

Farmall

F-30

Rock Island, IL 1931



In 1902, J. P. Morgan brokered a merger among five of the largest harvester companies: The McCormick, Deering and Milwaukee Harvester companies, Piano Mfg. Co., and Warder, Bushnell & Glessner (Champion harvesters). They merged to form the mighty International Harvester Company.

For many years after the merger, IHC sold two parallel lines of equipment, one named McCormick and one named Deering, each slightly different from the other, but wearing the IHC logo. This was deemed necessary since each line had its loyal customers, and there was usually both a McCormick and a Deering dealer in every farm community.

The U.S. government filed an antitrust action against IHC in 1912, and the suit dragged on until a consent decree was signed in 1918. One of the terms of the agreement called for IHC to have only one dealer in each town, meaning the dual McCormick and Deering lines of equipment could no longer be maintained. Indeed, the expense of designing, building, and supporting both lines of equipment had been a serious drag on the company, so, in 1923, a new grain binder – one combining the best features of each of the older machines – was introduced and called the McCormick-Deering. All of IHC's other farm implements soon followed suit, and the famous McCormick-Deering line was born. McCormick-Deering farm implements and Farmall tractors helped IHC become the giant of the industry.

Although the Farmall never reached the per-year production numbers of the Fordson during the 1920s, it was the tractor that prevented the Fordson from completely owning the market on small, lightweight, mass-produced, affordable tractors for the small or medium family farm. Its narrow-front tricycle design, power takeoff, (a feature on which IHC was an early leader), and standard mounting points for cultivators and other implements on the tractor's frame (a Farmall first) gave it some competitive advantages over the Fordson, especially for row crops. It soon became the favorite row-crop tractor of America, outselling all other competitors, even John Deere.

Late in 1931 the first variation on the Farmall International Harvester was brought out, the McCormick-Deering Farmall F-30, which was much like the original Farmall but larger, heavier, and more powerful. The original Farmall became known by the name Regular, which may never have been an official name for branding, but it was common among farmers.

The F-30 featured a four-speed transmission, one more speed than the Farmall Regular. At 12 feet 3 inches, the F-30 was nearly two feet longer. It turned tightly, like the original Farmall, but took a three-foot-larger circumference to do so. Still, a turning radius of just over 17 feet was impressive for a tractor of that size. The F-30 weighed about 5,300 pounds, which was nearly 2,000 pounds more than the

Regular. The extra weight, combined with the slightly more powerful engine, resulted in a bit more pulling power in the field.

Mind you, originally the F-30 was to use a slightly less powerful engine. One of the first decisions on the F-30 concerned increasing engine power and coolant capacity. That decision received final approval on May 1, 1931.



The decision bears a handwritten note stipulating the serial numbers for the more powerful engines would be AA501 and up. Also, construction of the new engines was to begin at Tractor Works on July 15, 1931. Considering only 623 F-30s were built in 1931, it's doubtful any were made with the less powerful engine.

The F-30 proved to be a rugged, maneuverable tractor and did well for both IHC and the farmer. It was built and sold in respectable numbers until 1939, with perhaps a few trickling out of the factory in 1940. The tractor slipped out of production when the Farmall tractor line was completely redesigned and the styled Letter Series was introduced.