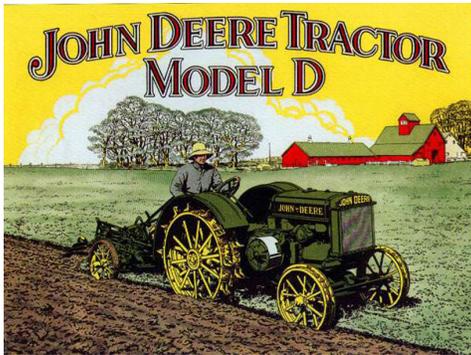


John Deere Model D

Waterloo, IA 1923-24



In 1837, John Deere was responsible for building the world's first steel plough in his blacksmith's shop at Grand Detour, Illinois. To cope with subsequent demand, production later shifted to Moline, Illinois. Upon John Deere's death in 1886, his son Charles Deere took over the running of the firm.



In 1911, Deere and Co. acquired the Dain Manufacturing Co. of Ottumwa, Iowa, and it was left to the company's founder, Joseph Dain, to design a new tractor for Deere to sell. After several prototypes, 100 of the three-wheeled "Dain" were built for sale in South Dakota.

The range of implements expanded, and in 1912, the company decided to begin experimenting with a tractor design.

Rather than design its own tractor, Deere and Co. still preferred to purchase already established companies, and in 1918, they bought the Waterloo Gasoline Engine Co. of Waterloo, Iowa. That firm was already producing the popular "Waterloo Boy" tractors. The

deal included Waterloo's experimental tractor designs and its sturdy 2-cylinder overhead-valve engine. John Deere continued the tractor development process and released the tractor as the Model D in 1923. Weighing just over two tons and costing around \$1,000, the Model D soon became a farm favorite.

This tractor was known by several names, including the John Deere Model D, the John Deere 15-27, and the John Deere Spoker D. The John Deere Spoker D stands at a new legendary level for collectors. Its status comes from the fact that these were the first true John Deere-designed tractors in successful commercial production. In total, only 5,846 Spoker Ds were produced. On December 28, 1925, the last Spoker D was built. The original spoked flywheel was at that time replaced by a solid flywheel and the initial series then became known as the Spoker D.

The first 50 Spoker Ds had four holes in the steering wheel spokes and four holes cast in the radiator sides. They had fabricated front axles, a 26-inch flywheel, and a one-piece steering rod mounted on the left side. A problem arose with the 26-inch fly wheel. When the tractor was turned too far to the left and the front axle was at its highest point on the left, the left-front wheel would hit the flywheel, sometimes causing breakage. About 880 26-inch models were produced before the first 24-inch model was produced. This corrected the flywheel from hitting the left-front wheel.

Over Model D's 30-year lifespan, it had various modifications, including rubber wheels, an increase in horse power, new hood and grill, and a dash with gauges. The Model D was produced from March 1, 1923, until July 3, 1953, giving it the longest production span of any John Deere tractor. Over that time, nearly 160,000 Model Ds were built and sold.

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