

Innovative farmers keep agriculture progressive

By JERRY WEBB
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NEWARK, Del. — Two men, as old as the average Delmarva farmer, are drawing on their years of experience and mechanical know-how to assemble a giant machine that will have great impact on the way they farm. Two men, who themselves planted corn with a two-row planter and a

team of horses in earlier times, are going to the field this Spring with a 24-row planter that will cover a full 60 feet in one pass. The thousands of dollars spent on this mechanical marvel will cut in half the time needed to plant their acres. Or, looking at it another way, will eliminate the need for a second planter rig that would be required to do the same work under last year's setup.

As they hurried to harvest two-dollar-a-bushel corn last Fall they calculated the acres and yields needed to pay for such an expensive new machine. But with the faith so typical of most farmers they decided that things would get better, that prices wouldn't always be that low and that they would be ready to do the best job

possible when the new crop year rolled around.

All Winter they worked, getting machinery in shape, shopping for supplies, making management decisions. All of their thinking has been geared to that magic day when it would at last be time to start tilling the soil again. Only this time they would do it even better with an efficient new machine that will allow them to plant thousands of acres of corn and soybeans in the few suitable days provided by Mother Nature.

As they toiled in the heated shop last February away from wind and biting cold, they knew the exhilaration of the challenge ahead. They knew it was them and their machines and their skills and their helpers against the world. They would have to be

ready on that special day in Spring to pit their resources against nature, against the American economic system, against the Environmental Protection Agency, the Chicago Board of Trade, the European Common Market and the Russian minister of agriculture. It would be that small group of men and few big machines racing against everything that can go wrong between then and the time when the crop is marketed. It would be a race run so many times before — first with horses then with awkward tractors and now with the most sophisticated of machines. But the challenge has always been there and it's surely no easier now to earn a good living from the farm than it was 50 years ago.

So on into the day the two

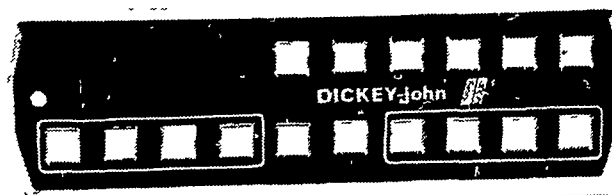
men worked as the sun made its arc and started to settle in the west. There was more to do before the monster would be complete and before they could get on to other preparations.

The thought must have crossed their minds from time to time — was this a good decision? Will farming be good enough in the years ahead to pay for such an expensive machine? Was the old way good enough? But

then they remembered the horses and the two-row planters and the few acres they were able to farm in the early days. And they remembered the many other changes they've seen and been a part of. And they knew this change was necessary also. Perhaps not as significant as that first tractor or first combine, but no less a part of an attitude that has kept them on the forefront of American agricultural progress.

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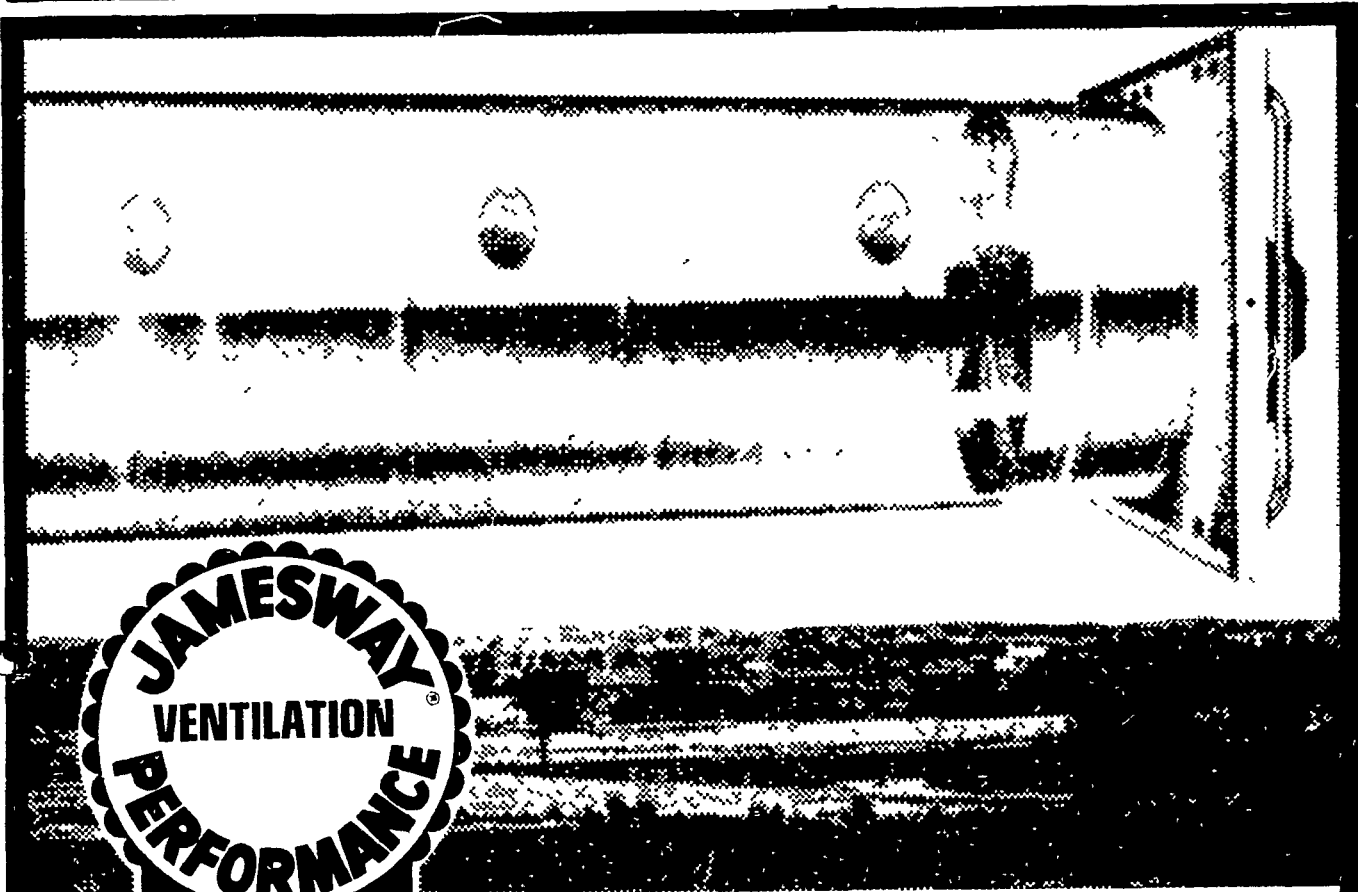
Dickey-John's new Tractor Performance Monitor is designed to help farmers operate his four-wheel-drive tractor more efficiently. The system gives him one-console monitoring of his tractor's vital functions.

The console of the Tractor Performance Monitor is a miniature computer that can store and analyze information. The console consists of a single digital readout and a series of selector buttons. At the touch of a button, the console delivers a direct digital readout of engine RPMs, PTO speed, battery voltage, true ground speed, acres worked, distance traveled, elapsed engine hours or percentage of wheel slip.

The console mounts in easy view on the tractor's hood or fender and the single display is bright and centrally located.

The Tractor Performance Monitor also has three programmable alarms. One to warn of excessive wheel slip. One to indicate excessive ground speed. And one to remind the farmer of elapsed engine hours when critical maintenance checks are due.

The Tractor Performance Monitor operates on the tractor's twelve volt battery, but it has its own automatically recharging power source that allows it to retain its memory when the tractor is shut down or when the battery is disconnected. The Tractor Performance Monitor is easily installed on most four-wheel-drive tractors.



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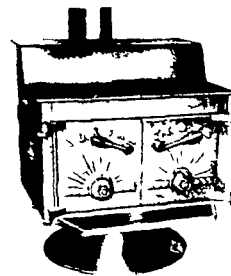
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