

# Light Bars Guide Crop Planting

(Continued from Page E1)

Foam markers are hard to see when it is dark or foggy. Additionally when an operator sprays standing crops the foam can fall down between the plants, also making it hard to see.

Also, foam markers will not work when temperatures are below freezing.

Consequently new technology using satellites and the Global Positioning System (GPS) is a welcome addition for crop producers.

Producers now use "light bars," which get their readings from GPS satellites through an antenna mounted on the roof to calculate their position. They then "drive by the box," which tells how the equipment operator how to steer through the field.

The driver's current position is visible by the horizontal line of green, red, and yellow lights. The steering guide looks ahead and displays heading instructions. The operator moves the steering wheel to match the indication.

The driver then is looking forward, "instead of looking back all the time," said Eby.

The system, easily moved from one machine to another, is usable for fertilizing, spreading, spraying, tillage, planting, and combining.

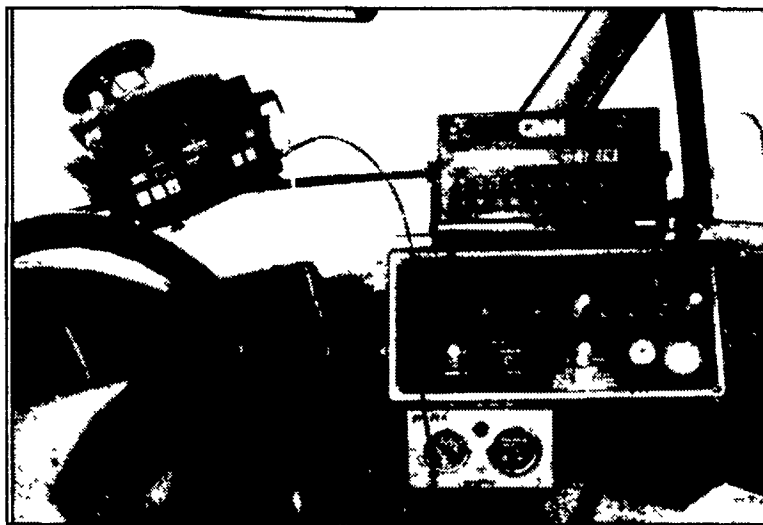
Besides giving information that sends a machine on a straight line, the system can also guide the machine in a contoured line. On the first pass, the

system does not guide but records information, then uses that information to guide the user alongside the previous pass.

There are four components to the system, said Eby — an antenna, which mounts on the roof or hood, the light bar display, and another connecting the light bar display to the power server.

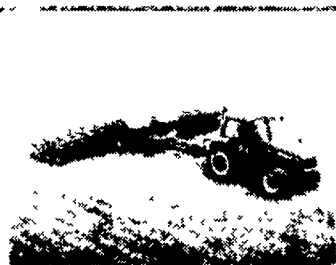
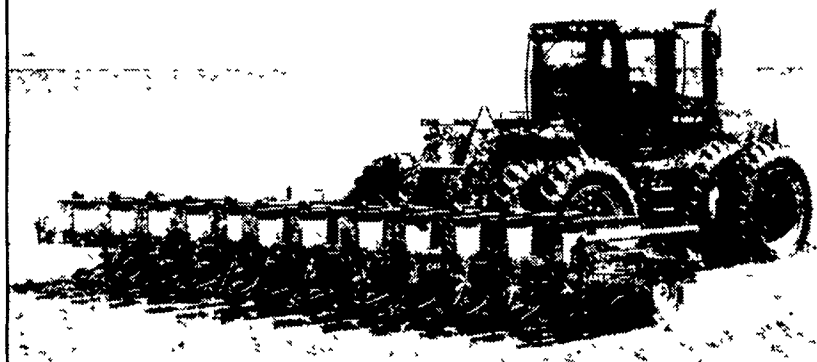
Producers can expect to pay about \$4,000 for the system.

The steering system (right) is easily moved from one machine to another.



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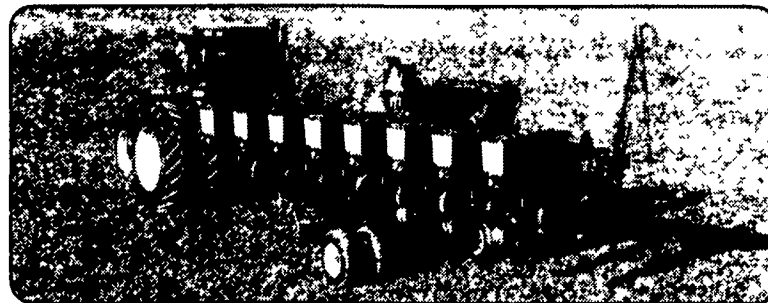
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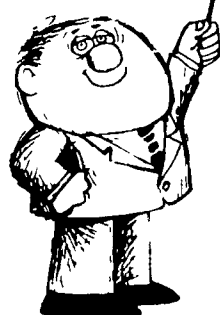
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