

# THE LEADING EDGE

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**A PUBLICATION DEDICATED TO MAXIMIZING YIELD POTENTIAL**

## The Closing Argument

### In the case of proper Closing Wheel Systems vs. Seed Spacing

When it comes to boosting yield potential with planter settings many elements are of arguably equal importance. However, the one key element that *seals* the fate of a yield increase is often over-looked; planter closing wheels. The best hybrids or perfect seed spacing can be rendered useless if the seed trench is less than ideally-closed to kick start emergence. The proper selection of the right type of closing wheel coupled with adequate down force are crucial to successful seeding. Rubber and spike are the two most popular style of closing wheels being used for seed trench closure.



Angle Tooth Closing Wheel Attachment



Close Wheel Adjustment Handle

Down force on rubber closing wheels and especially spike closing wheels should be adjusted to the soil type and real time conditions. Most planters sold today come standard with an adjustment handle that makes adjusting down force quick and easy. Planters that are in service can be updated.

Rubber tire closing wheels normally require more down force than their spike counter



parts. Too much down force on rubber wheels can cause soil compaction, creating a hardened layer of soil that resists seed emergence. The wetter the soil, the more this holds true. Inadequate down force can create a situation known as "open seed trench syndrome" where both sides of the seed trench lightly touch each other and open as the soil begins to dry. Seed is then exposed to the elements reducing germination and emergence, therefore resulting in a reduction of yield potential. Rubber closing wheels are best suited for lighter, dryer soils.



Rubber Close Wheel Attachment

Spike closing wheels are growing in popularity primarily to the many benefits this method of seed trench closing provides. Earlier planting dates present less than ideal soil conditions, spike wheels rise to the occasion fracturing and churning the soil along the seed trench for improved seed to soil contact. In most cases the down force can be set in mid to light range and still provide ample amounts of pressure for closing the furrow. The churning action of the fingered wheel eliminates sidewall compaction allowing the developing roots more space to establish themselves. Rated best for less than perfect soil conditions spike closing wheels can achieve desirable closing results in heavier wetter soils.

In recent studies a significant amount of attention has been focused on seed spacing, population and final ear count. Failure to properly select and adjust a closing wheel system will negatively impact yield potential. Late or non-emergence of plants caused by incorrect or misadjusted closing wheels is a yield barrier. If the seed trench is not closed properly, then the previous decisions that have been made to improve yield will be lost. This planter attachment decision will help provide consistent and uniform emergence which is the foundation for maximum yield potential.

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