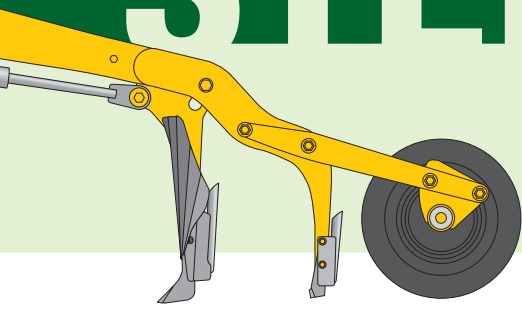


STEERING YOU STRAIGHT



Your Precision Seeding Newsletter

NEW TECHNOLOGY

THE SMART HITCH

SEEDING BETWEEN STUBBLE ROWS



Boost crop yields and seed into stubble of any height with the Smart Hitch.

Increases Crop Yields

Seeding a crop into standing stubble has never been an exact science... until now.

Straw Track Manufacturing has unveiled its newest seeding technology – the Smart Hitch. It is a hitch attachment for all *Seed Master* zero till drills. It guarantees seeding precision by keeping the hoe openers centred between the stubble rows.

“Every zero till farmer knows how hard it is to seed between the rows without tearing into standing stubble and dragging straw over the seed bed. The Smart Hitch makes it easy,” says Norbert Beaujot, P. Eng, the creator of the Smart Hitch.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

FROM THE PRESIDENT

STRAW TRACK PLANS MAJOR EXPANSION

Fifteen years ago, I had an idea. I wanted to design an air drill that could seed precisely and consistently at the same depth. Most seeders had poor depth control back then. They set depth by raising or lowering wide frames that bumped and tilted as they rolled over the field. That design is still common today.

My idea was to attach each fertilizer and seed knife to a separate hydraulically activated arm. Each arm has its own packer wheel at the trailing end that follows the ground independently, gauging depth uniformly for each row, and applying just the right amount of packing pressure. The concept for the *Seed Master™* was born! Field testing has shown the seeding accuracy of this technology is exceptional.

Over the years, we've perfected the *Seed Master* design with features like the *Residue Deflector™* for optimal trash clearance, and this year, we introduced the *Smart Hitch™*. Farmers can now seed with ease between stubble rows of any height, boosting average yields by as much as 17%. You can read more about it on page 1 and 2.

Demand for the *Seed Master* is so strong, we've outgrown our production facility in Regina. This summer, we are embarking on a million dollar expansion project that will triple the size of that facility, streamline our manufacturing process, and increase our production capacity by 600%!

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2





The Smart Hitch Sensor keeps the openers centred between the stubble rows for higher yields and a perfect field finish.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Staying between the rows provides many advantages, says Dr. Guy Lafond, a research

scientist with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) in Indian Head, Saskatchewan.

“It gives you a cleaner seed bed, better seed to soil contact and a more consistent seed depth, resulting in more uniform crop growth, and better competition against weeds.”

Higher Yields

Seeding between stubble rows also increases yields, especially if you cut stubble higher. It traps more snow and shelters crops from the wind, reducing evaporation and keeping plants warmer.

Ongoing research by AAFC in Swift Current has shown as stubble height increases, so do crop yields. Seeding into stubble 18 inches or higher in semi-arid climates can increase crop yields on average by up to 17% for canola, pulses, and spring wheat. Field tests by PAMI have proven cutting stubble higher (up to 20 inches) can speed harvest operations by 50%.

“At a savings of roughly \$10/acre in time, fuel and wear on equipment, that’s a tremendous benefit for farmers,” says Beaujot.

Sensor “Feels” its Way

The “smart” part of the Smart Hitch is a sensor that feels its way along the furrows from last year’s crop. The sensor features two metal disks that straddle the furrow. If one disk drops lower than the other, even slightly, it activates an electric signal that triggers two heavy duty hydraulic rams to push or pull the seed drill back into alignment, keeping the disks running parallel and the openers between the stubble rows.

Not even GPS auto steer systems can match the accuracy of the Smart Hitch for between-the-row seeding, says Beaujot. “People who sell those systems have admitted that to me. GPS auto steer is more effective between the rows when used in conjunction with the Smart Hitch.”

The Smart Hitch guarantees seeding precision.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

New Dealer Network

We are also expanding our sales and service team by partnering with equipment dealers across the prairies. Our new dealer network will provide our customers with prompt, reliable service in their own communities. Buying through a local dealer also gives you the flexibility of trading in your old seeder for a new one.

To locate a *Seed Master* dealer near you, or for seeding advice, product information, or to offer feed back on your *Seed Master*, please call us toll free at 1-888-721-3001 or stop in at our office for a visit. If you’re an equipment dealer or you know a dealer who is currently not carrying the *Seed Master*, we’d like to hear from you, too.

I look forward to seeing you at our upcoming seeding demos. Check page 4 for details. If you haven’t seen our drill yet, please come out and have a look. We’ll show you why it’s the drill of choice for so many top farmers across the prairies. And you can see for yourself how we’ve transformed direct seeding into an exact science.

Best wishes for a great growing season,

Norbert Beaujot, P.Eng.

President, Straw Track Manufacturing Inc.



To locate a Seed Master Dealer near you, please call us toll free at 1-888-721-3001



TECH TALK

SIDE ROW BANDING THE SAFE, EFFECTIVE WAY

Accurate fertilizer placement is critical. There is a lot at stake and no room for error.

That is why Straw Track Manufacturing developed its own unique method of side row banding that is superior to all other banding systems on the market. It places the fertilizer far enough from the seed to safely apply high rates of nitrogen, yet close enough to maximize crop growth.

Two Separate Furrows

The dual knife openers on the *Seed Master* are the key feature that set it apart. The knives create two completely separate furrows for the seed and fertilizer with a protective wall of

soil between them. The fertilizer is placed at an ideal location, precisely 1.5 inches to the side and 3/4 inches below the seed bed.

Many other side banding systems rely on a single opener that places the fertilizer about 1 inch to the side and 1 inch below the seed bed.

“An inch to the side is not always safe, especially with a single opener system. With widespread use of anhydrous nitrogen, we prefer the peace of mind of 1.5 inch placement and separate seed and fertilizer knife openers. The *Seed Master* gives you a very positive and determined separation,” says Norbert Beaujot, P.Eng, the agricultural engineer who designed the *Seed Master*.

“Very Safe” Separation

Dr. Jeff Shoenou, a soil scientist at the University of Saskatchewan says, “With two separate furrows at 1.5 inches apart, I feel the separation of the seed and fertilizer would be very safe.” And at a depth of only 3/4 inches below the seed bed, there is absolutely no seed bed disturbance, which can be an issue with single-opener, side banding systems, says Beaujot.

Researchers have found the accuracy of single-opener side banding can be hit and miss as wear on the opener alters the separation between the seed and fertilizer. Long term wear is not a problem with the *Seed Master* because the knives continue to create two distinct furrows, ensuring the placement of the fertilizer and seed never changes.

“Our side banding system has been completely successful in all soil types with very high rates of nitrogen. Farmers can feel at ease when using this technology,” says Beaujot

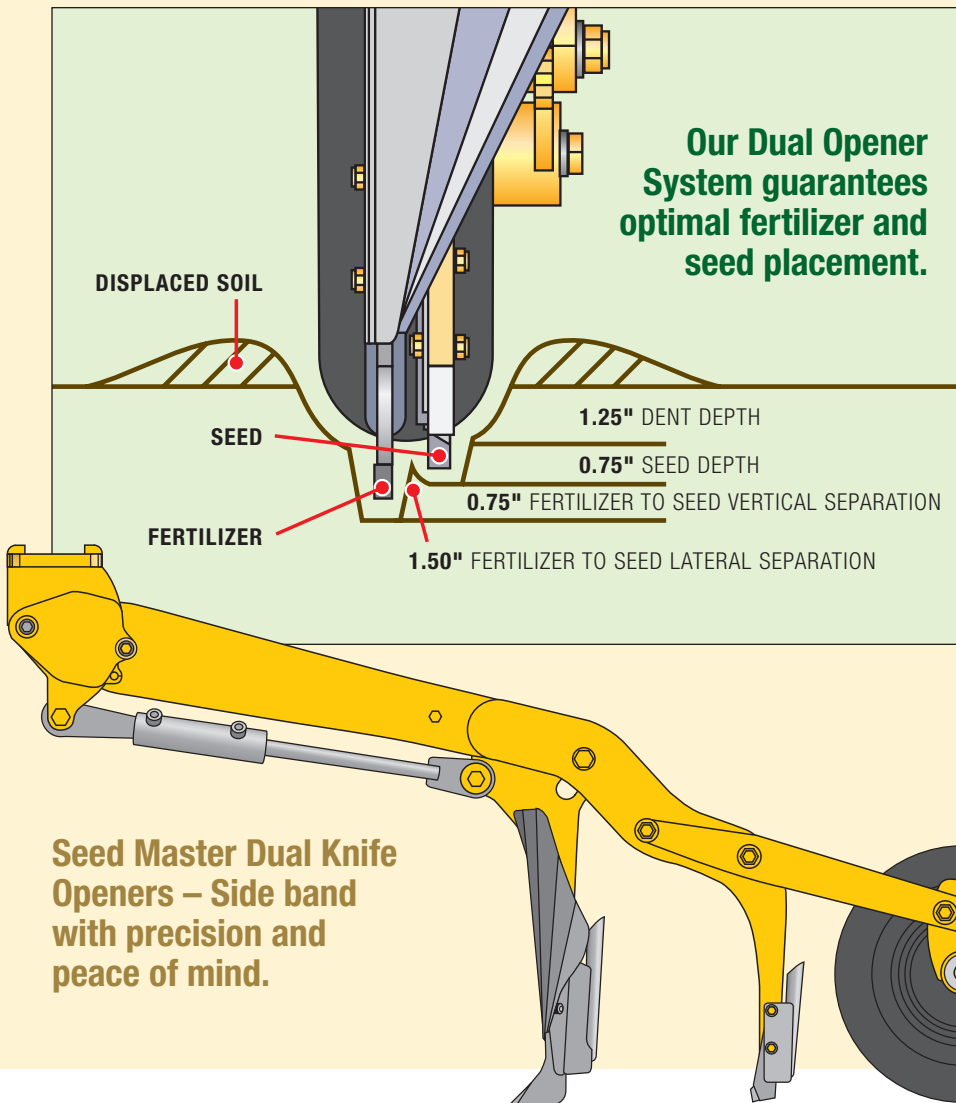
Better than Mid Row

The South East Research Farm Inc. in Redvers, Saskatchewan, has owned a *Seed Master* for two years. Farm Manager Scott Chalmers says he prefers side banding with the *Seed Master* over any mid row system. “Its precision for seed and fertilizer placement is great. The emergence is fast. And it definitely gives crops a jump on weeds compared to mid row banding where the fertilizer is too far from the seed.”

Phosphate placement is a major advantage the *Seed Master* has over mid row banding. Phosphate is immobile and can't reach the seed when placed mid row, forcing farmers to seed place some of it and risk seed burn. Seed placing over 15 to 20 lbs/acre can burn crops such as peas, canola, flax and lentils. Most farmers would prefer using twice that concentration.

“With the *Seed Master*, you can mix the fertilizer in one blend and safely side band it where the seed can access it,” says Beaujot. “Our side banding system is the most effective and safest method of fertilizing your crop. It truly advances the science of fertilizer placement.”

Our Dual Opener System guarantees optimal fertilizer and seed placement.



Seed Master Dual Knife Opener – Side band with precision and peace of mind.

KILLING FROST TEACHES VALUABLE LESSONS

For many prairie grain growers, 2004 was a stressful year. Hopes of a record-breaking harvest were destroyed by the killing frost just weeks before swathing. But scattered amid the frozen fields were success stories – of farmers who managed to harvest bigger crops than most. A closer look at one producer's experience reveals there was more at play than just simple luck.

Shallow, Uniform Seed Depth

"Early seeding at a uniform, shallow depth for fast crop emergence - that's the magic," says Walter Palaschuk, a grain farmer near Wisahart, Saskatchewan, an hour North of Regina. "It's the reason we harvested a good crop with above average yields in spite of the frost. We had neighbors who seeded at the same time or earlier than us in mid-May but harvested much less because their crops didn't mature in time." His canola averaged over 25 bu/acre with one field exceeding 40 bu/acre. He says many of his neighbors reported below average yields of 10 to 15 bu/acre while a few said they got close to 20.

Palaschuk direct seeded his crops at a uniform depth of $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch with his *Seed Master* zero till drill. But he says many neighbors who seeded deeper and unevenly with conventional air seeders ended up with patchy crops that took two weeks longer to fully emerge. That's what happened to Ron Lamb, who farms just North and East of Palaschuk. He tried seeding canola at 2 inches but his air seeder depth varied from 0.5 to 3.5 inches. "I wasn't happy with the emergence at all," says Lamb.

Uneven Seeding is "the worst"

Crops seeded unevenly "are the worst," says Dr. Yantai Gan, an Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada research scientist in Swift Current. Shallow seeded plants emerge several days faster, competing with the slower emerging, deep seeded plants for water, light and soil nutrients. Yields can be reduced by 50% or more and there can be 10 days between the first and last plants to emerge, which can be crucial in a frost year, he stresses.

Dr. Gan says frost or no frost, crops seeded shallow and uniform have a definite edge. They emerge more quickly and evenly, mature faster, and have higher yields. He led a three-year study that showed canola, mustard, and flax planted uniformly at $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch in early May emerged 3 to 5 days faster than seeds planted at 2 inches and had yields up to 25% higher. With lentils, the yields increased up to 15%. A small plot study with wheat showed a 27% yield increase at 1 inch compared to 2 inches.

Lamb says uneven seeding won't be a problem for his crop this year. He bought a *Seed Master* air drill in the spring. "I've seen how well it works. It gives you much better emergence and fertilizer placement. And with the packer wheel on each shank, I just know I'll get a better crop with it."

Note: This story appeared in magazines and newspapers across Western Canada and the Northern US earlier this year.

"Early seeding at a uniform, shallow depth for fast crop emergence – that's the magic."

Walter Palaschuk, A Seed Master Owner



YOU'RE INVITED!

Please join us for a Seed Master seeding demo and field tour.

Come see the Seed Master and Smart Hitch in action!

Lunch is provided. Admission is free.

June 22, 2005

9:30 am – 3:30 pm

October 5, 2005

9:30 am – 3:30 pm

(Includes tall stubble tour.)

The June 22 field day will be held at the Norbert Beaujot Family Farm, 14 miles South of Whitewood, Saskatchewan on Highway 9, then 3 miles West (6 miles North of Langbank). The location for the October event will be announced. For more information, please call **1-888-721-3001**.



For more information or to locate a dealer near you, please contact us at:

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Canada S4L 1C6**

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