



Single share, 15-ton Post moldboard plow measures 37 ft. long, 12 ft. high, and 11 ft. wide. It turned soil as deep as 7 ft.

15-Ton Plow Restored Flooded Farms

Fields flooded in 2019 might benefit from deep moldboard plowing with this “world’s largest” 15-ton, single share plow that turns soil as deep as 7 ft. The Post plow was used on around 1,500 acres of Missouri farmland that flooded in 1993 and 1994.

University of Missouri Extension soybean specialist Bill Wiebold and corn specialist Greg Luce recently tracked down the plow, studied the effects of the deep plowing, visited farms where it was done, and talked to the plow’s former owner.

“The big plow dug 5 to 6 ft. deep through sand and a hardened layer of blue-black muck to churn up soil,” says Wiebold. “Deep plowing followed by careful tillage and good nutrient management in years to follow restored most land.”

Pulling the plow wasn’t easy. It took 4 D8 and D9 Caterpillar dozers linked together with cables and chains. The plow itself was 37 ft. long, 12 ft. high and 11 ft. wide. It was considered to be the world’s largest moldboard plow.

Former owner Willie Aholt recalls charging \$560 per acre. He could do an acre per hour. “Tractors often sunk in sand, and the hitch broke the first day,” says Aholt. “Welders had to work all night to fix the plow in time for day two.”

Aholt bought the plow from a neighbor, adding a third wheel for stability and greater plowing depth.

Two brothers, Charles and Norman Post, built the plow in 1937. They used it to reclaim



It took four D8 and D9 Caterpillar dozers linked together with cables and chains to pull the plow.

land buried by California’s Santa Ana River that year. At that time, it rented for \$100 per hour. Later, it was used for cutting furrows for drainage ditches and pipelines. In the 1940’s, it dug trenches for cables at atomic bomb test sites in Nevada.

Aholt reports that the plow was the last item sold at auction when his family sold their farming operation in 2001. If the new owner didn’t salvage it for the steel, it might find a renewed purpose today.

“Some sand remains in fields that were deep plowed,” says Wiebold. “It feels spongy when walked on. Today, farmers consider it some of Missouri’s best farmland.”

Today the Post brothers’ plow is on display in Westminster, California.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, William Wiebold, 700 Hitt St., Agriculture Science Building, Room 2-44, Columbia, Mo. 65211 (ph 573 882-0621).

“Wheeled” Porch Railing Catches Eyes

After Robert McMahon got the idea for his half-wheel porch railing, he started collecting antique steel wheels for the project, but soon grew frustrated.

“They were all different sizes and needed work,” says McMahon. “I decided to make my own from scratch. Most of our driveway was once a wagon trail route, so the wagon wheel motif seemed appropriate.”

McMahon based his wagon wheels on some from a 5 1/2-ft. logging arch. He used 3 1/2-in. wide, 3/8-in. thick, steel flat bar for the rims and bent them to shape on a modified, Harbor Freight tubing roller (Vol. 43, No. 3).

“I made the 30 1/2-in. spokes from 5/8-in., round steel bar,” says McMahon. “The hubs are pieces of 4-in. pipe, 4-in. rings and 4-in. metal balls.”

McMahon dressed up the railing by filling open spaces with scrollwork. He used Italian made, 1/2-in., hammered square steel scroll sections that he bought from Triple S steel supply.

“They were cut apart and cold-worked to shape and welded in place,” says McMahon. “They are like dust zephyrs coming off the wheels to give them motion.”

The top rail sits 42 in. above the porch deck. McMahon used 5-in. wide steel for it.



Robert McMahon used a Harbor Freight tubing roller to make this “half-wheel” porch railing.

“It is wide enough that we have used it for a table surface when entertaining,” he says.

McMahon built the railing in six 8-ft. sections and two 13-ft. sections, 72 ft. in all. Each section is secured to wood posts with sixteen 6-in. lag screws.

“Powder coating the sections was about 30 percent of the \$28 per ft. cost,” he says. “My blacksmith buddies get \$200 to \$300 per ft. for custom railings.”

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Robert McMahon, P.O. Box 7008, Knoxville, Tenn. 37921 (ph 865 690-7783; robbo2871@gmail.com).

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Giant Tomato Plant Produces Monster Yield

Jim Zamzow has harvested as much as 1,000 lbs. of tomatoes from his monster tomato plants that reach 20 ft. high or more, outgrowing his 17-ft. tall tomato cages. He credits sun, space, and the soil-building products he markets under his own Dr. JimZ brand.

For monster tomatoes, he pours on the plant food and dedicates a larger growing area. “I prepare a plot approximately 12 by 12 ft. as the roots from the plant can grow outward as much as 6 ft. from the plant,” says Zamzow. “Try to select a place not too close to trees, as they will grow in and steal the nutrients.”

Once the soil is worked, he spreads 20 lbs. of Tomato Secret and tills it into the top 12 in. He then digs a 1-ft. by 1-ft. hole in the center of the plot and mixes in a cup of Tomato Secret. He also adds a package of eight, 3-2-1 Planting Tabs with 11 species of mycorrhizae to aid the roots in accessing water and nutrients.

Just before the last frost date, he sets a 6 to 8-week old, non-determinate seedling in the hole and mixes an ounce of his “Chicken Soup for the Soil” around the plant. It is a mostly plant-based mix of minerals and nutrients selected to feed soil microbes.

“I also protect against possible frost with Wall O’ Water or something similar,” says Zamzow.

The next step is installing the support frame. For less than monster tomatoes, he suggests using a 7 by 10-ft. section of 10-ga. concrete reinforcing wire for supports. He weaves rebar vertically through the sides and wires them in place or sticks them into the soil.

His preferred monster cage is considerably larger and stronger. “It should be 12 to 20 ft. tall and 30 in. in diameter,” says Zamzow. “I installed a permanent frame 20-ft. tall made from 5/8-in. rebar set in concrete.”

He advises placing concrete inside plastic buckets to prevent contaminating the soil.

“A few weeks after the soil has warmed, mulch the soil 4 to 6 in. deep from the frame out, leaving the interior open,” says Zamzow. “I use alfalfa hay, but chopped kudzu works well in the South. Both contain triacontanol, a growth hormone. If weeds come through, add more mulch. Mix a pint of Chicken Soup for the Soil and dampen the mulch.”

As the plant grows, he advises training it to the rebar. “Your plant will grow sucker stems at each branch node,” says Zamzow. “Allow one sucker to grow for every vertical



Jim Zamzow pours on the plant food to grow monster tomato plants that can reach 20 ft. high or more, outgrowing his 17-ft. tall tomato cages.

support in the frame, making sure they are at least a foot apart. Train them to the support and pinch off all others.”

He suggests using soft material like strips of nylon stockings, soft yarn or commercial plant ties for securing the stems. Stems should be tied loosely so as to not restrict growth.

“Spread one cup of Tomato Secret inside the framework and water it in with Chicken Soup for the Soil solution every 2 weeks,” says Zamzow. “Spray foliage weekly with fermented Chicken Soup tea diluted 1 to 10 with water. Continue this to the end of the season, and you’ll have bushels of delicious, nutritious tomatoes.”

While Zamzow endorses his own proven methods, he challenges FARM SHOW readers to experiment.

“Variations to what I have done will also work,” he says. “Be creative and enjoy growing.”

Dr. JimZ products are available online, as well as from select retailers.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Dr. JimZ, 933 N. Kings Rd., Nampa, Idaho 83687 (ph 208 318-0164; www.drjimz.com).