



ROTASPIKE OWNER REPORT

Testimonials from Nine Farmers

KEN ASHBY

Delta, Utah

MARTY CHIN

Merrill, Oregon

ED ESTELLE

Elmira, Michigan

MAX GRAFF

American Fork, Utah

VAN JENKINS

Newton, Utah

ANTHONY KIZEWSKI

Stevens Point, Wisconsin

HOMER MAICHEL

Harrison, Montana

WAYNE RICKARD

Plain City, Ohio

ROGER STANWORTH

Oasis, Utah

Ask the man who owns one.

This is sound advice for any farmer thinking of making a major equipment purchase. It is especially good advice when the equipment is designed for a job as important as preparing your seedbeds.

The nine farmers represented here are all owners of the HOWARD Model "HW" ROTASPIKE. No two of them farm in exactly the same way. Their crops, acreages and tillage methods vary--just as their locales across the country are different.

What they have in common is "real life experience" with the ROTASPIKE. They all purchased the machine because they felt it would answer a need in their farming operations.

They have also agreed to share their ROTASPIKE experience with others. All have consented to be interviewed by HOWARD for their ideas and opinions about ROTASPIKE performance.

We asked such questions as: how do they use it, how does it compare to other tillage implements, are they happy with it, would they recommend it to others?

If these are questions you have asked yourself about the ROTASPIKE, please read on. We think you will find the following information very enlightening.

We asked nine men who own them.

Ken Ashby: Delta, Utah
Marty Chin: Merrill, Oregon
Ed Estelle: Elmira, Michigan
Max Graff: American Fork, Utah
Van Jenkins: Newton, Utah
Anthony Kizewski: Stevens Point, Wisconsin
Homer Maichel: Harrison, Montana
Wayne Rickard: Plain City, Ohio
Roger Stanworth: Oasis, Utah

Here, in their own words, is what they had to say about the HOWARD "HW" ROTASPIKE. . .

. . .on Seedbed Preparation with the ROTASPIKE

Van Jenkins

"The ground that I used it on was a heavy clay ground....It was really hard and it had a lot of volunteer growth on it. And conventional means with diggers, harrows and that type of thing--all they did was stir the ground up in clods....When you got through you still didn't have a decent seedbed that you could drill through....We went over it with the ROTASPIKE and it immediately made a seedbed....In one shot over, we drilled it. And it was the actual difference in getting a crop and not getting a crop down there. I know that without any doubt....In fact, I think just on that many acres alone, down there in that kind of condition, it probably paid for itself in one year."

Wayne Rickard

"There's no comparison in the end product. You can go through better and get the job done. In your clay spots it stays real cloddy no matter how many times you run through with a disc. You can set there and beat it to death with that....We used to disc after beans for wheat, needed to disc 2 or 3 times....Now we chisel in the fall. Then we run through with the ROTASPIKE once....We always had to watch too, with the disc, you know, on the ends it left ridges. With the ROTASPIKE there's nothing, and it's level. And it's faster. It's one time over."

Homer Maichel

"The experience I've had in this heavier ground, as you go in there with a disc and you go over it, and it cuts it once, and then you've got to go over it again and you cut it, and pretty soon you can only go so far. And you wind up still with clods. Now the ROTASPIKE here, being PTO-driven, thrashes the ground up and it breaks all the clods, which is quite a savings....I would say that, well, if a discing operation costs you \$5.00 an acre probably and you save 4 or 5 trips, that's \$20.00 to \$25.00 an acre...plus, when you're all done, you still have a better seedbed."

Roger Stanworth

"I don't know how it is in other places, but around here you just have no way of floating or smoothing down a plowed

field out of alfalfa because the roots just tie up the blade on your land plane. So all you do is make a mess. But the ROTASPIKE went in, right in the plowed ground, and they pulled a drill immediately behind it...and planted right in the same pass, and I didn't even have to irrigate. The moisture was still there."

. . .on Seedbed Quality and Results

Wayne Rickard

"We go in and chisel, then we go in and ROTASPIKE it, and we have a much better wheat crop. The ground's much better and we don't have the drainage problems either after chiseling it....We get better conditions to plant seeds in than what we could come up with before. Oh, I'm not saying we couldn't come up with them before, it just took more time. More passes and all that. So we've come up with ideal seed conditions with less effort, less time."

Ed Estelle

"The big thing is, it really makes a nice seedbed. It leaves the bottom of the soil loose for water penetration, but that top is firm. It does a nice job with that."

Homer Maichel

"Another thing I think helps you with the ROTASPIKE is that it breaks the clods up, so consequently your following crop can use all of the nutrients that are in the soil. It makes them available to it. In fact, the spring wheat that I've raised, the yield was 100 bushel which is kind of a record up here....That's a terrific yield, and I think one of the things that helped make it possible was breaking all those clods up and getting a good seedbed."

Max Graff

"I used the ROTASPIKE in ripped alfalfa, then planted barley right behind. We got 200 bushels per acre. We get around 135 normally--that's after plowing, discing and harrowing. I have been up to 163 that way, weighed and sold, but the best results have been on that alfalfa."

Roger Stanworth

"When you land plane it takes a minimum of 2 trips--sometimes we used to go 3 times--to get it smooth. This ROTASPIKE will go through and it leaves a little bit of cloddy texture to the ground....I like that myself...you don't have the wind erosion....I was impressed with what I had done and the grain's come through now this spring just beautiful. We've got an excellent stand."

. . .on Chemical Incorporation with the ROTASPIKE

Marty Chin

"We used the ROTASPIKE to incorporate EPTAM into the soil on 600 acres to be planted to potatoes and found it did an excellent job....We averaged 60 acres a day which kept us well ahead of the planter....I would say we got better mixing action than with conventional tillage methods....This is the first year we've ever used EPTAM, and usually we have to go through and put what we call SENCOR through the sprinkler system to control weeds. And 90% of the fields I didn't have to put any on....I don't think you could have done a better incorporation job."

Ed Estelle

"In potatoes we had used some EPTAM, where we just sprayed it on and tried to disc it in, but it was never too satisfactory....That's one of the reasons for going to the ROTASPIKE....When we started raising the beans, we knew we had to have something that was going to do a good job. We've used it with a combination of EPTAM and TREFLAN. We'd already chisel plowed the subsoil and then left the underneath very loose. Except the top 2 or 3 inches were nice and firm for the seedbed. And we got good germination on the crop we planted, and the ROTASPIKE mixed the chemicals in the soil very well."

. . .on Simultaneous Planting/Drilling Operations

Ken Ashby

"We were able to hook a seed drill behind the ROTASPIKE and in one operation do seedbed preparation and planting...And

that just looked like it was going to save us quite a bit of money....I went in on some plowed ground that was quite heavy. And that was the roughest field I'd ever been on. I mean it just bounced and jumped me all over....But after that ROTASPIKE had gone through it, boy, the drill back there was just coming along like it was having no problem at all....It made a beautiful seedbed out of that. That was probably one of the most impressive things that I did."

Roger Stanworth

"I think the machine's capability for simultaneous tilling and planting is the best part of it."

. . .on Travel Speed with the ROTASPIKE

Ed Estelle

"The speed was fine. We have to move in our sandy soil...at a fairly good speed, so we don't break up the top of the soil too much. We were running at 5 miles per hour."

Wayne Rickard

"I'd say with the ROTASPIKE it's probably 5 or 6 miles an hour, that's my guess."

Anthony Kizewski

"On one farm we rotate potatoes with rye or oats. That's heavy ground. It's solid and it stays cloddy. We chisel plow it and air it out. Then we go in with the ROTASPIKE to bust up the clods. We can move right along, 4 to 4½ miles an hour. It's level and not cloddy at planting time....We like that."

Marty Chin

"I was probably going 3 miles an hour...even in some of this Tulelake ground. It's pretty mucky and you can get pretty big clods through it. It's lake ground....I think I went about 6 miles an hour in higher ground while incorporating."

Ken Ashby

"We feel like we're covering plenty of ground...seedbed preparation and planting all in one operation."

Roger Stanworth

"I think it was plenty, plenty fast."

. . .on ROTASPIKE Performance in Rocky Conditions

Anthony Kizewski

"We hit some rocks, some baseball size and some larger like basketballs, but the ROTASPIKE handles them real well...just moves them aside. I haven't broken a spike yet."

Wayne Rickard

"We do break some spikes, but we'd break other stuff too, whatever else we used, because of our rocky ground, you know, rocky patches....That's no different than anything else we've had. Maintenance is less expensive on the ROTASPIKE. So far it's held up better."

Homer Maichel

"Now my ground isn't rocky, but once in a while there'll be a rock out there....The ROTASPIKE is forgiving. The few rocks that I've hit haven't hurt the implement. It makes a little noise, but so far I haven't bent a spike on it yet."

. . .on "Bottom Line Savings" with the ROTASPIKE

Ken Ashby

"Yes, most of the guys we did seedbed work for told us that they figured they were getting the planting done for free. Now we were covering anywhere from 4 or 5 acres an hour. We charged \$60.00 an hour...\$12.00 to \$15.00 an acre is what it was costing. And they figured they'd be into it almost that much by the time they'd run a disc over it,

then they'd have to land plane it down or drag a rail or something, and then pull their drill over it again. And where we were coming in and in one operation it was all done."

Max Graff

"Well, on this fuel deal. You know fuel's expensive. But fuel's not as expensive as your time. And you know, when you use your disc you just unlevel your ground. You've just got more problems. And so I don't even use the disc....It's just sitting."

Ed Estelle

"There are other expenses that are greater than what the fuel is in farming, as far as I'm concerned. Some really go overboard on that. The percentage of our cost for just fuel on the farm--that's very, very small compared to some of the others. If you don't have a good crop, that's the worst part. I don't think you're using any more fuel than you would be plowing. In fact, I do believe you're saving somewhat."

Wayne Rickard

"Well, the ROTASPIKE pushes you along as opposed to dragging something, you know, so you increase your fuel efficiency. And maintenance on it is next to nothing....What you save on fuel and all that, you can't really gripe if you have to buy a few extra spikes. It's still, overall, cheaper than a disc and other things we used to use."

Marty Chin

"Well, to put the chemical on with the disc the right way they say to just cross disc one way putting on half the amount, and then cross disc the other way putting on the other half, to get the right mixing action....With our ROTASPIKE all we had to do was make just the one pass across. And if I wanted to put more or less on, I could just change my pressure on my tanks."

. . .So Would You Recommend the ROTASPIKE to Others?

Marty Chin

"I would....I thought your ROTASPIKE was a top-notch machine....After I bought that one here, our neighbor who had the old type of ROTASPIKE went and bought a new one just like ours. And there's another neighbor of ours--he just bought one this winter."

Van Jenkins

"Oh, I would. Yeah, there's no doubt that I'd recommend it, especially if people want trash on the ground or have harder soil, or if they want one shot to go over the ground and drill it right behind. I don't think you can beat that."

Wayne Rickard

"I would. I know we've had several people stop by and kind of take a second look. We're pleased with it."

Homer Maichel

"Yeah, I would. I would. And I think it's a pretty well-made tool. I think that the people that are making it...you know, they're concerned about putting out a product that doesn't fall apart after somebody gets it....No, I haven't been disappointed with any part of it. I'm real happy with it."

Anthony Kizewski

"I would never get rid of that ROTASPIKE. I'm real happy with it. It does a great job."

Ken Ashby

"Well, like I say, I think that's all I've been doin'. There are a lot of guys looking into them, neighbors of mine and everything....It really did the job we hoped for, you know."

For more information on the Model "HW" ROTASPIKE, please see your HOWARD dealer or contact us directly.

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