Intermill used the same Deere flex head to harvest both corn and soybeans.

PLANTS AND HARVESTS CORN, BEANS AND SMALL GRAINS WITH THE SAME EQUIPMENT

He Solid Seeds Corn With Deere 750 Drill

"I don't have all the answers yet, but I'm convinced solid-seeded corn is a practical idea. I'm doing it again this year," says Todd Intermill, Colman, S. Dak., who used his 15-ft. Deere 750 no-till drill last year to plant 17 acres of "solid seeded" corn in 7 1/2-in. rows.

"It sounds crazy until you stop to think that until 10 or 15 years ago, almost all soybeans were planted in rows. Now solid-seeded beans are very common. Maybe the same thing will happen with corn," Intermill told FARM SHOW.

He points to narrow-row corn research done by Pioneer Hi-Bred International in eastern South Dakota and western Minnesota. Studies in 1991 and 1992 found a 5 to 13 bu./acre yield advantage for 20-in. row corn over 30-in. row corn. "Why stop with 20-in. rows?" asks Intermill. "If I'm going to plant no-till anyway, why plant in rows at all? The extra stalks aren't a problem with no-till. And by solid-seeding corn I can use the same drill to plant all my crops, instead of spending $25,000 for a new no-till drill that I use only to plant soybeans."

Intermill drilled five different 93 to 101-day hybrids and one dwarf hybrid. Each hybrid had a different seed size. "Grain drills were designed to plant small grains so getting the right corn populations can be tricky but I found that seed corn drops very evenly from the fluted meters. The problem is that it can get hung up in the drill's ribbed seed tubes and bunch up in the furrow. I found that medium flat seed drops more evenly through the tube than round seed. A smooth-sided, flexible seed tube like the type used on older grain drills would probably provide a more even stand."

The experimental corn fields were harvested with both a Deere 220 flex head and a 20-in. row corn head, both mounted on his Deere 7700 combine. It was a tough year for growing corn in his area because wet conditions delayed planting until May 23rd. Yields averaged 83 bu./acre compared to 90 to 113 bu. for his conventionally-planted corn.

Based on his tests, Intermill says he thinks a short statured plant works best for solid-seeded corn when a flex head is used to harvest it because it allows the reel to reach the ears. He experimented with a 75-day, 4-ft. high Cargill dwarf hybrid that he planted at 42,000 seeds per acre (his goal was 50,000 seeds per acre). He says plant height isn't a concern when a corn head is used.

Intermill calculated population by using a formula in his drill's operating manual - and a lot of guesswork. "Deere's operating manual mentions that the 750 no-till drill can be used to solid seed corn, but it doesn't have a calibrating chart for corn. However, I was still able to consistently get a plant population in the low-to-mid 30,000 per acre range."

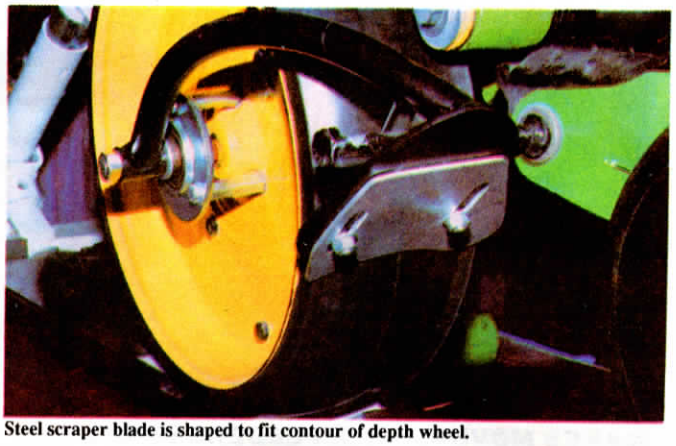
Solid seeded corn matures more slowly than row corn so it may be best to plant a shorter-season hybrid that your area would normally require, says Intermill. "Most seed companies have one or two numbers in the 90 to 95-day maturity range. I plan to mount liquid fertilizer tanks on the drill to apply starter fertilizer to get the crop growing faster."

Intermill says combine manufacturers could design a header specifically for solid-seeded corn. Until they do, he says either a flex head or corn head will work. "A corn head eliminates the need to plant short corn hybrids and does a good job of harvesting solid-seeded corn. The one I used got 98% of the ears.

"One problem with a flex head is that the reel may be too low to reach the ears, especially on taller hybrids. A detassler could be mounted ahead of the reel so that it would harvest only the 18 to 24-in. section of the plant where the ear is attached. A flex head takes in a lot more crop material than a corn head. However, most combines are over-powered anyway and can easily handle the extra material."

Intermill also planted corn in twin rows 7 1/2 in. apart, 3 3/4 in. off the center of 30-in. ridges. He used duct tape to close up every other pair of holes on drill. He used a 6-row 30-in. corn head to harvest the paired rows.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Todd Intermill, RR 1, Box 27A, Colman, S. Dak. 57017 (ph 605 534-3136).



Steel scraper blade is shaped to fit contour of depth wheel.

KEEPS DEPTH WHEELS CLEAN TO ENSURE UNIFORM SEED PLACEMENT

New Mud Scraper For Corn Planters

"It's a simple solution to a sticky problem," says Montezuma Welding of its patented new mud scraper for corn planter depth wheels. A 4.5-in. wide steel blade, shaped to fit the contour of the depth wheel's surface, keeps the wheel free of mud and other debris, ensuring uniform seed depth.

"We field tested 100 scraper attachments last year in a wide variety of mud conditions involving no-till, ridge-till and conventional planting. They worked great, enabling planters to maintain uniform seed depth in less than ideal ground conditions," says Lavern Schmidt, president.

The new mud scraper attachment, available to fit all Kinze and all 7000-7300 series Deere Max-Emerge planters, sells for $72 per row. It bolts onto the hub of the depth wheel. The scraper blade is adjustable and doesn't interfere when backing up. "We anticipate that the steel blade will last up to five or more seasons. It's adjustable and can be moved up closer to the wheel at the start of each season," explains Schmidt.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Montezuma Welding & Mfg., Rt. 1, Box 40B, Montezuma, Kan. 67867 (ph 800 759-5157 or 316 846-2482).

Lift Pillow Keeps Cow Upright To Prevent Bloat

"Our new Cow Pillow keeps a downed cow in an upright position so she won't bloat," says Bill King, Winnsboro, Texas.

The "Cow Pillow" is a 2 1/2 ft. wide, 5 1/2-ft. long inflatable rubber tube that's inserted into a large vinyl bag. The pillow is placed on the ground next to the cow and on her right side. Straps are attached around the cow's body just ahead of the back legs and behind the front legs. The pillow is then inflated which tightens the straps.

"It works better than stacking bales beside the cow because the bag stays with her all the time. She can't slide away from it," says King. "I came up with the idea one night after trying to find a way to keep a sick cow up. Cows get tired of holding their body up and lay down on their side and bloat. If they're weak, they can't get back up. They can eventually suffocate from the pressure on their lungs. Cows generally lay on their right side because their digestive system is on that side. They can roll over on their left side, but usually they don't stay there for long. In their weakened conditon they're not likely to flop back and forth from side to side.

"The vinyl bag is very thick and durable so it'll last. It lies loose on the tube so you can flip it inside out to repair it. Two straps will do the job on most cows. However, a third strap in the middle can be used on short or long cows."

Sells for $299.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Bill King, 210 N. Main, Winnsboro, Texas 75494 (ph 903 342-3514 or 800 343-2912).