



RYSE Recon ultra-light aircraft can be used in crop scouting, checking livestock or fences, and servicing irrigation systems when crops are high.

One-Man Drone Perfect For Farm Use

"Anyone can fly this thing. You don't have to be a pilot, and it takes very little time to learn to operate," says Mick Kowitz, CEO of RYSE Aero Technologies of Mason, Ohio, about the company's all-electric, vertical takeoff and landing drone.

The vehicle qualifies as an ultralight because it weighs less than 255 pounds, has a single occupant, goes less than 63 mph, and therefore doesn't require a pilot's license.

"It has six independent motors, each with their own battery pack," Kowitz says. "Each unit has its own controller and propeller."

Kowitz says the idea behind their independence is that the propulsion units "talk" to each other, an important safety feature built into the Recon.

"If you lost a motor for any reason, you could still fly and land safely with the vehicle because the others would compensate," he says. "By comparison, if you see someone flying a glider with a small motor on it and that motor goes down, they're going down hard."

The flight controls are two joysticks,

with one on each side of the pilot. The left stick will take you up in the air if you push it forward and down to the ground if you pull it back. If the joystick is in the center, the vehicle will hover.

"The right stick is the directional stick," he says. "Push it forward to fly straight ahead and pull it back to fly in reverse. If you push it right, the vehicle slides to the right and vice-versa to fly left."

There's also a thumbwheel on the right stick that allows the pilot to pivot the Recon in a circle while hovering. "It's like spinning in a circle while you sit in an office chair," he says.

The folks at RYSE Aero Tech found out firsthand how this could benefit American farms. They've been spending time at farm shows talking to producers and asking what they thought.

"We asked farmers how they could use this, and they came back with interesting responses," he says. "They said in crop scouting, reducing soil compaction, and as a much easier way to get to your irrigation system when the crops get high."

It's a great timesaver when trying to get around in difficult terrain. If a producer is flying a drone to see what's out there, you'll still have to bring the drone back and make a long walk or drive to wherever you're going.

"We visited with a producer in Steamboat Springs, Colo., who had a reservoir 6 miles from his operation," Kowitz says. "It took him 45 minutes to get there with an ATV. With our vehicle, he's there in a few minutes."

Some of the key features of the RYSE Recon include: up to a 25-mile range, the ability to operate on both land and water; six independent propulsion systems with rechargeable batteries.

Kowitz says the MSRP for a unit is \$150,000. "If you can get things done faster and more efficiently by using a Recon, this will more than pay for itself over time."

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Edes slid an old tire over his snow blade and secured it with a rope to keep gravel from getting dug up by the blade.



Tire Keeps Snow Blade From Digging In

After years of digging up gravel with his snow blade that later had to be cleaned up in the spring, Joseph Edes, La Veta, Colo., hit on an idea that lifts the blade just enough to keep it out of the rocks.

"I slid an old tire onto the end of my rear snow blade. Keeps it from digging in and just works great. If the blade gets overloaded, I just lift it to dump the snow and then back up to push it out of the way. The tire helps when backing up, too," says Edes.

A short length of rope holds the tire in place.

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Dalton removed the short spray booms from the sprayer mast frame and mounted the new spray booms. No other changes were needed to the older sprayer.

Boom Swap Speeded Up Spraying

Craig Dalton cut his spray time by more than 2/3 with a pair of new booms. Saving time is important when highbush blueberries are a sideline to the 180-head family dairy business. Dalton and his brother Marc raise Jerseys on farms that neighbor the 70-acre blueberry farm.

"When we bought the farm, it was for the land, but I ended up enjoying the berries," says Dalton. "We've been raising blueberries now for 4 years. There's a little pocket here, a micro-climate that lets us harvest blueberries very early, even for our area."

The early harvest is great for getting the use of harvesting machines, but Dalton has to get the berries to maturity first.

"A 500-gal. sprayer that covered two rows

at a time came with the farm," says Dalton. "It took 10 hrs. to spray the berries. Now I can do it in 3 hrs. spraying six rows with 60-ft. of booms."

Dalton removed the short spray booms from the sprayer mast frame and mounted the new spray booms. No other changes were needed to the older sprayer.

"The only negative was the booms came from a dealer in Ontario," says Dalton. "Shipping was as much as the booms, but it was still worth it."

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'Made It Myself' Garden Tools



Garden hoe with 6-in. markings.

"My homemade garden tools might look a little crude, but they make planting our 1/4-acre garden a little easier," says Steve Faber, Tiffin, Ohio.

"One quick and easy idea helps to measure row spacing. I mark off the handle of my hoe in 6-in. increments, so there's no need to carry a measuring stick.

"I made a row covering tool from scrap steel. Saves a lot of bending over when going back down the row to cover seeds.



Row covering tool.



Tire and rim used to go over newly planted garden rows.

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