

ESPRO EFFICIENCY EQUALS MARKET SUCCESS

When farm machinery manufacturer Kuhn was developing its new Espro min-till seed drill, it turned to longtime partner Trelleborg Wheel Systems to ensure that problems such as “bulldozing” never gained traction.

TEXT CLAUDIA B. FLISI PHOTO KUHN

BULLDOZING can be a major problem for farmers trying to maximize their productivity while reducing costs. Bulldozing – when a vehicle accumulates a mass of soil in front of it – slows the tractor down, requiring more horsepower to overcome the speed loss – a classic case of energy inefficiency.

So when Kuhn, a major agricultural farm machinery manufacturer worldwide, decided three years ago to develop a new min-till seed drill called the Espro, it turned to longtime partner Trelleborg to help design its press wheels. “We chose Trelleborg because they have been a partner of ours for 32 years and have always been careful listeners,” explains Matthieu Schmitt, Kuhn’s product manager for the Espro. “They react quickly and show a high level of understanding of our expressed needs, and they respond accordingly.”


In this case, Trelleborg’s response was to propose a tire calibrated to meet both agronomic and road transport

needs. In the field, the tire profile was designed to enable both a breaking up of the soil and compression to prepare it for seeding. In terms of transportation, the tire was conceived to support loads up to a speed of 40 kilometers an hour. In addition, Kuhn wanted a self-cleaning tire to keep soil accumulation in check.

AFTER A PERIOD of intense collaboration and a series of prototypes, the Espro solution was developed, involving tires with relatively low pressure, a large diameter and narrow profile and squared-off, aggressive studs. The wheels are positioned in staggered rows on the tractor, facilitating the evacuation of soil and residues toward the back of the machine.

The Espro was first introduced in February 2015, and the market reaction so far has been very positive. According to Schmitt, test users report no damage or early wear and tear, as well as, less soil accumulation on the tires. He attributes the good results to the longstanding partnership between Kuhn and Trelleborg and close cooperation between the two companies. ■

FOR MORE
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The tires on the Espro seed drill enable both breaking of the soil and preparation of it for seeding.