

unstoppable

HARDY FARM-HANDS

Its been over 80 years, since the Farmall debuted.
And like all grizzled vehicles this one too has an interesting tale to tell.



Edition 17 of a special CV series by
APOLLO TYRES



The Farmall tractors, manufactured in 1924 by International Harvester were the first general purpose tractor with narrowly spaced front wheels. The narrow front combined with good ground clearance allowed for more nimble and accurate field cultivation.

In time, other tractor manufacturers introduced models with a similar form factor as the Farmall. As a class, these are generally referred to as row crop tractors.

The first row crop tractor manufactured by IH was given the name Farmall. Development began around the start of the 1920s, and the tractor was introduced in 1924. IH was fearful that this new 'tricycle' type of tractor may not sell well, so when the tractors rolled out, they were meant to be sold only in Texas. Only after the Farmall went on to be successful did IH buy rights to that tractor type.

In 1932, IH introduced an updated Farmall, which received the designation F-20. This tractor replaced the original Farmall, which became known by the retronym Regular. IH also added other new tractors to the series which became known as the 'F-series', lasting until 1938. The tractors were updated to the 'super' series in 1952 and received many improvements.

At the Hinsdale, Illinois Testing Farm in July 1958, IH entertained over 12,000 dealers from over 25 countries. IH showed off their new '60' series of tractors: including the big, first of their kind, six-cylinder 460 and 560 tractors. But the joy of the new line of tractors was short-lived. In June of that year, IH recalled the 460, 560, and 660 tractors: their final drive components had repeatedly failed in production models. IH, who wanted to be the first big-power manufacturer, had failed to substantially update the final drives on the new six-cylinder tractors. These final drives,



APOLLO TYRES LTD.
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Never wary of progress, never skeptical about success,
Never scared of challenges, never tired of trying,
Every step of the way we travel with our customers,
On the "unstoppable" journey to success.

which were essentially made up of unchanged model 'M' components, would fail rapidly under the stress of the more powerful 60-series tractors. IH's competitors took advantage of the recall, and the former would lose customers in the ensuing months. But this failure did not detract from some of the unique features of the tractors.

The Farmall Cub, A, B, 100, 130, and 140 models had the seat offset from the engine, allowing the operator to look directly at the ground under the tractor. This feature was called Culti-Vision because it was created to give the operator an excellent view of the cultivator teeth as they cultivated the vegetable row.

The first Farmall tractor with an optional diesel engine was the M. It started on petrol and was manually switched to diesel after warming up. The Super MD, 400, and 450 diesels used the same engine design as the M but with larger displacement. The next Farmall tractor to offer diesel power was the 350. Unlike other diesel engines that IH manufactured itself, the 350 engine was built by Continental Motors. It was IH's first 'self-start' diesel tractor (no gasoline). IH then developed their own new self-start diesel engines for the 460 and 560 tractors.

The Torque Amplifier (TA), first introduced on the Super M in 1954, was an extra low range gear ratio (comparable to the two-speed rear of a truck) that allowed for a quick downshift without the clutch to gain torque at the drive wheels. The TA model was then called Super M-TA. The TA became an option on the model 300 and larger tractors after 1955. International Harvester was also one of the earliest manufacturers to provide a stepless transmission in a row crop tractor. Introduced first as an option on 656 and 544 tractors, the hydrostatic transmission would become a defining feature of the 70 Hydro and 100 Hydro models.

END OF AN ERA

1973 would see some important events for IH. On February 1, 1974, the 5 millionth tractor came off the assembly line at the Farmall Plant in Illinois. IH was the first tractor manufacturer to accomplish this.

Around the same time, IH officially dropped the Farmall name from its new tractor offerings after this date. However, Farmall tags still appeared on some 1974 and 1975 tractors until the factories exhausted their stock of tags made before 1973.