

Table-top farming has its advantages

By Russel Weidman

(Editor's Note - Russel Weidman is a Berks County native who was employed as a farm equipment mechanic for 21 years.

The Christmas Season is upon us, and I find myself reminiscing my childhood.

I grew up in a small town of Bernville in Berks County and lived next to the farm equipment dealer. I could hardly wait for the week before Christmas. This would be the week when the John Deere toys were displayed in the farm store window.

After a long, wishful look, I continued my walk to school, swinging my first grade lunch box (still in my possession today). I was thinking that some day my dad would buy me farm toys. My dad was employed at the dealership and the odds were in my favor.

Christmas morning that year found Russel Weidman a very happy boy. My dad bought me a 1938 Model A toy tractor. I still have this tractor in my collection and it's as good as new.

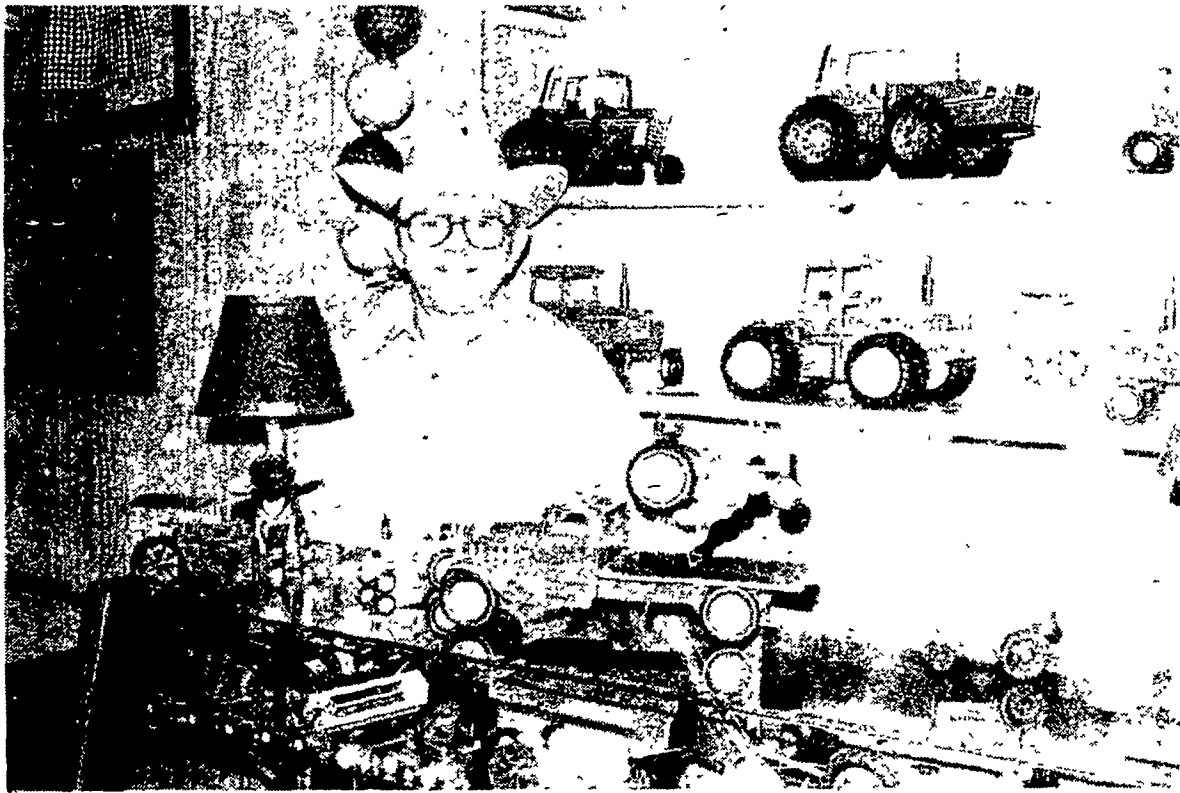
I guess a person never stops wanting. The next item on my list was a flat-bed truck. You see, I had to haul my tractor from the farm to the repair shop, there my dad could make the necessary repairs.

The old dump truck in my toy box, (not so old at that time) would be the answer. The body was the correct width, but too short in length. The 'mechanics' in my mind told me that a cigar box with one end removed would solve my 'serious' problem.

In the year 1948, working part time, I began to earn some money. This gave me the opportunity to start my toy collection. I collected scale-model toys from all of the major farm equipment companies. I remember a trip to the Harrisburg Farm Show one year—returning home with two shopping bags full of toys.

At that age I was beyond the playing stage and began collecting for a hobby. My brother Leshe and I would unpack all the toys three or four times a year. Each toy was admired and examined before repacking it in its original box. During the Christmas season, mother's dining room became the display room.

During the 1960s I thought, "It is time for a grown man to forget about toys." I purchased few toys in that time period. But in the late 1970s I got the fever once again. Although the excitement was still the same with each new toy, the big difference was the increase in prices.



Berks County's Russel Weidman, Bernville, holds his first toy tractor, a 1938 Model A that was a Christmas gift from his father. His next piece added to the farm toy collection was his

flat-bed truck, shown here with later models of tractors that make up his present 160-piece collection.

In the years 1948 through 1952, scale model toys sold for an average of less than two dollars each. Inflation hit the toy market. I was all too apparent that, at my age, the difference between a man and boy is the price of the toy.

Since the start of my collecting, six major tractor companies have discontinued building farm tractors. The toy companies, likewise, allow their inventories to become exhausted, knowing that the full-size tractor is no longer manufactured.

For all those farmers who scoff at farm toys there is an advantage to table-top farming. My plow, purchased in 1946, has its first set of plow shares and shows no indication of wear. Driving to the make-believe fields to harvest the grain, there is no need to check engine oil, water, or make adjustments. Sometimes the room becomes crowded with toys, especially at Christmas time, but there is no dust from disking or baling hay.

A disadvantage with table-top farming is, that there is no tax

deduction for depreciation. Not feeling pessimistic about my investment. I have since learned that my models have increased in value over the years.

Since I have a collection of newer tractors I have retired my 1938 Model A. Today that toy tractor has a permanent resting spot upon the old cigar box truck. These two toys bring back many happy childhood memories.

Looking over my collection of tractors, the old "Model A" may not be the nicest but the memories make it priceless.

PENNSYLVANIA AGRICULTURE



WE'RE GROWING BETTER

CALL

MARVIN J. HORST

DAIRY EQUIPMENT

717-272-0871 1950 S. 5th AVE., LEBANON, PA 17042

For A FREE DEMO

of WIC STRAW CHOPPERS And Other WIC PRODUCTS

WIC MOTORIZED SILAGE WAGON WITH HYDROSTATIC SPEED CONTROL

A GREAT IMPROVEMENT ON EFFICIENCY

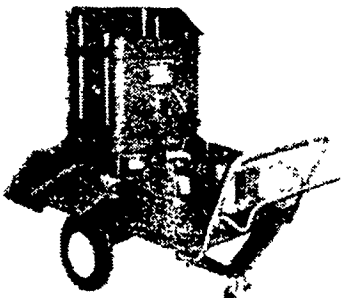
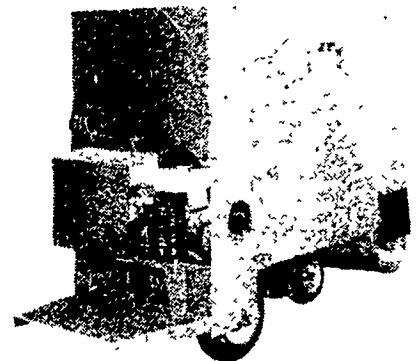
The NEW Hydra-static speed control gives you a choice of speeds from slow to fast. With a touch of the pedal the wagon moves forward or backward; release the pedal and it automatically brakes. You also have a regular feed discharge or a 40-inch high discharge from one or two sides. The WIC Silage Wagon is operated by gas or electric and available in 30-, 45- or 52-bushel sizes. With the 16-inch wheels it goes wherever you want to take it.

★ Electric or Gas Operated

A GREAT IMPROVEMENT ON EFFICIENCY

★ Regular Feed Discharge or 40" High Feed Discharge

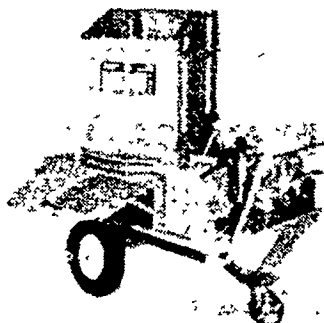
No Competitor Can Beat The Wic Choppers For Performance And Cost



ELECTRIC BEDDING CHOPPER

Wic also makes an electric 200 volt a c chopper or a 24 volt d c battery operated chopper including an automatic charger. These two models are equipped in the factory with a manual starter panel and are protected by fuses to diminish risk of accidents.

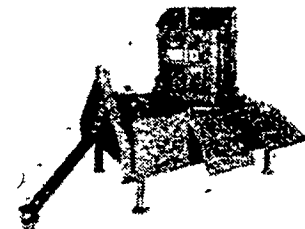
Very quiet these bedding choppers are mostly used on small or medium sized farm. As well as being mobile the 220 volt a c model can be installed stationary. Motor 220 volt a c 3 h p 24 volt d c 21/2 h p



GAS BEDDING CHOPPER

The gas powered bedding chopper is the most popular on the market. It's operation is simple and it handles easily. Equipped with a Honda 4-stroke gas engine, the Wic bedding-chopper insures maximum output while in use.

Motor 5, 7 or 10 h p 4-stroke Honda Starter 5 h p manual, and 7 and 10 h p manual or electric start



POWER TAKE OFF BEDDING CHOPPER

Wic has perfected a three point hitch PTO chopper activated by the power of your tractor. Easy to install, it is ideal for free-stalls, or in strawberry fields for mulching purposes.

DISTRIBUTOR - **PAUL HORNING**
R.D. 1, Stevens, PA 17578 215-267-7208