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## **Kinze Recommends Planter Maintenance** ***Consistent Planter Performance Depends on Proper Adjustment***

**WILLIAMSBURG, Iowa (March 26, 2012)** – The folks at [Kinze® Manufacturing, Inc.](#) understand time is money during planting as farmers rush to get their seed in the ground. Many Kinze employees also are farmers and understand the critical nature of proper planter maintenance to ensure planters are ready to place the seed into the ground when the planting window opens.

Do the basics first, recommends Phil Jennings, Kinze Manufacturing service manager. “Consistent planter performance starts with a planter that is in good mechanical condition,” he explains. “Make a close inspection of the soil engaging components on the row units. Badly worn parts must be replaced or planter efficiency will be impaired.”

Checking disc opener blades is an important step. Farmers should check the wear on disc blades and replace 15-inch blades when they are worn to 14.5 inches in diameter. Inspect the disc blade contact too. “Optimal disc blade contact is 1-1.5 inches to form the seed trench,” Jennings says.

Take a look at the inner scraper to be sure it protects the seed tube. “This prevents soil buildup between the opener blades,” Jennings states. “Replace scrapers when they are worn to five-eighths inch or less.”

When inspecting gauge wheels, check for light contact of the tire to blade in the operating position, Jennings says. He also recommends looking over the arm and bushings. Different field conditions can affect the depth adjustment of the planter. “Be sure to check and adjust the depth when field conditions change,” Jennings recommends.

Do not forget how important it is to assess closing wheel performance. The closing wheels must be centered over the seed trench. “Apply only enough down pressure to maintain good seed to soil contact,” Jennings states. Closing wheels may be offset slightly for better residue flow, he adds. If the closing wheel plugs with crop residue, the seed trench won’t close properly. An optional closing wheel shield might be needed to help prevent stalks from lodging in the closing wheel arm.

“Hitch adjustment is another important factor of consistent seed depth, spacing and seed to soil contact,” Jennings says. “Adjust the hitch height so the tongue runs parallel to the ground when the [planter](#) is in planting position,” he states. The parallel arms of the row unit should be approximately level when the toolbar is 20-22 inches above the planting surface. On the planter’s parallel arms, check the bolts, bushings, down pressure springs and the drive chains to be sure all the parts are performing optimally.

Do not forget other planter attachments that contribute to uniform seed placement. Inspecting no-till [planter](#) parts also is critical to optimizing planter efficiency. No-till coulters should be set at a depth slightly above the disc opener blades. Residue wheels are intended to move obstacles in the path of the row unit. This reduces hair pinning of the residue and creates smoother row unit operation. Residue wheels should be adjusted to just skim the planting surface and may not turn 100 percent of the time. If the tines of the wheel are building up with moist soil, they are set too deep, Jennings explains.

Always confirm what you “think” is happening with a full field check. It is not enough to just dig a few seeds up behind the planter. Jennings strongly recommends a full 1/1000<sup>th</sup> acre field check when any settings or adjustments change. For 30-inch rows, that is 17 feet 5 inches row length. Tie up a set of closing wheels and drive ahead at planting speed. “Take the time to prove it to yourself that the job is getting done right,” Jennings says. “The extra 15 minutes is an inexpensive insurance policy. Dirt is the real test.” Farmers then can visibly see all of the critical factors for success, including consistent seed depth, seed spacing, and seed to soil contact.

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### **About Kinze Manufacturing**

Founded more than 45 years ago on the premise of innovation, Kinze Manufacturing, Inc., markets its planters and grain carts globally and is known for a number of [industry “firsts.”](#) Kinze operates with [core values](#) of integrity, customer focus, excellence, innovation and mutual respect. Kinze Manufacturing is the recognized technology leader and innovator of [planters](#) for row-crop production and [grain auger carts](#). Kinze employees spend their nights and weekends farming, putting them in a unique position to be both manufacturers and customers of the planters and grain carts they build. For more information, visit the Kinze Manufacturing website at [www.kinze.com](http://www.kinze.com).

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(Information Box No. 1)

### **Factors Affecting Seed Depth**

Phil Jennings, service manager with Kinze Manufacturing, Inc. recommends farmers check the following factors to ensure the seed they are planting reaches the proper depth:

- Planter height hitch
- Worn row unit components
- Down pressure settings
- Planting speed
- Row unit bounce
- No-till attachments
- Field conditions

(Information Box No. 2)

### **Factors Affecting Seed Spacing**

Phil Jennings, service manager with Kinze Manufacturing, Inc. recommends farmers check the following factors to ensure the seed they are planting is properly spaced in the rows:

- Hitch height
- Planting speed
- Drive chains
- Seed meters
- Tire pressure
- Row unit attachments
- Worn or dirty seed tubes

(Information Box No. 3)

### **Factors Affecting Seed to Soil Contact**

Phil Jennings, service manager with Kinze Manufacturing, Inc. recommends farmers check the following factors to ensure the proper seed to soil contact needed for germination:

- Hitch height
- Closing wheel alignment
- Closing wheel pressure
- Gauge wheel adjustment
- No-till attachments
- Field conditions