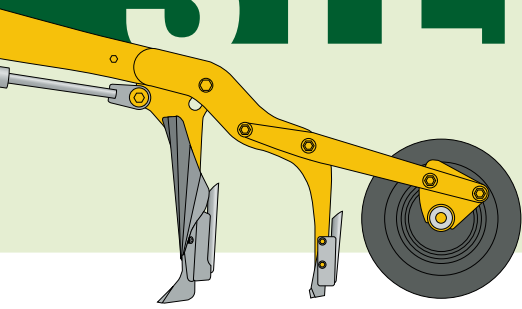


# STEERING YOU STRAIGHT



Your Precision Seeding Newsletter

## FROM THE PRESIDENT SMART HITCH DRIVES DEMAND FOR SEED MASTER

As each of you wrap up another growing season and make plans for the spring, here at Straw Track we are gearing up for what promises to be our busiest and most exciting year yet.

As you can see in this newsletter, we have expanded to keep pace with the rising demand for the Seed Master. Producers from as far away as Australia and Kazakhstan are inquiring about the fast uniform emergence and precise seed and fertilizer placement our drill consistently provides.

The launch of the Smart Hitch last spring is driving demand even higher. Farmers who have seeded with it are amazed at how well this new guidance tool keeps the openers centred between the stubble rows for a clean, firm seed bed and perfect field finish. Almost every producer ordering a new Seed Master wants the Smart Hitch attachment. And many are ordering Smart Hitches for existing Seed Master models.

## Researchers give Seed Master High Marks

As our drill grows in popularity, research institutions are taking greater interest in the technology. The AgTech Centre in Lethbridge, Alberta tested the performance of Seed Master openers recently. The findings echo what our customers have said all along: The Seed Master rates “very good” for seed and fertilizer separation, stubble clearance, and low soil disturbance. Project technologist Blaine Metzger also commented on the ‘very consistent packing pressure and uniform seed depth in all contours of land, even on very rough terrain.’

One of the reasons for the Seed Master’s success is the ongoing field testing we put it through each year. This constant scrutiny leads to important

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## STRAW TRACK COMPLETES MILLION DOLLAR EXPANSION

### Producers Invited to Grand Opening



The Straw Track team gathers in front of the newly-expanded building.

Straw Track Manufacturing is unveiling a massive expansion of its production facility just east of Regina.

The 15,000-square-foot addition features state-of-the-art manufacturing technology that will boost production capacity by 600% and enhance the superior quality of Seed Master products.

“Our production line is now fully automated, allowing us to operate with maximum efficiency. We’ve also acquired the most advanced paint finishing process available, raising the bar on quality even higher,” says Norbert Beaujot, President of Straw Track Manufacturing.

“This expansion enables us to keep up with the rising demand for the Seed Master,” he explains. Sales are expected to double this year as more farmers discover the remarkable precision and seeding accuracy of the Seed Master and the Smart Hitch guidance system.

“Last year, we had so many Seed Master orders we had to create a waiting list. With the expansion, that backlog will disappear,” says Beaujot. “We are now equipped to produce up to 300 seed drills per year, and as always, the quality will be unbeatable.”

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# WIDE ROW SPACING – A DOLLARS AND “SENSE” ISSUE

**It was once a common belief that narrow row spacing produces higher yields than wider row spacing.**

**Not any more.**

That widely held view is fading as scientific research supports wider row spacing and as a growing number of Seed Master owners experience maximum yields at 10 and 12-inch spacing.

Seed Masters are factory-set at 10 or 12 inches, although they can be adjusted according to preference.

## Maximum Yields

“In my opinion, it just makes sense to use wider row spacing,” says Norbert Beaujot, P Eng, the creator of the Seed Master and President of Straw Track Manufacturing.

“There is extensive research showing wider spacing does not impact yields if good crop management is practised. And the hundreds of producers using my drill design repeatedly confirm 10 and 12-inch spacing provides them with optimal yields.”

Beaujot says he’s been getting maximum yields on his farm since switching from 9 to 12-inch spacing in the late 90s. “It immediately reduced the number of openers I needed by 33%. That translates into a

33% drop in fuel and horse power usage - a valuable savings that multiplies with rising fuel prices.”

“And the residue clearance you gain is tremendous if you’re not already using a Smart Hitch to keep your openers between the stubble rows – especially in cold, wet conditions.”

## Studies Support Wide Spacing

Dr. Guy Lafond, a research scientist with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada in Indian Head, SK, conducted six years of field trials comparing the effects of 4, 8, and 12-inch row spacing on winter and spring wheat, durum, flax and barley.

“Overall, I found no differences in yield among those row spacings,” he says.

Dr. Lafond also reviewed all row spacing studies he could access across Western Canada from 1966 to 2003. “There were enough positive studies to show high grain yields can be maintained with up to 12-inch (30 cm) spacing without compromising yield potential,” he concludes.

Studies that report a drop in yields at wider row spacing often have “unplanned biases” built in related to seeding rates, experimental design and methodology, explains Dr. Lafond.

For example, many studies show a large drop in plant populations at wider row spacing, indicating a problem with seeding rates, not row spacing.

“If seeding rates are not adjusted to ensure plant populations are comparable at each row spacing and within the proper range, you may see a loss in yield that has nothing to do with row spacing,” warns Dr. Lafond.

“Seeding rates should target 200 to 250 plants/square metre for spring wheat and 150 to 200 for barley. If plant populations are within that range at each row spacing, there should be no difference in yield,” he says .

## Fertilizer Placement is Key

Fertilizer placement emerged as another “bias” in some studies that produced lower yields at wider spacing.

“Going from 9 to 12-inch spacing increases fertilizer concentration by 33% per row. So using an opener that maintains adequate separation is very important to prevent crop damage,” stresses Dr. Lafond.

The Seed Master’s unique fertilizer placement makes it ideal for seeding wider rows, says Beaujot.

The two knife openers create separate furrows for the seed and fertilizer, leaving a protective wall of soil in between. The fertilizer is consistently placed 1.5 inches to the side and ¾ inches below the seed bed.

“That degree of separation allows farmers to safely side band very high rates of nitrogen without any risk of seed damage. And the efficient use of fertilizer with this system is crucial in times of high fertil-

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design enhancements which you can read about on page 4. We have not found a soil type the Seed Master doesn’t work well in, and we intend to work hard to keep it that way.

Behind every product’s success is a strong team of talented people. The group we have put together at Straw Track Manufacturing brings a valuable array of abilities and knowledge that have contributed significantly to the fast growth of this company. I would like to thank those people for their ongoing dedication and hard work.

I invite you to come and meet our team – either at the Grand Opening in November or whenever you happen to be in the neighborhood. The coffee is always on and I look forward to showing you around the plant.

Best Wishes,

**Norbert Beaujot, P. Eng.**  
*President, Straw Track Manufacturing Inc.*

## SEED MASTER CROP EMERGES FIRST AT SEAGER WHEELER

Less than a week after all the tractors and seeders had left the field, the real moment of truth arrived at the Seager Wheeler National Historic Farm Site near Rosthern, SK.

Twelve plots of canola had been seeded by various equipment manufacturers as part of the June 1, 2005 Direct Seeding Demonstration. In the days that followed, organizers of the event and some of the 300 producers in attendance returned to the field to assess the crops as they emerged.

“The Seed Master crop was the first out of the ground,” confirms Rich Szwydki, an event organizer and an agrologist with the Saskatchewan Soil Conservation Association. “It was an excellent crop. It had even emergence and a very uniform, healthy plant stand throughout the whole strip.”

Aaron Friesen, a founding partner of the Seager Wheeler Farm Site and a Seed Master owner who lives nearby, agrees with Szwydki. “The Seed Master had the nicest plot out there. It matured faster and finished blooming before any of the other plots because of the fast emergence.”

He adds, “I’m not surprised. On most machines you have to be very careful with seed depth, but with this machine, the technology is very accurate.”



**The Seed Master produced an “excellent”, fast-emerging canola crop at the Seager Wheeler Historic Farm Site.**



The 15,000-square-foot addition features state-of-the-art manufacturing technology that will boost production capacity by 600%.

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## The newly expanded facility includes:

- **A continuous overhead conveyor system** that carries welded drill components through each phase of production, eliminating manual handling and optimizing efficiency.

All steel components are stamped out off-site using high precision laser technology before arriving at our welding department.

- **Cutting-edge powder coat painting technology** that delivers an extremely durable paint finish that won't crack, peel or chip. It protects the



Straw Track Finishing Supervisor, Leonard Wollbaum, applies powder coat paint to Seed Master components.

producer's long term investment by retaining the drill's resale value for years to come. The procedure was previously sourced out but has now been moved in-house.

- **An industry-leading blasting chamber** that flawlessly cleans the steel components in preparation for powder coating.



Steel beams enter the blasting chamber for cleaning.

- **An expansive packing and shipping area.** The Seed Master's unique bolt-together design makes it easy and cost-effective to ship unassembled. The savings in shipping fees and assembly time are passed on to the buyer.

About 10% of our drills are sold this way but that number is set to rise as international markets are

developed further, says Cory Beaujot, Marketing Manager at Straw Track.

The bolt-together design is stronger and more durable than welding components together. It also makes it simpler and more affordable to replace parts and upgrade equipment over the years.

## Improved Customer Service

"We've also implemented new manufacturing software that has dramatically elevated our customer service capabilities," says Ryan Beaujot, Purchasing Manager.

When a unit is sold, the program automatically creates detailed customer records, noting the lot and model number of each component on the drill. So years later, if a replacement part is needed the order can be filled quickly and effortlessly.

## Grand Opening in November

Producers and equipment dealers are invited to tour the facility during Agribition on November 22 and 24 from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Refreshments will be served. Drill demonstrations will be held outside.

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izer costs," he adds.

## Wide Rows Hold Swath

Even farmers who swath can successfully use 12-inch spacing with the Seed Master.

"Because our drill produces heavy yields year after year, our customers tell us holding up a swath on 12-inch spacing is not a problem," says Beaujot.

Kleven MacDougall and his brother Larry tried swathing on 12-inch spacing this year for the first time on their farm near Langbank, SK.

They seeded half of each field with the Seed Master

at 12 inches and the other half with another manufacturer's drill at 8.5 inches.

"The 12-inch spacing worked well. We were pleased," says Kleven. He did notice some of the cereals fell between the rows slightly on the outside rounds where he swathed in the same direction as he seeded. He was able to pick up those rows by going a little lower. That would not happen if you cut at an angle with a self-propelled swather, he says.

A barley field that was seeded at 8.5 inch spacing with the other drill yielded a light crop and wasn't able to hold the swath. "We had to leave a lot of that in the field," says MacDougall.

"We didn't find any difference in yield at 12 inches but we did find a big difference in maturity," he says.

In one wheat field, the Seed Master crop matured 7 to 8 days earlier than the half seeded by the other drill. In another field, the Seed Master crop matured 5 days earlier.

"Crops that were seeded earlier in cooler ground showed the greatest difference in maturity. The Seed Master is so super when it comes to germination. It's so even whereas the other drill always did come up uneven. In a frost year, that extra week of maturity will mean big dollars," says MacDougall.

# ANNOUNCING NEW DESIGN FEATURES ON THE 2006 SEED MASTER

## Plugless Granular Knife

Applying granular fertilizer has never been easier with our new plug-proof knife.

We have redesigned the metal shields that protect the granular tube from becoming tangled and plugged with roots and plant material.



Extensive field testing in very severe conditions has repeatedly proven this design to be 100% effective.

## Freeze-Less Anhydrous Knife

Our innovative design team has alleviated frost build up on the knife.

We have modified the shape of the knife and housed the anhydrous tube with insulated plating. This insulation inhibits the transfer of cold air to the knife.



As well, the granular tube is now constructed of plastic instead of steel, eliminating any plugging caused by anhydrous fertilizer drifting up into the tube.

## Packer Wheel Hub Twine Guard

No amount of mud, dust or twine can overcome the reinforced shield that fully encloses our packer wheel hub, protecting the bearings from the most extreme conditions and ensuring their long life.



*Note: Each item fits all previous Seed Master models.*

## SEED MASTER A 'MUST HAVE', SAYS DEALER

Seeder sales have "really jumped" at Henry Kelly Tractor in Watrous, SK, since the equipment dealer started carrying the Seed Master last year, says General Manager Ryan Kostenuk.

"I don't have to sell the product. It sells itself," he remarks.

Kostenuk says the majority of farmers who walk into his dealership looking for a seeding implement have already decided they want the Seed Master. "They are interested in the uniform seed depth and crop growth it offers."

Kostenuk ordered 8 Seed Masters this fall and expects to sell out. "This is the seeder to have," he says.



Ryan Kostenuk, General Manager of Henry Kelly Tractor in Watrous, SK.

## TO PURCHASE SEED MASTER PRODUCTS, PLEASE VISIT A DEALER NEAR YOU.

### DUSYK ENTERPRISES LTD.

306.424.2212 MONTMARTRE, SK  
www.dusykent.com

### FARM WORLD EQUIPMENT LTD.

306.864.3667 KINISTINO, SK  
306.682.9920 HUMBOLDT, SK  
306.922.2525 PRINCE ALBERT, SK  
www.farmworld.ca

### HENRY KELLY TRACTOR

306.946.3301 WATROUS, SK  
www.henrykelly.com

### KE-ED EQUIPMENT LTD.

306.842.6626 WEYBURN, SK  
www.ke-ed.com

### KOSIOR TRACTOR LTD.

306.483.5115 OXBOW, SK  
www.kosiortractor.com

### MARKUSSON NEW HOLLAND

306.781.2828 REGINA, SK  
www.markusson.com

### MILLER FARM EQUIPMENT

306.435.3866 MOOSOMIN, SK  
204.638.5558 DAUPHIN, MB  
204.759.2424 SHOAL LAKE, MB  
www.millerfarmequipment.com

### NYKOLAISHEN FARM EQUIPMENT LTD.

306.542.2814 KAMSACK, SK  
204.734.3466 SWAN RIVER, MB  
www.nykolaishen.com

### PROSPER TRACTOR LTD.

306.634.6422 ESTEVAN, SK  
www.prospertractor.com

### RAYMORE NEW HOLLAND

306.746.2911 RAYMORE, SK  
www.raymorenewholland.com

### REDVERS AGRICULTURAL & SUPPLY LTD.

306.452.3444 REDVERS, SK

### R-J SALES & SERVICE LTD.

306.338.2541 WADENA, SK

### YORKTON NEW HOLLAND

306.783.8511 YORKTON, SK  
www.yorktonnewholland.com



*For more information and a free video, please contact us at:*

**#1 South Plains Road West  
Emerald Park, Saskatchewan  
Canada S4L 1C6**

**TOLL FREE  
1-888-721-3001  
LOCAL  
(306) 721-3001  
FAX  
(306) 721-3002**

**www.strawtrack.ca**