



American Crystal Sugar Company

AgNotes



562 - Planter Preparation - How Ready Is Yours?

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The two factors most responsible for excellent results in 2012 are planting early and achieving a high plant population. Accurate seeding into a well prepared seedbed should result in about 70% of seed establishing a healthy plant. If 10 percent of the seed sown at a 4.7 inch spacing does not establish a harvestable root, losses could be as much as \$100 per acre. Additional losses are likely from greater difficulty defoliating and harvesting uneven stands.



Questions to Ask About Your Planter:

- Do I need a new planter?
- Do I have adequate planting capacity to plant my crop on time?
- What repairs and maintenance should I do this winter?
- Have I stored my planter and plates properly this winter?
- Do I need to go to a test stand clinic again?

What Your Drill Needs To Do!

- Space seed accurately
- Plant at the desired depth
- Cause no seed damage
- Place granular insecticide properly
- Apply the correct rate of starter fertilizer
- Apply in-furrow fungicides at the correct rate

Seedbed Preparation Goals

- Manage residue to maximize stand establishment
- Shallow tillage to conserve moisture
- Control early germinating weeds
- Avoid compaction
- Properly incorporate fertilizer
- Establish cover crop
- Reduce the opportunity for spring erosion and stand loss



Planter Maintenance Considerations

- Are discs worn enough to affect seed placement?
- When were seed knocker wheels last changed?
- Are plates warped or grooved to the point of replacement?
- Are door seals damaged, worn or too stiff to work properly
- Are insecticide granule spoons or banders missing?
- Do doors close properly?
- Are vacuum gauges properly calibrated?
- Do you have the correct plates for seed sizes ordered for 2012?
- Have you calibrated insecticide applicators for each row?

- Is the monitor working properly?
- Are press wheels at the proper distance apart?
- Is each row unit exactly 22 inches apart?
- Are row markers or GPS guidance units set properly?

Information Available On Planter Storage, Maintenance, and Operation

1. Planter off season storage guidelines
2. Planter operation, maintenance and care brochure
3. Planter pre-planting checklist
4. Planter plate and seed size specifications recommendations

Access this information in our [Stand Establishment section](#).

Every 10 beets/100 foot of row are worth about \$40 per acre.