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## TRACTOR COSTS AND RATES OF PERFORMANCE

A preliminary report of data secured in 1935 covering the cost of operation and the rate of performance of farm tractors in Minnesota and summaries for 1933 and 1934

Ву

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#### TRACTOR COSTS AND PATES OF PERFORMANCE

## Source of Data

The operators of 30 tractors submitted records of the cost of operating their tractors and of the amount and kind of work done by them during the year 1935 to the Minnesota Agricultural Experiment Station. These records were obtained from 24 farms. On six of these farms, two tractors were used. Only 22 of the 30 records cover the use of a tractor for a full calendar year as some of the records were started or discontinued during the year. The distribution of the tractors by makes and models was as follows: Case, Model C, 1; Case Model CC, 1; Case, Model L, 2; Farmall 20, 4; Farmall 30, 1; McCormick-Deering, Model 10-20, 3; McCormick-Deering, Model 15-30. 3; John Deere, Model F-12, 1; John Deere, Model A, 7; John Deere, Model B, 1; John Deere, Model D, 3; and John Deere, Model GP, 3. The years in which these tractors were purchased ranged from 1928 to 1935. Seven were purchased prior to 1930 and 13 in 1934 and 1935. The average years of use per tractor prior to 1935 were two and one-half. The average estimate of the operators as to the total life of these tractors was ten years. Fifteen tractors were equipped with rubber tires. The average estimated life of these was six and one-half years. These records were supervised and tabulated jointly by the Divisions of Agricultural Engineering and Agricultural Economics.

## Cost of Tractor Operation

The cost per hour of operating these tractors is shown in Tables 1 and 2. Only tractors for which records for the full calendar year were available are included in this table. The separation into two-plow and three-plow tractors is more or less arbitrary. It is based in part on the rating of the tractor and in part on the plows used. Two-bottom plows were used with all of the tractors listed in Table 1 and three-bottom plows with all but one listed in Table 2. In the latter case, a four-bottom plow was used and the tractor would usually be classed as a three-four plow size altho with other tractors of the same rating only three bottoms were used. Fuel and lubricants were charged at the purchase price. Man labor spent in servicing and repairing was charged at 25 cents per hour. Annual depreciation was determined by dividing the purchase price of the tractor by the farmer's estimate of the number of years it would last. Interest is charged at the rate of eight per cent on the average value of the tractor in 1935. Costs are shown for each individual tractor for 1935 and also average costs for both size groups in 1935 and also for the tractors for which records were kept in 1933 and 1934.

There is a wide variation among different tractors in each of the items To a considerable extent, this reflects differences among the operators in their ability to handle their tractors economically and to provide adequate work for them. To a lesser extent it reflects chance differences such as variations in fuel prices in different localities and the irregularity with which repairs and overhauling are necessary. Fuel is the most variable item of operating costs. The amount of fuel per hour varied from 1.0 to 1.8 gallons per hour for the two-plow tractors and from 1.8 to 3.1 gallons for the three-plow tractors. There was also a variation in the kind of fuel used and in the price of each of the three fuels. Gasoline was used exclusively as fuel for seven tractors, distillate was used except in starting for twelve, kerosene for two, and gasoline and distillate in the ratio of one to two for another. The average price per gallon of these three fuels was gasoline 12.9 cents, kerosene 9.3 cents, and distillate 7.7 cents. average fuel cost per hour for the three-plow tractors using gasoline was one-third higher than those using distillate. The difference was almost altogether a price difference as there was little difference in the number of gallons used per hour. Of the total fuel used 57 per cent was distillate. 34 per cent gasoline, and 9 per cent kerosene.

The fixed charges per hour varied relatively more among different tractors than did the operating costs. This variation is largely due to differences in the number of hours of work annually for which the tractors were used. In general, the larger the number of hours of work annually the lower the fixed charges per hour. There is also some variation in the operators' estimates of the length of life of different tractors. Since this was used as a basis for the depreciation charge, these variations in the operators' judgment are reflected in the fixed charges.

An analysis of these figures shows no advantage or disadvantage for rubber tires. The fixed charges are somewhat higher for the tractors equipped with rubber tires but this was offset by the larger number of hours that these tractors were used. The average purchase price of all rubber tires reported in this study was \$211. The average annual interest and depreciation charge as estimated by the operators was \$40.91. On the basis of the average number of hours of work per tractor, this would represent an average additional cost of 6.7 cents per hour for the use of the rubber tires. No significant difference was noted in the amount of work done per hour between tractors equipped with rubber tires and those equipped with steel wheels.

## Amount and Kind of Work Done Annually

The annual hours of use of the tractors included in Tables 1 and 2 are shown in Table 3. The three-plow tractors are used for belt work much more than are the two-plow tractors. Silo filling, threshing, corn shredding, and feed grinding were the common belt operations. More power could be used advantageously for these operations than could be supplied by the smaller tractors. On the other hand, it was impossible to utilize the capacity of the large tractors to good advantage at many drawbar operations. Ninety-two per cent of the tractor-drawbar work is done on the home farm but only one-half of the belt work. The larger tractors are used much more extensively for custom work than are the smaller ones.

#### Rate of Tractor Performance

The rate at which various operations were performed with these tractors is shown in Tables 4, 5, 6 and 7. The rate of performing drawbar operations varied with the size of implement used, the kind and condition of the soil, the size and shape of field, the distance travelled to work, and the yield of crops. Undoubtedly, the rate for tillage operations varied somewhat with the amount of overlapping in case of such items as disking, harrowing, and field cultivating. In case of feed grinding, the output was expressed in bushels but the kind of grain was not specified. In these cases, the weight per bushel was estimated at 40 pounds. It is quite apparent that the proportion of the capacity of the tractor utilized for belt operations varies widely. These tables include all tractors for which records are available for any portion of the year. They do not include minor operations for which no output is recorded or which are performed by only one tractor or under conditions that vary widely from farm to farm. Average rates of performance in 1933 and 1934 are shown in comparison with the 1935 average rate.

#### Use of Data

These summaries should be useful to the individual tractor operator for purposes of comparison with his own figures. They should point out cost items in which economies might well be adopted. They should also indicate to some degree, at least, the effectiveness with which he is securing a satisfactory rate of performance. Furthermore, they may suggest the possibilities of using the tractor for operations for which it is not now used and the advantage of using implements large enough to utilize the capacity of the tractor to best advantage. In some cases, full utilization of the capacity of the tractor may be secured by using a combination of two implements at the same time. Two operations may be performed at the same time at very little additional expense since none of the items of tractor cost except fuel would be materially affected by the heavier load and the rate of travel would probably be about the same.

Table 1

Cost per Hour of Operating Two-Plow Tractors in 1935 with Averages for 1933 and 1934 Average 4122 2132 1182 1082 1935 2112 2082 1112 1192 2192 1934 Tractor Number: 1933 Operating Cost: \$.148 \$.110 \$.137 \$.119 \$.154 \$.109 \$.125 \$.133 \$.169 \$.154 \$.125 \$.137 Fuel \$.154 \$.141 .022 .025 .051 .013 .036 .031 .068 .024 Lubricants .011 .031 .019 .031 .037 .050 .014 .014 .014 .014 .027 .009 .009 .016 .018 Labor .008 .012 .017 .008 .019 Cash repairs ,008 .026 028 142 163 .187 .230 208 Total Fixed Charges: .104 .174 .102 .214 Depreciation .385 .181 .128 .170 .129 .112 .100 .159 .233 Interest at 8% on avg. value . 140 .075 .130 .060 .020 .074 .060 .032 .075 .086 Total .446 .541 .686 ,454 .389 .441 .420 .510 .320 .417 .323 1441 .565 : Total cost per hour .550 445 1451 469불 620 654 710를 7171 844 976 1146 Hours of work per year 993 728 516 587 Labor and Materials per 100 Hrs: 3.4 4.9 4.0 4.8 4.3 4.5 3.6 3.5 5.2 5.5 5.1 Servicing, hrs. 8.3 3.1 3.3 2.6 Repairing, hrs. 1.6 2.1 1.5 2.5 .3 1.1 1.1 3.1 104.5 5.6 9.6 17.5 54.0 Fuel: Gasoline, gal. 15.1 21.7 8.0 17.1 40.5 10.8 25.0 40.0 91.0 129.9 5.3 13.5 35.0 Kerosene, gal. 22.0 Distillate, gal. Total 1.9 3.5 6.2 4.2 Oil, gal. 5.0 2.8 1.6 7.6 2.8 4.3 4.8 1.5 .9 3.2\*\* 16.1\*\* 12.9\*\* 2.0 Grease, 1b.

<sup>\*</sup>One-plow tractor, not included in averages.

<sup>\*\*</sup>Average of farms reporting.

Table 2

Cost per Hour of Operating Three-Plow Tractors in 1935 with Averages for 1933 and 1934 Averages 4193 2123 1935 1933 1153 2113 1073 3013 2013 1934 Tractor Number: 1033 Operating Cost: \$.334 \$.213 \$.246 Fuel \$.361 \$.183 \$,237 \$.265 \$,235 \$,203 \$.298 \$.187 \$.188 \$.160 .069 .064 .024 .043 .024 .041 .Oji1 .029 .038 .076 Lubricants .018 .026 .057 .036 .022 .058 .008 .006 .008 ,002 .011 .017 .025 .016 .015 .019 .009 .008 Labor .211 .699 Cash repairs .107 <del>-</del> 297 255 .297 .272 Total Fixed Charges: .364 .482 .308 .326 .260 .254 .191 .216 .193 .099 ,220 .308 .227 Depreciation .130 .062 .282 .209 .517 .024 .123 .044 Interest at 8% on avg.value ,291 .083 .130 .321 .103 .092 .174 Total 1.354 1,006 .618 .662 .642 .571 .770 .706 .387 .511 .728 .835 Total cost per hour .789 .559 461출 664 231분 259호 451 460 463분 490 670글 681 957출 564 406 519 Hours of work per year Labor and Materials per 100 Hrs.: 4.8 3.4 2.4 3.3 .9. 3.1 4.5 2.3 6.0 4.5 5.4 4.5 Servicing, hrs. 11.6 7.7 11.4 .5 .9 1.3 5.2 1.8 1.5 3.2 Repairing, hrs. 256.9 134.0 306.3 19.6 265.3 Fuel: Gasoline, gal. 21.1 251.7 25.1 179.9 20.3 135.1 83.0 17.0 187.8 17.1 65.0 Kerosene, gal. Distillate, gal. 201.0 190.0 179.9 Total 4.7 4.7 13.0 7.2 2.6 3.6 14.0 Oil, gal. 12.7 7.7 11.7 8.0 1.6 8.7 5.1 3.8 6.3\* 19.3\* 20.1\* 12.1 Grease, lbs.

<sup>\*</sup>Average of farms reporting.

Table 3

Amount of Belt and Drawbar Work per Tractor and Proportion of Home and Custom Work Tractor Hours of Work Percentage of Custom Work number Drawbar Belt Total Drawbar Belt Total Two-Plow Tractors 145<del>1</del> 445 434 475½ 687¾ 496글 178호 5 21 7 5 22<del>3</del> 710분 45° 39 241 672<del>1</del> 717호 2Ó 1146 1070불 75吉 Avg. hours g Percentage Three-Plow Tractors 231호 259호 451 29 32 45 122불 144글 4193 289‡ 161<del>3</del> 

Avg. hours	456	<u>All</u> 153	Tractors 609			
Avg. hours Percentage	304 59	209 41	513 -	g	56	28
2123 3013 2013 3193 2133 2183	371 <del>3</del> 482 52 280 619 <del>3</del> 622	91½ 8 467 390½ 61¼ 335½	463 <del>4</del> 490 519 670 <del>4</del> 681 957 <del>2</del>	11 2 12 31 0 6	59 71 0 45	9 1 54 55 0 20
2113 1073	224 162 <del>3</del>	236 298 <del>½</del>	460 461 <del>1</del>	- 19	71 64	36 48

g

Percentage

Table 4

Size of Implement and Acres Covered per Hour for Drawbar Operations with Two-Plow Tractors in 1935 with Averages for 1933 and 1934

Operation:	Plo	wing	Dis	ski ng	Sprin	gtooth		.eld	Harrowing		See	ding
	Si ze	Acres	Size	Acres	<u>har</u> r	owing	<u>Culti</u>	vating	Si ze	Acres	Gr	ain
Tractor No.	·····				Si ze	Acres	Si ze	Acres	·····		Size	Acres
3122	2-14"	.73	<del></del>	**	<del></del>	••	-	<b></b>	261	6,08	<b>.</b>	••
1151	2 <b>-1</b> 4n	.68	g:	2.31	10'	2,06	***	<del></del>	18'	5.65	-	-
2112		•••	10*	2.67	-	-		***	261	7.23	10'	2.97
2082	2-14"	.94	10:	2,96	g <b>s</b>	2.00	***	_	201	6.81	101	2.55
1112	3-14#	1.29*	7 *	2.00	141	4.95		•••	201	9,32	-	-
4122	2-14"	,60	gı	3,01	-	-	71611	1.81	201	7.18	-	***
2132	2-14"	.75	-		<b>÷</b> -		· 91	2,72	221	8.74	14,	3.75
1182	2 <b>-16"</b>	.99	14.	4.80	10'	4.87	-	-	16'	9.03	***	-
1082	2-14"	.63	15 <b>'</b>	3.97	-	-	-	-	-	**	10 1	2,52
1192	2 <b>-14</b> "	.98	81	3.40		***	101	3.75	-	-		•
2192	2 <b>-14"</b>	,6g	gt	2.09	gı	2.30		und.	24!	8.81	-	-
2032	2 <b>-1</b> 6"	1.06	g t	2,41	91	3,29		-	201	11,84	10 '	4.30
4193		-	-	*	_	-		-		<del>***</del>	91	1.00
4082	2 <b></b> 16 <sup>n</sup>	.98	***	<del></del>	7 1	2.96	**	-	201	8.65	11 '	3.92
3082	2 <b>–</b> 16°	.94	15!	3.71	71	3.00	-	<del>,</del>	<del></del>	•	-	-
1012	2-14"	.69	gı	3.70	<del>-</del>	_	-	_	261	6,27	16:	1.71
1232	2-14"	.91	15!	3.11	-	-	71	3.68	201	6.01	-	***
1062	2-14"	.90	J.† .	4 84	91	5.56		•••	20 1	8.57	· ·	4-
Avg. 1935		.83	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	3.21	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	3.44		2.99		7.87		2.84
Avg. 1934		.83		3.21		2.97		2.58		7.45		3.33
Avg. 1933		.85		3.30		-		2.60		8.02		3.32

<sup>\*</sup>Not included in average.

(Table 4 continued)

Operation:		Cutting Grain		Planting Corn		Cultivating Corn		Cutting Corn		Picking Corn		owing Hay
Tractor No.	Size	Acres	Si ze	Acres	Size	Acres	Si ze	Acres	Si ze	Acres	Size	Acres
3122	•••	•	•••	_	-	-	-	_	-	_	_	
1151	gı	2.03		***	2-row	1.82	2-row	1.34	•••	_	_	-
2112	gı	2.18	4-row	2.76	2-row	1.91	2-row	1.82	_	-	71	1.71
2082	101	2.17	_	_	2-row	2.02	-	_	-	•••	*	**
1112	gı	2.13	-	••	•	-	-		1-row	. 74	•••	
4122	7 *	1.58	-		2-row	2,10	-	_	1-row	.75		•••
2132	<u>,</u>	_	4-row	2,62	2-row	1.79	_	-	l-row	. 87	71	2,72
1182	7 *	1.62	-	-		-		•	-		-	
	ا 10	2.67	_	_	2-row	2.78	-	_	_	-	-	
1082	gı	1.53	3-row	2.09	3-row	2.69	l-row	.67	1-row	.87	***	<b>-</b> .
1192	gt	2.34		_	2-row	2.22	-	-	l-row	.70		-
2192	71	1.29	-	-	2-row	2.08	1-row	.73	2-row	1.16		<b>***</b> .
2032	_	_	-	_	_	-		-	_	-		- 1
4193	10 *	2.19		_	2-row	2.65	1-row	.75		-		
4082	-			_	2-row	2.17		-	<b>~</b>	-	7.1	3.10 1
3082	gı	1.96		<u> </u>	_	•••	•••	-	_	_	_	-
1012	71	1.27	3-row	2.18	3-row	2.64	1-row	1.06	1-row	.56	71	1.79
1232	<u>.</u>		4-row	3.35	_	-	_		2-row	1.67	<u>.</u>	
1062	-	-	-		2-row	2.83	-	1.50	-	-	<b>400</b> Ang	_
Avg. 1935		1.92		2.60		2.60		1.12		.92		2.33
Avg. 1934		1.97		2,41		2.19		1.33		1.03		2,58
Avg. 1933		1.45		2.73		2,29		.82		.80		*****

Table 5
Size of Implement and Acres Covered per Hour for Drawbar Operations with Three-Plow Tractors in 1935 with Averages for 1933 and 1934

Oponeti	on: Plowing	T) i	olei ne	Springt		1933 WIT.				oding			0:1+	l wat i na	Chat	tina	D4 a1	ri na	
Operaci				Springt				rowing				tting		ivating		ting		cing	
Tractor	Size Acre	s orse	ACTES	Si ze Ac:				ACTES		Acres		rain		Acres	Co Si ze		Co:	Acres	-
No.				oi ze ac.	ies ora	e Meres			21.56	ACTES	ST SE	ACTES	21 26	MCI 68	21.56	MCTER	21.56	ACTES	•
NO.	<del></del>			<del></del>									**						_
1033	3-14" 1.2	5 <b>-</b>	-	11' 3.	79 <b>-</b>		_		_	-			_	-	-	_		_	
1153	3-16" 1.2		2.06				_	_	_	-	-	_	_	-	_	-	_	_	
4193	3-14" 1.2	1 10'	4.51		<del>-</del> 10	2.32	281	5.93	_	_	10'	2.52	_	-	1-row	.79	_		
2113	3-14" 1.1	0 10	3.15				261	8.11	_	-	_	_	-	-	***	-	1-row	1.00	
1073	4-14" 1.6	<b>4</b> * –	_	91 3.0		· -	-			-	_	-	-	_	-	-		-	
2123	3-14" 1.0	5 15'	3.37	-	- g16	3.45		6.67	-	***	10'	2.61		-	***		2-row	1.45	
3013	3-14" 1.0					-	261	6.45	-	_	gt	2.09	2-row	2.01	-	-	-	•••	
2013	3-14" 1.1	0 -	-			<b></b>	_	-		_	-	-	_	-	_		-	-	
	2-16" 1.0		_	•			-	-	_		-	-		-	-		-	-	
3193	3 <b>-</b> 1 <sup>4</sup> " .9	g 10'	3.05	912.7		3.39	201	5.07	-	•	g:.	2.08	_	-	-		-	-	
		-	_			21 3.26	_	_			_	-			-	-	-		1
2133	3-16" 1.3	2 10'	3.53		- 9	1 2.99	221	9.64	14 '	3.64	_	-	2-row	1.84			_	-	00
2183	3-16" 1.2			1116" 3.0	00 -		-	-	***		10'	2.66	-	-	-	-	1-row	.98	1
			3.25					-	-		-		-	-	-	-		-	
1203	3-14" .5	7 -		•••	- 8	(1 2.8)4	221	7.01	-		7 *	1.18		-	-	-			
	<u> </u>	<del></del>	<del></del>				·												
Avg. 19			3.46	3.		3.04		6.98		3.64		2.19		1.92		.79		1.14	
Avg. 19			3.33	3.7	71	3.25		8.62		4.00		2.12		1.69				1.14	
Avg. 19	33 1.3	b	3.16		<u> </u>	3.11				3.52		1.70		2.17				.99	

<sup>\*</sup>Not included in average.

Table 6

Size of Implement and Rate of Performance per Hour for Belt Operations with Two-Plow Tractors in 1935 with Averages for 1933 and 1934

Operation:	with Two-Plo Grinding	g Feed	Shelling	Corn	Filli	ng Silo	and 1934 Thr	eshing
<u>.</u>	Mill	Pounds	Туре	Bushels	Si ze	Tons	Si ze	Bushels
Tractor		per		per		per		per
No.		hour	,	hour		hour		hour
•								1
<b>31</b> 22 ·	3000	-	-	-	16"	6.8		-
1151	-	***	****	4000	-	_	-	•
2122	-	-	•••	-	-	-	•••	
2082	-	-		-	***	***	2211	58.5
1112	8" burr	2656	tent.			-	22"	96.2
4122	_	-	-	-	12"	14.3	-	-
2132	Hammer	1284	No.2 cyl.	92.7	-	-	-	-
1182	10" burr	988	***	-	-	-	-	
1082	10" burr	2070	-		-	•	26"	66.6
1192	Hamme r	3185	•	-	-	11.3	5511	165.5
2192		***	***	Quies.	15"	4.6	<del>-</del>	
2032	<b>,,,</b>	1338	-	-	•••		-	, <del></del>
4192			2-hole	49.5	16"	7.5	-	-
4082	8" burr	1949					22"	33.1
3082	g" burr	2200	•••	**		***	2211	68.8
1012	10" Letz	1224	-	••	_	-	-	<b>–</b> ,
1232	Hammer	845	No.2 cyl.	58.0	16"	7.7		25-46
1062	10" burr	1911	No.2 cyl.	75.1	16"	4.6	55"	88.8
Avg. 1935		1786		68.8		8.1		82.5
Avg. 1934		1544		50.4		8.1		76.6
Avg. 1933		2254		93.0		8.7		128.0

Table 7

Size of Implement and Rate of Performance per Hour for Belt Operations with Three-Plow Tractors in 1935 with Averages for 1933 and 1934

Operation:			Shelling		Fillin			shing	Shreddi	ng Corn
	Mill	Pounds	Type	Bu.	Si ze	Tons	Si ze	Bu.	Туре	Bu.
Tractor		per		per		per		per		per
No.		hour		hour		hour		hour		hour
							- (4			
1033	8" burr	1600	-	-	19"	9.9		101.0	-	-
1153	Hammer	2657	-		16"	19.7	2811	151.8		•••
<u>4</u> 193 -	10" burr	1622	-		-	-	24-46	79.7	-	-
2113	-	-	***	]	HC-B.	13.0	2811	123.8	-	-
1073	10" burr	1618	***	_	15"	9.2	2411	75.2	6-roll	28.0
2123	g" burr	2372	Cylinder	103.3	-	-	28-46	85.5	-	***
3013	10" burr	2489	-	_	_	_	-	***	•••	
2013	10" burr	2089		- h	IcD-A	7.5	32 <del>-54</del>	111,6	4-roll	29.1
3193		, <b></b>	_	-	16"	6.3	21-36	76.5	4-roll	26.2
2133	Hammer	1663	No.2 cyl.	64.2	_	_	28-50	115.8	***	-
2183	g" burr	3205	-	-	16"	8.0	-	_	-	-
-	-	<b>-</b>	-	-	11"	8.0	-		-	•••
Avg. 1935		2146	<u> </u>	83.8		10.2	<del></del>	102.3		27.8
Avg. 1934		1666		104.9		10.2		73.3		-
Avg. 1933		1889		160.0		12.4		138.0		-