

These Farmers Built Their Own Narrow-Row Planters



Saltzman built his own 15-row, 15-in. split-row planter out of two old IH 800 models.

15-Row Split-Row Soybean Planter Built From Two Used IH Models

Ron Saltzman, Corning, Iowa, wanted to plant narrow-row soybeans but he didn't want to spend the money for a commercial narrow-row planter. He solved the problem by building his own 15-row, 15-in. split-row planter out of two old International 800 models.

He bought the two mid 1980's planters from area dealers. One was an 8-row pull-type and the other a 12-row, semi-mounted, vertical fold model. He discarded the air module on the 8-row model and mounted the 12-row model's two air modules onto the 8-row planter frame. He mounted six of the 12-row model's row units on front of the toolbar to make "pusher units". He mounted a seventh row unit 20 in. back at the center of the toolbar. He also mounted the hydraulic pump and oil reservoir off the 12-row planter onto the 8-row model.

"I spent a total of about \$10,000 for the two planters and was able to sell some of the leftover row units from the 12-row planter. My Case-IH dealer had a new model 955 – a 6-row, 30-in. or 11-row, 15-in. planter. However, he wanted about \$25,000 for it plus my 1985 IH 6-row, 30-in. planter as trade-in.

"I still use my 6-row 30-in. planter to plant corn, which I harvest with my 6-row 30-in. corn head.

"One big advantage is that my planter has positive tongue weight –lifting the planter puts weight on the tongue which gives the tractor more traction in muddy ground. IH's new 955 split-row planter has the planter units on back of the toolbar and a coupler caddy and all lift assist wheels on front, which takes all the weight off the planter's



He mounted six row units on front of the toolbar to make "pusher units".

Saltzman had a local machine shop make the pusher unit adapter for the row units. He mounted the air modules 9 in. higher than they were on the 12-row planter in order to have clearance for the pusher units. He used the monitor from the 12-row planter and had a new wiring harness made for it so that he can monitor all of the new planter's 15 rows. He also mounted a homemade catwalk across the back of the planter. "The catwalk allows me to fill all the seed boxes without ever having to move my auger wagon," notes Saltzman.

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Easy-To-Transport No-Till Drill Built From Scratch

"For less than the down payment on a new air seeder, we built our own no-till drill," says John Fields, Wasco, Ore., who spent about \$12,000 to build an easy-to-transport 38-ft. drill.

"We looked at several machines and decided to combine a number of different features into one machine. We used our existing 35-ft. Deere 1600 chisel plow and bought used International 510 drill boxes. We bought special "triple delivery" points from a farmer-inventor we heard about and purchased packer wheels from a company in Canada.

"We first moved the fold-up mechanism to the front of the machine, and extended the drill frame out to 38 ft. The drill boxes were removed from the drill frame and drives and

then raised up about 2 ft. over the plow frame to make the gravity flow work on steep hillsides. One box is set a couple feet ahead of the other two so we can fold up for transport. All three boxes are ground-driven via drive lines from the middle box.

"Last fall we seeded 5,000 acres with no problems. In front of the drill, we pulled a 1,000-gal. fertilizer cross cart.

"A number of area farmers have looked at the drill and made favorable comments. We will make detailed plans available for the drill if there's enough interest. We might even put together do-it-yourself kits.

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"It makes quite a colorful sight in the field," says Denny Neubauer, who uses an orange Allis-Chalmers 7040 tractor to pull his home-built red (IH) and green (Deere) planter. It lets him plant soybeans in 18-in. rows and corn in 36-in. rows.

"Poor Man's" Narrow-Row Planter

"I call it my poor man's interplanter because I don't have a lot of money invested in it. It's very simple to operate and lets me plant soybeans in 18-in. rows and corn in 36-in. rows," says Denny Neubauer, Radcliffe, Iowa.

He owned an IH 500 3-pt. mounted, 8-row, 36-in. planter equipped with newer-style model 800 row units as well as lift assist wheels. He paid \$3,000 for a used Deere 7000 8-row, 30-in. planter equipped with Kinze bean meters and converted it to a 7-row, 36-in. planter. He pulls the Deere planter behind the IH planter when planting beans.

To split the rows made by the IH planter, he offset the row units on the Deere planter and mounted a hitch on back of the IH planter. The Deere planter has a single row unit at the center, which results in two 30-in. skip rows for spraying. To raise and lower the Deere planter, he "T'd" the lift assist wheel hydraulics on the IH planter into the Deere planter's hydraulics. He also shortened up the IH planter markers on each side by 18 in. and extended the planter's monitor extension cord back to the Deere planter.

"My total cost was less than \$5,000. It saved me a lot of money because new interplanters that do what this rig does sell for about \$35,000 to \$40,000," says Neubauer. "I used it last spring to plant more than 700 acres of soybeans and it worked great, even though I had to go through some pretty tough wet spots. Yields ranged from 50 to 67 bu. per acre. I planted about 175,000 seeds per acre. I think the narrow 18-in. rows resulted in a 3 to 4 bu. per acre yield advantage, so my Deere interplanter paid for itself the first year. The narrow rows provide early shading which reduces the need for herbi-



To split the rows made by the IH planter, Neubauer offset the row units on the Deere planter and mounted a hitch on back of the IH planter.

cides. I planted some Roundup Ready beans but mostly conventional beans.

"My neighbor Jim Spaid made most of the modifications to the Deere planter, but the entire neighborhood contributed ideas.

"I use the IH planter by itself to plant corn. To plant soybeans I back the IH planter up to the Deere planter and hitch it up, then hook up the hydraulic hose and the monitor cord. I didn't have to add any extra control levers in order to raise or lower the Deere planter. Instead, I use the same hydraulic lever that controls the lift assist wheels on the IH planter to raise or lower the Deere planter. I raise the IH planter on-the-go at the end of the field, and by some engineering fluke there's a delay in the hydraulics so that the Deere planter raises up at about exactly the same spot as the IH planter.

"I thought that I'd have problems turning at the end of the field, but the long hitch on the Deere planter allows it to turn tight behind the IH planter."

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Fields spent about \$12,000 to build this 38-ft. drill. A 1,000-gal. fertilizer cross cart mounts in front of it.