

Weeder comes in one to eight rows and has adjustable row width and an available PTO pump hookup.



## Unique Weeder For Specialty Crops

For farmers raising specialty crops such as chili peppers, tobacco, watermelon, tomato, pumpkin, cactus or others, A1 Implements offers "The Weeder," a uniquely designed hybrid weeding machine.

"What sets our equipment apart from the competition is that it's made simpler, heavier and designed really well," says Cody Arvin, one of the company's co-founders. "Plus, it works well in a large range of specialty crops."

The unit comes with an available PTO pump hookup for hydraulic connection or remote hookups. Machines use from two to four remotes depending on overall size.

Hand hydraulic or foot pedal lifts are available for smooth operation.

The Weeder is available in 1 to 8-row models with row units adjustable from 30 in. to 72 in. Smaller units are also available.

Larger units can cover up to 30 acres in an 8-hour day.

Hydraulically-driven rotors with replaceable teeth are manually controlled, moving in and out of crop rows by the operators seated on the rear frame seats. Teeth last an average of 200 acres before needing replacement.

Machines can be ordered with varied toolbar designs and a lift capability of 3 1/2 ft. to work above higher crops.

The smallest Weeders begin at \$5,900 and the larger models go up to \$40,000 plus S&H.

"We have a few dealers but mostly to handle parts for us," Arvin says. "We like to deal directly with our customers."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, A1 Implements, 237 E. 1st St. Morehead, Ky. 40351 (ph 606-388-3114; info@a1implements.com; www.a1implements.com).

## Garden Tool Changes Heads Fast

The Connecta® from Johnny's Selected Seeds is an interchangeable tool system designed to withstand the rigors of market gardening. A simple push-button release lets you change out the cultivation head in seconds.

"The Connecta tool system resulted from several years of gathering feedback from farmers and trusted tool consultants," says Joshua D'Errico, Johnny's Selected Seeds Community Marketing Specialist. "We've made design adjustments over the last few years based on rigorous on-farm trialing."

The tool is built from durable, corrosion-resistant stainless steel and cast aluminum, while the handle is made from ash. It's compatible with multiple styles of tool heads, including a stirrup hoe, contour wire head, and collinear hoe. The contour wire hoe head has a low-profile design for cultivating crops like lettuce spaced 4 in. and 6 in. apart. Use it to cut close to crop stems with minimal risk of harming them. The collinear hoe head lets you remove weeds from an upright, ergonomic position and works best for crops spaced 4 in. to 7 in. apart.

You can store the extra tool heads on the included belt loop clip for quick switches while out in the field.

Johnny's sells both a Connecta Starter Kit



**Connecta interchangeable tool system offers different heads that attach to a carry loop.**

(\$89.99) and Cultivation Kit (\$129). The Starter Kit includes the Connecta receivers, ashwood handle carrying clip, and both a collinear 4-in. hoe head and contour wire 4-in. hoe head. The Cultivation Kit adds a 7-in. collinear head and a 6-in. contour wire head. It's also compatible with a 6-in. stirrup hoe head, sold separately.

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## How To Transition to Certified Organic

Transitioning into certified organic farming takes time, patience, and a lot of paperwork. But seeing compacted ground transform into rich black soil teeming with worms and insects has made the journey worthwhile, says Keba Hitzeman of Pleasant Hill, Ohio. After taking over her parents' 180-acre farm in 2010, Hitzeman and her husband Dennis allowed some acreage to go back to nature to preserve topsoil in flood-prone areas along the river.

Since they didn't have equipment, the Hitzemans let a renter work the acreage until

trees started dying due to overspray from crops being treated with 2,4-D. When the renter's contract expired, the couple let the land go fallow for a couple of years until they could decide on a more sustainable direction. Farmers saw the idle land and asked about renting it. Among them was Adam, a farmer who shared the Hitzemans' ideals.

Costs for certified organic farming are higher than conventional farming, and it takes at least 3 years to become certified. So, they agreed on a sharecropping arrangement, splitting the expenses and income on about



Double-bladed mower attachment can be mounted on both sides of tractor using existing hydraulics to save time by mowing both sides in orchards.

## Dual Cutting Option Cuts Down Weeding Time In Orchards

The Dyna-trim DT5300 hydraulic (double option) mower attachment from Edwards Equipment removes the need to mow grass, weeds and brush in both directions when cleaning up orchard fruit rows, vineyards, berry farms and trellised orchards.

Rather than mowing on only one side of a tractor, the DT5300 offers the option of cutting mowing time in half by reaching twin discs out between the trees on either side.

Large single discs can be mounted in a variety of ways, including to the edge of an offset mower, toolbar, 3-pt. hitch, or loader. Matching left-hand cutting discs can also be mounted in tandem to work both sides of the row, saving up to 50 percent in time plus cutting back on equipment wear and tear.

The system adapts to most tractor hydrau-

lics with direct coupled hydraulic motor drives. The unit also features rugged pivot joints for a wide range of movement.

"Edwards Equipment has been around since 1946, making rugged equipment that's sized to run on existing tractor's hydraulic systems," says Randy Searl, Manager. "Our equipment works the way it's supposed to, which is what our customers want."

The double-bladed DT5320 including hoses to the rear remote valves start at \$10,068 plus S&H.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Edwards Equipment Company, 4312 Main St., Union Gap, Wash. 98903 (ph 800-452-5151; sales@edwards-equip.com; www.edwards-equip.com).

100 acres. By 2018 some of the acreage was certified, and all the fields were certified in 2021. Adam grows corn, soybeans, and a couple of hay mixes. The Hitzemans have two pastures for sheep and goats.

Hitzeman shared her story in Grit magazine and offers a few suggestions for farmers considering organic certification.

Take time to carefully research options in your area that are best for you. Sometimes organically grown (without certification) or Certified Naturally Grown (beyond certification) are more suitable, she notes. Hitzeman looked at websites at Ohio State University Extension and USDA, then searched "how to become Certified Organic in Ohio." She chose to work with the Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association for certification. (OEFFA serves farmers in other states, as well.)

"Paperwork for the first few years is overwhelming," Hitzeman says, noting that some information needs to be repeated in several places in the application. The first application is 20+ pages and requires a field history for the past three years and plans for the future with documentation of equipment, seed, soil amendments, soil tests, buffer zones, harvest handling, and more. Once certified, annual renewals are easier, she notes.

Save receipts and input labels and organize and maintain paper and computer files. Adam is responsible for finding seed and input sources that are approved, and Hitzeman takes care of the certification paperwork. "It's good to have a second set of eyes looking at it," she notes, adding that if things get missed, they can be fixed by email or when the inspector comes each year. It's part of the process and fee they pay to OEFFA annually for certification.

Expect questions and sometimes uncomfortable conversations with neighbors about what you're doing, especially if organic



**Costs for certified organic farming are higher than conventional farming, and it takes at least 3 years to become certified.**

farming isn't common in your area.

Hitzeman notes organic practices are becoming more common, and with growing demand for organic products, there are grants available, especially for young and new farmers to get started. Growing organically is more expensive, and can be challenging to find seed and input suppliers that meet organic standards.

At the same time, organic crops earn premium prices compared to commodity markets. Adam works with an elevator to purchase corn and beans, and the hay is sold to organic livestock farmers. For the Hitzemans, a huge benefit is improved soil and the perimeter areas filled with wildlife and pollinators.

"In the end, you have to follow what you think is right," Hitzeman says. "For us, that means treading on the land as lightly as we can to leave things better than we found them."

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