

Air-Seeder Preparation, Now is a Good Time!

It'll be spring before we know it, and air seeders will be out on the fields. Now is a good time for a good look at your Seeding equipment before the wheels start turning. Whether the machine is brand new or new-to-you, focusing on fine-tuning product delivery mechanisms will pay through good, even germination and maturity.

To help cover as many bases as possible, here is short checklist of key inspection points.

START BY GIVING THE SEEDER FRAME AN OVERALL INSPECTION.

With so much horsepower pulling on them, toolbars are subjected to a lot of stresses. Inspect the hitch and main frame for signs of cracks or damage. Check, then equalize the pressure in all tires. This is particularly important if the seeder depends on the frame being level for accurate placement. Ensure packer wheels are following accurately behind openers.

CHECK ALL BEARINGS ON ROLLERS AND AUGER DELIVERY SYSTEMS FOR POSSIBLE DAMAGE.

Seed treatments and coating on crops, like canola, can leave a residue that can penetrate sealed bearings and may cause drag and bearing wear, which can slow rotation of the seed delivering system and cause inaccurate seeding rates.

CHECK FOR OPENER WEAR.

Check for excessive wear on each opener to ensure they are contacting the soil in an ideal manner. Measure the wear of the openers in relation to the original specifications. Checking with your opener manufacturer would be a great idea to get their recommendation on replacement tolerances. If your drill has disk openers, having extreme opener wear can cause hair pinning, which does not provide good seed to soil contact and placement. Shank style openers also need to be within wear tolerances in order to keep the appropriate fertilizer shelf. In the case of canola, it is important to have one and half inches of separation between nitrogen and the seed. If the nitrogen is placed too close to the canola seed, you may see excessive burning of the seedling as it emerges.

CHECK AIR LINES AND MANIFOLDS FOR LEAKS.

Squirt a water-and-dishwashing-soap solution around hose connections at manifolds, metering systems, air tank seals and other joints — escaping air create bubbles. Eliminating leaks can make a big improvement in seed and fertilizer placement accuracy. Also, look for internal obstructions like mouse nests or other debris.

TURN THE HOSES A ¼ TURN.

This will maximize the life of lines and even out wear patterns inside them, particularly at bends. It will also reduce drag and help even out seed and product flow.

CHECK SEED MONITOR SENSORS.

A build up of seed coating on monitor sensors can affect seeding rate accuracy. Ensure the number of pulses per mile are set properly. They can be affected by tire size, tire pressure and soil conditions. Confirm tire circumferences; there can be a small variation between brands. Measure and be sure.

MAKE SURE THE DRILL IS LEVEL.

A drill that is level side to side and front to back is essential for even seed placement. Find a level piece of ground — a cement pad if possible — to park your seeder. Wing the machine down and measure the distance from opener to ground across the drill. If the distance measured is not consistent across the drill, a re-leveling must be completed. Check your manual for leveling tips. Important: you cannot assume that a new drill is level when delivered from the factory and dealership.

Ten tips to get your air seeder ready for spring
Published: April 15, 2013, Features, Machinery and Shop
By Scott Garvey, machinery editor for Grainews
<https://www.grainews.ca/2013/04/15/ten-tips-to-get-your-air-seeder-ready-for-spring/>

Tips to Get Your Seeder Ready
By Shaun Haney, Published: May 4, 2009, Columns
<https://www.grainews.ca/2009/05/04/tips-to-get-your-seeder-ready/>