

THE LEADING EDGE

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A PUBLICATION DEDICATED TO MAXIMIZING YIELD POTENTIAL

High Speed Low Cost Weed Control

Small weeds can be managed effectively through the use of rotary hoes. The process can take place pre- or post-emergence. Hoeing can even eliminate pre-emergent weeds before they come to the surface.



3530 Series Rotary Hoe

The effectiveness of rotary hoeing is dependent on the timing and type of crop. Corn, for example, could benefit from rotary hoeing 3 to 5 days after planting and/or during or within a week after the spike stage.

Choosing the proper rotary hoe and options for your production agriculture operation is the first step as there are several things to look for in narrowing down your selection. When choosing a rotary hoe, look for a hoe width that allows you to cover more acres during the short periods in which crops can benefit from hoeing. You should also make certain that the hoe you choose matches your row spacing. Failure to do so may cause skipping or overlapping.



Min-till Rotary Hoe

In high residue conditions ensure that the hoe is equipped with wheel cleaners so crop damage is not caused by residue build-up on the wheels. For extreme high residue conditions select a hoe that is equipped with longer rear arms that provide a greater distance between the front and rear arms for additional residue clearance.

The rotary hoe wheel is the most important part of the hoe. Hoe wheels should start with riveted construction for durability and feature special gothic arch sealed bearings which provide more stability and a longer life; and they should have curved spoon bill tips that enter the soil straight down and come out at an angle to break up the soil. Each wheel should be mounted to a cast arm that is independently spring cushioned also. This allows it to follow the contour of the soil while protecting the wheel from rocks and other obstructions. With an arm designed for speed, you can cover more acres each day.

If you choose a hoe that has folding wings make sure it has gauge wheels. The fold feature allows you to effortlessly transport wider hoes and the gauge wheels allow the wings to follow the natural ground contours.

There are also several things to remember when using the rotary hoe in your fields. Undeveloped weeds have little chance of survival in hot, sunny, windy conditions, so it is best to select a day on which these conditions are present, if possible. Begin by hoeing all turn-rows first and then continue on to the rest of the rows. This procedure ensures maximum weed control as likelihood of packing by repeated turning is eliminated.

Rotary Hoes should be operated at a relatively fast speed, depending on the growth stage of the crop. This process maximizes the effectiveness of the wheel teeth. It is also important to always inspect the crop to make sure unwanted crop damage is not occurring. When ground speed is properly matched with crop type and soil condition, rotary hoeing can be a very effective means for weed control.

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