

THE GUSHER

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New Beginnings...



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Strategies for Extending Equipment Life

The following article contains several helpful hints on how to extend the life of your high priced equipment. These reminders will help you to keep that equipment in good shape for several years.

Machinery Maintenance

A Midwest study revealed that many farmers can reduce machinery repair costs by improving routine maintenance procedures. With a yard full of machinery, that savings is significant. As an example, an \$80,000 tractor will typically require about \$24,000 in repair costs during 5,000 hours of operation when receiving average maintenance. This cost can be decreased to approximately \$18,000 with excellent service management.

Timely preventive maintenance and inspection not only will help reduce major problems and downtime, they will also help identify developing problems while they can be corrected with relatively minor repairs.

Equipment repaired during the winter can save money on service at mechanic's shops. An effective machinery service program requires good record keeping. It shouldn't be based on the operator's feelings or memory as to when a machine needs attention. The maintenance program must be based on fact as determined by an accurate service record for each piece of equipment as recommended by the operator's manual and adjusted to individual conditions.

To aid record keeping, mount a service record chart for each piece of equipment in a prominent area of the shop or in a service record book. Identify hour maintenance intervals such as 10, 50, 100, 250 and 500 so it is convenient to identify, perform and record the services needed. Be sure to follow the Preventative Maintenance Guide in the operator's manual for each particular piece of equipment. Carry a small notepad in each cab to record problems and observation as they arise.

Machinery Storage

Snow piling around and over machinery during the winter months is doing more than covering it up – it also is eating away at the investment. Equipment stored inside has a significantly higher trade-in value compared to the same equipment stored outside. The farmer who keeps the most valuable and vulnerable machinery out of the weather can save a lot of money. For example, consider \$300,000 worth of tractors, combines and planters inside, and assume a 50% trade-in value after 5 years. The equipment's value is approximately \$20,250 greater because it was stored inside, assuming the trade-in value is increased by only 13.5%.

Inside storage on a small tractor will increase the trade-in value by \$400 to \$500 per year. Proper storage of a 4-wheel drive tractor should add \$1,000 to \$2,000 per year to the resale value. Storage also saves money by reducing repairs and time in the shop. Machinery stored inside had only 7.6% downtime, while unhoused equipment was down 14.3% of the time it should have been working. Parts such as belts, tires and hoses deteriorate rapidly when unprotected. Places where water can collect and freeze are problem areas. Machines including tractors, combines, planters, drills, forage choppers, trucks and pickups should be kept inside. Tillage implements should be the last to be placed inside. They take up a lot of space and decline in value only slightly faster when kept outside. After 5 years, tillage equipment kept inside is worth only about 5% more than if left outside. Usually, the deterioration that occurs to the tires and bearings is less than the cost of providing building space.

*From the University of Nebraska
Cooperative Extension Educational
Programs*

ARCHER OIL ANALYSIS PROGRAM

Over the years many Archer Dealers and their customers have taken advantage of Archer's terrific Oil Analysis Program. We believe that this free service provides an extra benefit to our oil customers. There have been numerous times when a problem has been detected by the Oil Analysis Program and measures taken to correct this situation before it developed into a major breakdown saving the customer a considerable amount of expense and unscheduled downtime.

Although expensive, our immediate plans are to continue to offer this service at no charge. However, we all must do a better job of knowing where the Oil Analysis Kits go and how they are utilized. The main function of the Archer Oil Analysis Program is to monitor heavy-duty diesel engines. That does not mean that we can't utilize this service on other engines or tractor transmissions and hydraulic systems if the need arises. The use of Oil Analysis on ATV's, motorcycles and lawn mowers does nothing to benefit the customer other than satisfy his curiosity.

Here are some guidelines to follow:

- Use primarily for diesel engines, sample every drain to establish wear characteristics
- For product identification, call 1-800-798-6457 Ext 120 before sending sample to the lab
- Keep a record of who gets kits from you so you can check back with them on the results
- Promote this program to new customers

In a recent advertisement, one of our competitors was offering oil analysis and they are charging \$19.91 for engine oil analysis and \$36.87 for transmission and hydraulic fluid analysis. This points out the value of this program regardless of the company that does the analysis. In talking with your current customers or new prospects, you need to establish a value for this service. It may be free to you and the customer but there is a definite value when used properly.

