



# Planter tips for the busy farmer

Have you been paying too much attention to everything but your planter?

That's a mistake—you may be itching to get out in the field with your silage chopper or a piece of harvesting equipment, but everything comes back to the planter.

## Pay attention to your planter

To maintain good seeding depth and even emergence you need to make sure your planter frame is a) level with the ground and b) at the correct height. With corn, for example, you want to see your planter bar five to seven inches from the ground—and as close to level as you can get it. Check before planting day, then double-check in the field.

Unfortunately, you won't be able to do it by yourself. You're going to need to have one person driving the tractor and pulling the planter forward, and another checking on the planter bar—determining whether it's running level or pitched a little high in the front, for example, and whether the row units are running level.

## Check your tractor

Can your tractor place nicely with your planter? "Of course," you say—but maybe not if you've upgraded without hydraulic & electric capacity. If you can't power new hydraulic and electrical attachments, you've got an issue you need to sort out... Fast.

## Balance your weight

If you have a center-fill planter, the extra weight will compact center rows when you're full of seed. You may also be light on the wings, especially if you're not using markers. Growers often forget about the amount of weight they carry in the center of a large framed planter—if you've had some bad weather and the planting conditions are too wet, you'll almost surely compact the soil around the seed zone.

## Investigate your springs—or upgrade

An older planter may not be applying the correct down-force. Check the spring tension, or upgrade to a down-force system before planting day.

## Look for wear

It's good practice to look at your row units and make there's not too much wear. Check bearings and bushings, parallel arms, and belts. And don't forget about seed openers—if they're worn you'll have troubles correctly getting your seed into the bottom of the trench.

It goes without saying, but we'll say it anyway—it's a good idea to replace worn parts before you start to plant.

### Consider residue management

Residue management on the front of the planter row unit—to move residue and clods off to the side while you plant—is always a good idea. Doing so will make your seed metering device and row unit more efficient.

### Summing up

All of these tips contribute to one goal: maintaining uniformity in what we call “the micro-environment”—the seed zone.

The easiest way to do that? Get off the tractor and spend some quality time with your planter.

### About PASI

We understand what it's like to farm—because at Precision Agri Services, Inc., we have years of farming experience ourselves. There's no such thing as a “set it and forget it” approach to farming, which is a truth we've learned first-hand.

We use the products we sell, and prove an approach in the field time and again before we recommend it to you. Even then, we'll only make a recommendation if we can be sure it's good for both your profitability and for the environment.

To learn more about how we can help you with your farm, contact us at 419.628.4167.