

Cockshutt Combine Tiller

Along with moldboard plows, the Cockshutt Plow Company Limited also built disc plows. Disc plows are suitable for sticky soils found in many areas and which pose problems for moldboard plows. Cockshutt built both horse drawn disc plows and tractor drawn disc plows which ranged in size from one disc to 5 discs. The discs were 30 inches in diameter. Along with Cockshutt built plows, Cockshutt also sold the Angell Disc Plow from the Ohio Cultivator Company which came in 6 ft, 8 ft and 10 ft sizes with 20 inch discs. Selling the Angell allowed Cockshutt to offer a more complete line of tillage equipment with a minim investment.

However in 1931 Cockshutt took the Angell concept and made a huge leap forward. Cockshutt designed their version of the Angell making a number of improvements along with one important innovation, that of mounting a seed box on the machine. This machine they called a tiller combine.

The Cockshutt Tiller Combine featured 24 inch disc blades mounted 7 1/2 inches apart. All blades were mounted on a single shaft raised and lowered by a power lift. The shaft was supported on ball bearings so the entire assembly rotated. The depth of penetration of the soil could be adjusted. When the seeding the seed box dropped the seed down tubes which ran immediately in front of the shaft and close to the back of each blade. Each blade had its own tube. As the seed was dropped , the blade following behind threw dirt over the seed.

For 1931, the Cockshutt Tiller Combine was a revolutionary concept as the machine was a combined plow, light disc and seeder. Only one field operation was necessary, that of seeding the land in the spring. Fall plowing was not necessary which saved time, money and even more importantly conserved moisture and reduced soil erosion as the stubble was left on the field to trap snow and slow down the wind at the surface of the soil. When seeding, the combine tiller left a rough surface which aided in reducing wind erosion. The till combine did not pulverize the soil which also aided in reducing soil erosion. Given the drought conditions of the 1930s, the Cockshutt Tiller Combine was the right machine at the right time.

The Cockshutt Tiller Combine was available in 3 1/2 ft and 4 ft sizes suitable for horse traction. The Tiller Combine was also produced in 6 ft, 8 ft and 10 ft sizes suitable for various sizes of tractors.

In 1931, Cockshutt sold 100 units. While this number is small, one must remember the conditions experienced in 1931 of a widespread and serious drought, a collapse in farm prices and a sever economic recession. 100 units in this context was a significant achievement which indicates the concept behind the Tiller Combine was a solid one that farmers saw value in. Further proof that the concept was a good one was the copying of the Cockshutt Tiller Combine concept by other farm equipment manufacturers in the years after 1931.

The MAM collection includes several Cockshutt Tiller Combines including a Cockshutt Tiller Combine painted Canadian Co-operative Implements Limited Orange and sold through CCIL.

The Expo at the 2015 Threshermen's Reunion features the Cockshutt family of companies. If you have equipment built by Cockshutt or Frost and Wood you should consider bringing it to the Cockshutt Expo. You can contact the Museum office at [204-637-2354](tel:204-637-2354) to make arrangements.

The Museum is open year round and operates a website at <http://ag-museum.mb.ca/> which can provide visitors with information on Museum events and location.



A four-foot wide Cockshutt tiller combine set up for horse operation with an operator's seat attached to the machine. Oddly enough, this tiller combine features a rubber tire on the front left corner. Whether this tiller combine left the factory with a rubber tire is not known to the Museum. While possible, it is an odd set of options.