

Big Tractor Show at Fremont Is a World-Beater

Miracle Story of Farm Tractor and the Development of the Tractor Demonstration

A Big Tractor at Work

Increasingly Important Role Played by Power Machinery in Economy of the Modern Farm

Horse race meets are on the wane in popularity and the tractor show is drawing the crowds these days.

Only ten years ago if anyone had predicted such an assemblage of tractors and interested spectators as has been seen at Fremont each year for the last four years, the prediction would have met with the same incredulity that would have been displayed had the present world war and the importance of aircraft therein been prophesied.

Nowadays the farmer is converted to power farming and the tractor man's slogan, "Power-Farm America," is hailed with enthusiasm on all sides.

To Save the Horses.

They are too expensive to use up by overworking in the fields in August and August is the month in which the great portion of the plowing is done for winter wheat.

Deep plowing is work that requires a great deal of power. Horses and mules are of interest to supply enough power by hitching plenty of them onto the plow, but they must work slowly, with long rests at the ends of the furrows, or they will not be able to withstand the hot sun of the corn belt summer.

To Convince the Farmer. This is one of the reasons why the farmer has been interested in it from the first. All that was necessary to do to give him interest was to convince him that the tractor could do this work.

Tractor manufacturers at first made large, powerful machines, which were used with some degree of success on the immense wheat fields of Canada, but were too unwieldy and expensive for the ordinary farmer on the diversified farm of the corn belt country.

It was at this show that the tractor manufacturers received the information they needed. They got it direct from headquarters—from the farmer himself. For the farmer came to the show—he came by hundreds and even thousands—and he looked at the machines shown at that time, but it was plainly and frankly, he found them too big and heavy, too clumsy and too expensive to run.



The machines could do in the hands of the real user. Much feeling resulted in the awarding of the honors and there was a general feeling among the contestants that the judging was not fair. No doubt they tried to be fair, but such decisions are difficult.

The Twentieth Century Farmer conceived the idea of eliminating the idea and putting on demonstrations, so that the farmer could see just what the machines could do in the field and be his own judge of their merits.

In 1911 T. F. Sturgess, manager of the Twentieth Century Farmer, was also manager of the Omaha Land show, and invited the tractor manufacturers to demonstrate there what their machines could do.

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machines were sold to men who operated large grain farms, but the majority of farmers found them unsuited to their needs, although they began to see the possibilities of power farming.

The 1914 and 1915 demonstrations, managed by Mr. Hildebrand and his coworkers on the Twentieth Century Farmer, were more successful by far than the first one.

In 1916 the tractor companies decided to cut down the heavy expenses they had been put to in shipping their machines and men all over the country to the various demonstrations.

Idea Spreads Fast. So successful was the 1914 demonstration that farm papers and other organizations all over the country began to organize them, and in 1915 the tractor manufacturers were beset with requests for entry into demonstrations in all parts of the country.

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cess, but the Fremont demonstration led them all by a big margin in attendance, enthusiasm and the ability of the town to care for the crowd. Fremont had had experience and did its part well.

Fremont Stands Alone. This year the association decided, owing to war conditions, to cut expenses still further and only one demonstration will be held—at Fremont, of course. Again the services of A. E. Hildebrand as manager have been sought and secured, and there is no question but what the demonstration this year will be one of the greatest gatherings of any kind ever held in America.

There is an alarming shortage of farm labor this year, in conjunction with a most urgent demand for all the food that the American farmer can raise. Grain farming means work and lots of it. Men can not be found to do it; horses are scarce. It devolves upon machinery to meet this demand. And the tractor is equal to the demand.

It has proved its ability in the field. It is unsurpassed in ability to handle the plowing. It can do the harrowing, the rolling, the discing, the planting. It furnishes power to fill the silo, grind the feed, cut the wood, and even to do the family washing. It is the all-around handy man on the modern farm. They used to say that no machine could be made that would cultivate the corn, but there are a number of machines on the market now that belie this prediction.

Up to the Manufacturer. There is only one thing in the way of the tractor meeting the situation and solving for the world the great question of the food supply. That is the possibility of getting men and material to make the tractors, tractor men, farm paper publishers and all the interests that are in touch with the situation are alive to the danger of this labor and material on the preferred list, along with munitions, for our armies can not fight unless they are fed. The farmer has sent his boys and his hired men to the front to fight, and he must have something else to take their place. He can not farm at best without machinery and implements, and he needs machinery and implements now more than he ever did before.

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The farm tractor has a leading role to play in the present food production campaign. Intensive agriculture is urged on all sides and in order to combat the shortage of food in other countries as well as our own it is necessary that every possible plot of ground be made productive.

Scientific agriculturists are trying to show the farmer how to make two blades of grass grow where one formerly grew. Government officials are urging that all acres be planted instead of allowing any to stand idle, so now manufacturers are developing machinery whereby one may do the work that two or more formerly did.

The advantages of a farm tractor at such a time may be considered in four ways: First—To assist in solving the labor problem. Second—To reduce cost of operation. Third—To increase acreage farmed with same equipment. Fourth—To increase the yield.

Replace Hired Help. The majority of tractors are being purchased for the purpose of assisting in solving the problem of hired help and to have more power available at the busy seasons without having so many horses to feed during the entire year.

In order to lessen the expense of operation the number of horses is being reduced to a minimum. Only such a number as can be used to advantage during the entire year will be kept. Actual data obtained from 120 farmers who have used tractors for an average of fourteen months on farms averaging 300 acres under cultivation shows a decrease of four horses per farm. It also shows a material decrease in the number of men required during the rush seasons. It is not recommended that a sufficient number of horses be disposed of to offset the price of the tractor, but in order to reduce expenses it is necessary to keep the tractor busy and dispose of all horses which cannot be used to advantage under normal conditions.

Statistics Tell a Story

The popularity of the tractor demonstration has grown with the astonishing rapidity of a stalk of Nebraska corn. In 1913 at the first National Power Farming Demonstration there were fifteen tractor manufacturers who entered their machines and the attendance at the show was about 15,000.

Care for More Acres. Many farmers who have purchased tractors are finding time to tend a greater number of acres with the same effort and same equipment and are increasing profits accordingly.

Over 60 per cent of the farmers from whom the above data was collected reported that their yields had been increased since using the tractor. There are occasions on every farm annually when weather conditions prevent preparing the seed bed properly, planting the seed in season or harvesting the grain. At such a time the tractor can be used long hours or night and day, making it possible to prepare the seed bed thoroughly and plant the grain in season, both of which are conducive to larger yields. In some localities early plowing is considered essential for large yields of wheat. Very often at such times the ground is exceedingly hard and the temperature is such that plowing to proper depth is impossible.

Map Showing Location of All the Exhibitors

Map showing location of all the exhibitors. Includes a grid with 'Auto Parking Space' and 'Tractor Road' labels. Lists exhibitors such as Gray Tractor Mfg. Co., Four Drive Tractor Co., Emerson-Brantingham Co., etc. Includes a compass rose and a 'State Council Defense' label.

List of Tractor Makers Who Have Entered Their Products for the 1917 Exhibit

- Advance Rumely Thresher company, LaPorte, Ind.
Albert Lea Tractor company, Albert Lea, Minn.
Allis-Chalmers Manufacturing company, Milwaukee.
Aultman-Taylor Machinery company, Mansfield, O.
Avery company, Peoria, Ill.
Bull Tractor company, Minneapolis.
Bullock Tractor company, Chicago.
J. I. Case Plow Works, Racine, Wis.
J. I. Case Threshing Machine company, Racine, Wis.
Cleveland Tractor company, Cleveland, O.
Dauch Manufacturing company, Sandusky, O.
Deere & Co., Moline, Ill.
Electric Wheel company, Quincy, Ill.
Elgin Tractor corporation, Elgin, Ill.
Emerson-Brantingham company, Rockford, Ill.
Four Drive Tractor company, Big Rapids, Mich.
Gray Tractor Manufacturing company, Minneapolis.
Grand Detour Plow company, Dixon, Ill.
Hart-Parr company, Charles City, Ia.
Holt Manufacturing company, Peoria, Ill.
Huber Manufacturing company, Marion, O.

List of Accessory Makers Who Have Entered Their Products For the 1917 Exhibit

- S. K. F. Ball Bearing company, Hartford, Conn.
Diamond Chin company, Indianapolis, Ind.
Byrns-Kingston company, Kokomo, Ind.
Timken Roller Bearing company, Canton, O.
Delco Engineering company, Dayton, O.
Holly Bros., Detroit.
Buda Motor company, Harvey, Ill.
McQuay-Norris company, St. Louis.
Hyatt Roller Bearing company, Chicago.
Perflex Radiator company, Racine, Wis.
Kokomo Electric company, Kokomo, Ind.
Balso Oil company, Detroit.
Universal Detachable Lug company, Chicago.
R. D. Nuttall company, Pittsburgh.
Standard Oil company, Omaha.
Doman Motor company, Oshkosh, Wis.
New Departure Ball Bearing company, Bristol, Conn.
Champion Spark Plug company, Toledo, O.
K. W. Ignition company, Cleveland.
Vacuum Oil company, New York.
Waukesha Motor company, Waukesha, Wis.
Climax Engineering company, Clinton, Ia.
Sunter Electric company, Chicago.
Moline Radiator company, Racine, Wis.
Eiseman Magneto company, 8 Bush Terminal, Brooklyn.
Malthy Specialty company, Detroit.
Remy Electric company, Anderson, Ind.
Keystone Lubricating company, Chicago.
Erd Motor company, Saginaw, Mich.
Link-Belt company, Chicago.
Minneapolis Steel and Machinery company, Minneapolis.
William J. Oliver Manufacturing company, Knoxville, Tenn.
S. E. Johnson company, Racine, Wis.
Eureka Auto Parts Manufacturing company, St. Louis.
Standard Mechanical Manufacturing company, St. Louis.
Muzzy-Lyons company, Detroit.