 ft. wide. The wand works great for spraying fence rows," says Brooks. "My Honda Rincon 650 4-wheeler is equipped with independent rear suspension, which helps absorb the tank's weight. I don't have a foam marker system on it, but as long as I can see my tire tracks I know where to spray



Dennis Brooks mounted a 15-gal. Demco poly tank on an aluminum frame, which slips into the receiver hitch on back of his 4-wheeler.

without overlapping."

The sprayer frame is secured to the 4-wheeler's rear cargo rack by bungee straps, which attach to vertical posts built into the frame. "The straps help keep the tank rigid and reduce the weight on the receiver hitch," says Brooks.

The bottom of the tank is bolted to a pair of 3-in. dia. pvc pipes that are strapped to bolts in the frame. The tray that holds the spray wand is fashioned from 1-in. dia. pvc pipe



Lyndon Miller's home-built sprayer rides on walking tandem axles and has a folding 10-ft. boom built in sections, as well as a foam marker system to avoid overlaps.

Small-Acreage Sprayer Has Big Rig Features

Lyndon Miller couldn't find a small acreage sprayer that had all the options he wanted, so he built one himself. He pulls it behind his Deere 317 garden tractor.

"I wanted something that would pull easy and roll over ground better than the solid axle models that I found on the market. I also wanted something with a folding boom so I could spray in small areas," says Miller.

He started by building a steel frame and adding walking tandem axles made by using the wheels and axles from off-brand tractors. He built a folding 10-ft. boom in sections; each section can be turned on or off as needed. He also added a 50-ft. long hose reel with hand wand for spot spraying.

After some trial and error, he installed a foam marker system to avoid overlaps. He also added a 5 gpm pump and Tee-Jet nozzle bodies that won't drip when the pump is off. All the components are stainless steel. "I mounted halogen lights on front and back of

the tractor and also behind the sprayer so I can work at night when there's less wind," says Miller.

He had a local fab shop build a stainless steel cradle for the 60-gal. tank. "With the extra weight, I had to use lugged rear tires on the tractor," he says. "I installed oversized tires on the front and rear, and filled the rear tires with windshield washer fluid. It provides added weight for better traction, especially when pulling the sprayer on slopes."

He uses a GPS mounted on the tractor's hood to track his ground speed. "With the pump, foam marker and lights, I installed separate switches on the tractor's dash so I can flip them on and off with my thumb while controlling ground speed with the tractor's hand-controlled hydrostat transmission," notes Miller.

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and is notched in a way that locks the nozzle trigger in the "on" position.

A toggle switch mounted on the 4-wheeler's rear rack is used to turn the sprayer on or off, and to switch between the boom and handheld nozzle. Brooks mounted a trailer plug adapter on the cargo rack that hooks up to the 4-wheeler's battery and doubles as a plug-in

for the sprayer and a battery maintainer.

"If I want, I can quickly unbolt the receiver hitch from the 4-wheeler and install a drawbar to pull other implements," says Brooks.

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