



Handle includes three main pieces: one that fits into the shank and attaches to the pivot point, another that fits into the planter casting's notches, and a spring-loaded handle for small adjustments.

Add-On Delivers Micro-Adjustments To Planter Depth Settings

"When we think about setting planter depth, even though we have the depth setting the same from one row to another, there are still variations from factors like moisture lines that impact consistent crop emergence," says Precision Planting Marketing Director Bryce Baker.

To address this yield-impacting concern, Precision Planting developed the DuraWear Depth Handle, an in-house-engineered replacement for factory-installed depth-control parts on John Deere planters.

Baker explains that they typically encourage clients to perform a pre-season calibration check to fine-tune depth settings using existing components and blocks placed under the gauge wheels. Although somewhat successful, this practice still leaves clients seeking more precise settings.

The DuraWear Depth Handle includes three main pieces: one that fits into the shank and attaches to the pivot point, another that fits into the planter casting's notches, and a spring-loaded handle for small adjustments. By using micro-adjustments between the

casting ridge and the handle, farmers can fine-tune each row unit for more consistent planting depth. Once calibrated, the setting is secured with a lock nut.

"It's a simple process to install and fine-tune," Baker says. "Remove the old handle, install the new one with the roll pin and snap ring, then lower the planter onto blocks that equal the desired depth. Adjust each row until it's tight against the gauge wheels, tighten the lock nut, and move to the next row. Once each lock nut is tightened, the planter is calibrated."

The units are fitted and assembled in Illinois and are available for shipment throughout North America through Precision Planting dealers. A helpful dealer locator page is available on the company's website.

The Precision Planting Depth Handles are priced at \$120 per row, plus S&H.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Precision Planting, 23207 Townline Rd., Tremont, Ill. 61568 (ph 309-925-5050; info@precisionplanting.com; www.precisionplanting.com).

Portable Hay Feeder Goes Automated

HayDrop, an automated feeding system for horses, was developed by TEKZO, a Danish startup founded by three engineering students from the Technical University of Denmark. The system was designed to address two simple needs: to make accurate feeding easier, even when it's difficult to be present, and to help horse owners reduce the risk of gastric ulcers and other issues associated with prolonged fasting.

Research suggests that 60% to 70% of horses develop gastric ulcers during their lives. In many stables, horses go 8 to 12 hr without hay overnight, whereas veterinarians generally recommend limiting fasting periods to 4 to 6 hr whenever possible.

"Most existing automated forage solutions are large, permanent installations that can be expensive and difficult to move," says TEKZO Director Mads Emil B. Andersen. "HayDrop is designed to be compact, portable and easy to install. Owners can use it in a stable, take it to competitions, or move it between locations without needing electrical wiring or structural modifications."

The main component of the HayDrop is a reinforced tarpaulin bag designed to store animal feed. It holds approximately 5 kg of hay, depending on the forage's density and type. The second component is the HayUnit, which houses the timer and release mechanism.

The system is designed as a standalone product that does not require Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, power cables or permanent installation. It can be hung where needed in a stable, paddock or shelter. For users who want a more permanent mounting solution, TEKZO also offers a sturdy HayMount option.



HayDrop is battery-powered. Users set the desired feeding time, and the HayUnit releases the hay automatically.

"HayDrop is battery-powered, with a battery life of approximately 6 mo, depending on usage. It's recharged via USB-C. Users simply set the desired feeding time, and the HayUnit releases the hay automatically," Andersen explains. "Our main customers are horse owners, boarding stables, competition riders, and anyone looking to improve feeding routines and horse welfare."

Currently, HayDrop is available only in Europe. Based in Denmark, TEKZO is focused on European expansion but plans to enter the North American market as interest is growing quickly.

HayDrop retails for just under \$400 USD, plus S&H. Accessory and mounting solution pricing varies by configuration.

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A Smarter Way To Monitor Insects In Prairie Crops

By Bruce Derksen, Contributing Editor

Insect monitoring in agriculture remains one of the most time-consuming and labor-intensive tasks for growers and agronomists. Traditional scouting requires repeated field visits, significant travel, and hours spent identifying insects and assessing population levels, making effective pest management decisions difficult.

While completing an M.Sc. in Entomology at the University of Saskatchewan, Teresa Aguiar-Cordero, co-founder of IPPM Now, recognized this challenge and saw an opportunity to modernize the process.

"I realized how much time and effort are required to monitor insects across multiple fields. At the same time, I saw that growers and agronomists needed faster ways to identify insects, understand pest pressure in their area, and make informed management decisions," Aguiar-Cordero says.

She also noticed that beneficial insects, such as pollinators and natural enemies, are often overlooked in monitoring programs.

"While growers regularly scout for pests, much less attention is paid to tracking the insects that provide valuable ecosystem services. That's a major aspect that sets IPPM Now apart from anyone else," Aguiar-Cordero says.

She explains that insects play a vital role in supporting healthy agroecosystems and can influence pest management outcomes. By tracking both harmful and beneficial insects, growers gain a more complete understanding

of what is happening in their fields.

Aguiar-Cordero's efforts led to IPPM Now, an AI-powered insect monitoring platform that helps growers identify insects more quickly, understand pest pressure in real time, and make informed management decisions, all while reducing scouting costs and effort. The application boasts more than 90% recognition accuracy.

The platform combines two technologies. The first is a visual scouting tool that uses machine learning to identify insects from smartphone photos taken during field inspections. The second is a Smart Trap system that remotely monitors insects captured on sticky rolls, enabling users to collect data without frequent trips to the field. Both technologies run on the same platform, allowing users to manage insect identification and remote monitoring in a single application.

Users can use the app independently for visual scouting and insect identification. If they also have a Smart Trap, they can register and manage it on the same platform, enabling remote monitoring of insect captures and direct data delivery in the app.

"Once an insect is identified, the system classifies it as a pest, pollinator or natural enemy," Aguiar-Cordero says. "For pest species, users receive crop-specific economic threshold information along with integrated pest management recommendations that include cultural, biological and chemical control options."

IPPM Now and the Smart Trap technology

are being validated across Prairie crops, including canola, wheat, lentils, faba beans, peas and soybeans, in Saskatchewan, Alberta and Manitoba. The platform continuously collects field data to improve its AI models and builds a larger dataset of insects captured on sticky cards and Smart Trap sticky rolls, improving identification accuracy before activating automated insect detection alerts.

Some field validation also compares Smart Trap captures with conventional sampling methods, such as sweep-net sampling. It has already been trained to recognize many of the region's major pest insects, pollinators and beneficial predators.

The development team is seeking growers, agronomists, researchers and other interested users to participate in the testing phase, test the app, and provide feedback. A beta access link is available on the website.

"We're actively looking for partners interested in working with us on field validation, technology integration, data collection and commercialization."

The platform remains free during validation, with user feedback helping refine its functionality and reliability. After commercialization, IPPM Now plans to offer a free identification and mapping service alongside a premium subscription, priced at approximately \$10 CAD per month, which includes advanced alerts, forecasting tools, management recommendations, and data export capabilities.

"Our vision has also become clearer as we



IPPM is an AI-powered insect-monitoring platform that helps growers quickly identify insects, understand pest pressure in real time, and make informed decisions.

continue talking with growers, agronomists, researchers and industry partners," Aguiar-Cordero says. "Rather than simply developing an insect identification app, our goal is to build an integrated insect monitoring and decision-support platform that connects field scouting, remote Smart Trap monitoring, AI-assisted identification, economic thresholds, and science-based pest management information, while also considering beneficial insects such as pollinators and natural enemies."

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