

Case IH celebrates 60th anniversary of cotton picker

In December, Case IH celebrated the 60th anniversary of the commercial introduction of mechanical harvesting technology for cotton. In 1943, International Harvester Company, part of today's Case IH, unveiled the model H-10-H spindle cotton picker — the world's first commercially successful mechanical cotton picker.

"Mechanical cotton harvesting presented engineers with unique challenges," says Geoff Rendell, Case IH product manager. "The plants are stiff and woody, and the bolls that house the fibre do not readily release it. International Harvester experimented with various technologies for about 40 years before developing our signature design, which harvests from both sides of the plant."

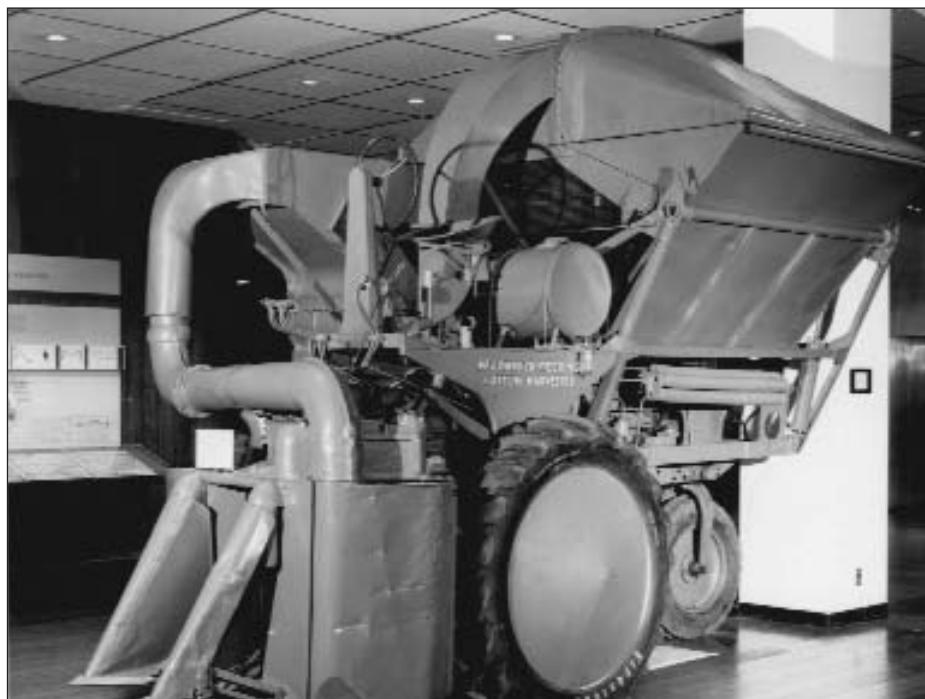
Introduction of the H-10-H picker also came at the height of World War II when the cotton harvesting workforce was in short supply. When commenting on the revolutionary introduction, Fowler McCormick, then president of International Harvester, said, "We regard it as fortunate that perfection of the picker has coincided with the great present wartime need to solve a critical agricultural manpower situation."

QUEST FOR MECHANICAL PICKING

The quest to replace man with machine for cotton harvest began even earlier. Between 1850 and the introduction of the International Harvester design, more than 1,800 cotton picker patents were issued. Today's spindle picker design is based on the early work of Angus Campbell, Theodore H. Price and Peter Haring.

International Harvester purchased the Price-Campbell patents in 1924 and continued to refine the cotton picker to produce a design that performed consistently under all conditions.

Due to the scarcity of resources during World War II, mass production of IH cotton pickers could not begin until after 1947, when the Memphis works was completed. In 1948, more than 1,000



This International Harvester H-10-H cotton picker was donated to the Smithsonian Institute in 1970, along with the original Farmall H tractor on which it was mounted. It was designated as a landmark of agricultural engineering by the American Society of Agricultural Engineers in 1978.

cotton pickers were produced. H-10-H pickers mounted on Farmall H tractors could pick approximately seven acres per day, or four bales of cotton. Today's six-row Case IH CPX610 pickers can harvest up to 100 acres of cotton per day, or 200 bales.

In 2000, the American Society of

Agricultural Engineers (ASAE) recognised the development and successful commercialisation of the IH cotton picker as one of the top five agricultural achievements of the 20th century. Prior to that (in 1978) ASAE also designated 'Old Red' — a 1943 International Harvester H-10-H cotton picker donated to the Smithsonian Institution — as an ASAE landmark.

Two-sided picking advantage continues

Case IH has continued to improve and refine its industry-leading cotton harvesting design over the past 60 years, as evidenced by an impressive string of patents in cotton harvesting technology. Most recently, four new patents accompanied the introduction of the Case IH Cotton Express CPX610 cotton picker. But the basics of the two-sided spindle design have remained constant over the years.



Like the first commercially successful mechanical cotton picker unveiled in 1943, the Case IH CPX610 cotton picker continues to harvest from both sides of the cotton plant for consistent harvest efficiency.