



History of the International Harvester Company

As you know, our feature this year is International Harvester which is abbreviated as IHC or IH. It's history can be traced back to the 1830s when Cyrus McCormick perfected his version of a horse-drawn reaper. He received a patent in 1834 and he along with his brother Leander, moved to Chicago in 1847 and founded the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company. Their products were sold at the same time railroads were being developed. This offered a wide distribution of products to areas further away. Unfortunately, when Cyrus passed, the company was passed on to his son whose incompetence led to problems with their employees and labour revolt. This resulted in the merger of the company with other agricultural equipment companies – Deering Harvester, Milwaukee Harvesting Machine, Piano Manufacturing, and Warder, Bushnell and Glessner. The International Harvester Company was created in 1902.



1900 ad for McCormick farm machines



McCormick-Deering 15-30 on the fields of the Ukrainian SSR in 1930

In 1919, IH purchased Parlin and Orendorff, who was a leader in plow manufacturing and renamed it Canton Works. IH continued success with their Farmall line allowed them to build a new plant in Illinois. By 1930, they had produced their 100,000th Farmall. IH next business prospect was introducing a general-purpose tractor. The 'letter' series Farmall tractors proved to be a huge success and IH dominated the market through to the 1950's. All this at a time when there was stiff competition from Ford, Allis Chalmers, Massey Ferguson and John Deere.

IH also produced other equipment such as construction equipment and trucks. Like many businesses, they experienced issues with competition, increased production costs due to labour and government imposes environmental and safety regulations.

These problems led to selling off some of the divisions. IH Farmall Works ceased in 1985 and the new Case IH tractors moved to J.I. Case in Racine, Wisconsin. Their truck and engine divisions remained. In 1985, Harvester changed the corporate name to Navistar International Corporation where it continues to manufacture medium and heavy-duty trucks, school buses, and engines under the International brand name.

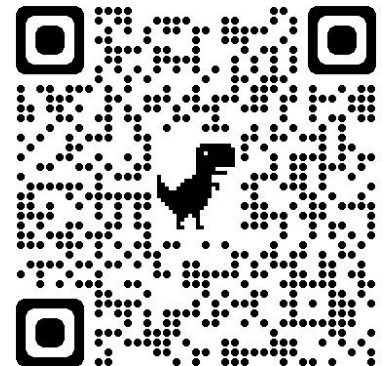


Ad for the 1940 International Tanker Truck

We hope you are looking forward to seeing some of IHC's equipment this year at our show. If anyone would like to submit an article on their IH equipment or restoration project, please contact Joan.

Credit: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Harvester#History

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 ABOUT THIS YEAR'S SHOW



Looking at International Harvester continues



FARMALL Regular

Farmall tractors were manufactured in the 1920s to the 1980s. They were part of International Harvester, part of McCormick-Deering Farmall and later McCormick Farmall. In the early years, their focus was to build a tractor that would help the farmer at a time when the trend was heading to the mechanization of agriculture. Their row-crop tractors were viewed as the first tractor with a combined set of traits that would define the row-crop tractor category. These traits included a 'tricycle' configuration – a single front wheel or narrowly spaced pair, high ground clearance, adjustable axle track, excellent visibility all around and underneath, and light weight; (b) sufficient power for plowing and harrowing, and a belt pulley for belt work; and (c) all at low cost, with a familiar brand and an extensive distribution and service network. Farmall tractors were compared to the Fordson tractor but had a better cultivating ability due to the first trait as it had more nimble maneuvering and more accurate cultivation.

Tractor sales rose on the premise being an all-purpose tractors as it not only brought power for plowing, harrowing, belt work, and it replaced the horse team entirely thus reducing the overhead costs for the farmer. With Farmall's success, other manufacturers introduced their own version of general and all-purpose tractors with varying success.

Up until mid 1936, all Farmall tractors were painted a deep blue-grey (often mistaken for battleship grey) with red wheels most often. It was in 1936 when the company decided to change the colour of the tractor and wheels. A new colour was created - Farmall Red. Many other tractor manufacturers also began using their own distinctive colours for branding. This made it easier to see tractors at a distance and recognize the manufacturer. This also helped for advertising as the market became highly competitive.



From 1936, the bright red colour of Farmall tractors were seen on many farms. So much that it was synonymous with farming. The F-series tractors lasted until 1939 when the Letter series was introduced. Model name letters were A, B, C (which replaced B in 1948), H, M and MD (M diesel). Industrial designer, Raymond Loewy was commissioned by IH to create a new, sleek streamlined look to general-purpose tractors. These offered small to medium sized farms a wider variety of capabilities, engines and equipment options. Each model had their own unique design and capability.

IH took care to produce a model for almost every farm and every need. The Farmall A, B, BN and the later C offered compact size; the H and M series provided extra plowing capability and power, while the Model H proved most popular with customers. The 'MD' Farmall offered a diesel engine, which actually started on gasoline, then was switched over to diesel when thoroughly warmed up. Sales took off, and letter-series production did not end until 1954. Overall, the Farmall 'letter' series, well built and affordable, became not only a defining product line in IH history, but an iconic symbol of the prototypical American small-farm tractor. Many machines (especially the two largest models, the H and M) are still in operation on farms today.

In 1947, Farmall introduced the Cub, which was the smallest of the lines, geared to small farms. The Letter series tractors changed to the Super series in 1947. In 1954, the line of numbered series was introduced. Farmall continued to keep up with the changes in farming trends and production challenges while modernizing their model lines in order to lowering their costs in order to remain competitive.



FARMALL CUB

After the 1960s, the trends in farming changed. There was a decline in cultivating moving to the more favorable use of herbicidal weed control. Farms were being sold and the agricultural sector developed into larger but fewer farms. These changes ended the era of Farmall manufacturing. Sadly, in 1973, Farmall ended their brand of tractor

With concerns of the environment, there has been a resurgence of interest in organic farming since the 1990s. A revival of Farmall Letter series tractor was brought about by Case IH.

Looking at International Harvester continues

International Harvester had a list of different lettered series of trucks of all sizes over the years. The first model was commercial trucks were the Metro line. Production years for the Metro line was 1938-1975. During these years, the Metro Van was built for delivery services such as milk or bakery delivery.



They were also used by ambulance services. They allowed the driver to stand or sit while driving, something that would not be permitted today. Variations of this line include a passenger bus called a Metro Coach, a Metro partial cab-chassis with front-end sections and a cab-over truck called a 'walk-in cab'. The truck variation could be configured with a separate box for cargo transport or left open to be fitted with other equipment such as a compactor for a garbage truck.

The overall design of the Metro Vans remained somewhat unchanged from 1938 to 1964 when it was felt they needed to be more competitive with the Boyertown and Hackney vans.

The corners were squared and an opening hood was added for easier access to coolant and oil dipstick. They also offered an eight-cylinder engine for customers wanting more power.

In 1959, IH introduced the 'Metro Mite'. It was based on the Scout drive train. In 1960, the 'Bookmobile' was built by the Metropolitan Body Company on a IHC chassis. By 1972, all IHC Metro Vans were stripped chassis that other manufacturers could build on. After 1975, the truck line, all but the Scout II, was discontinued.

The International Harvester Scout was produced by IH from 1961-1980 as an off-road vehicle. The Scout was created as a competitor to the Jeep and initially featured a fold-down windshield. Along with the Scout II, were built in Indiana as two-door trucks with a removable hard top, half-cab pickup, and/or soft top.



first model 1961 Scout 80 pickup

In 1953, IH introduced the first generation of R-Series truck range. This range of trucks were from ½-ton pickups to heavy commercial trucks including the introduction of the

Travelall. They were produced from 1953-1975, and was one of the first competitors to the Chevrolet Suburban. It was a truck-based station wagon serving as a forerunner of modern people carriers and full-sized sport utility vehicles.



1954 R-110 Travelall

The second generation, A-Series trucks was produced from 1958-1960. They called it 'A' as in Anniversary to signify 50 years of IH truck production. Improvements to the rear-seat access, a second passenger-side door was added and offered the option for four-wheel drive on the A-120 model. The A-Series was revised becoming the B-Series. Improvements made were power steering and power brakes, and V-8 engines options.

The third generation or C-Series were from 1961-1968 with a redesign of the chassis and front suspension. The front axle was moved four inches forward extending the wheelbase to 119 inches. The body was also mounted lower on the frame resulting in an increase to the front clearance angle. The C-120 Tavelette had front and side-by-side twin headlights.

The fourth and final generation Travelall production was from 1969-1975. Travelalls built during these years came in two and four-wheel drives. They offered interior and exterior features such as up to three rows of forward-facing passenger seating (interior) and woodgrain trim (exterior). The Wagonmaster was a pickup truck variation to the Tavelette by removing the roof and windows of the cargo section. It was developed for truck users who towed, primarily owners of fifth-wheel RV trailers.



1975 IH Travelall Custom 500



1978 Scout II wagon

In May 1975, International Harvester discontinued the entire Light line model series following the 1973 oil crisis and their main competitor, Suburban, being more fuel efficient which led to a decline in sales. Only the Scout II remained in production to 1980.

IHC History Continues with CUB CADET and TITAN TRACTORS

International Harvester established a new branch to produce outdoor power equipment and service in 1960 and introduced its first Cub Cadet tractor in 1961. This new line of heavy-duty small tractor used the same components from the previous Cub series tractors (1947-1985). The new IH Cub Cadet was marketed to owners of rural homes with lawns and private gardens. They also offered a variety of after-market attachments such as mowers, blades, snow blowers, front loaders, plows and carts.

The first Cub Cadet model was better known as the Original. It was powered by a 7 hp and 8 hp replacement Kohler engine. Like any new productions, IH amended the frame. In 1963 and gave the Cub Cadet a tougher, narrow frame from 1963-1971. This was followed by the Quieter series in 1974, the 82 series in late 1979, and the Cyclops series, which had a restyled hood, plastic side panels, a plastic hood, and newly designed fenders.

In 1981, due to financial hardships, IH sold the Cub Cadet division to the Modern Tool and Die (MTD) corporation, which took over production and use of the Cub Cadet brand name (without the IH symbol). One change MTD made was replacing the International Harvester cast-iron rear end with an aluminum rear end. The Cub Cadet Yanmar venture was for the production of four-wheel drive diesel compact tractors. The Cub Cadet Corporation, a wholly owned subsidiary of MTD, produced Cub Cadets for lawn equipment dealers (branded as Cub Cadet Corporation tractors, in traditional white/yellow livery) and IH agricultural dealers (in red/white livery) until the IH agriculture division was sold to Tenneco in 1985.

Today, we see Cub Cadets at our shows, some even modified for our Garden Tractor pulls.

TITAN TRACTORS

In the early 1900s, Harvester sent two experimental tractors by train to the Winnipeg Industrial Exhibition Association in 1909. They were assembled in such a rush that they were even painted on the train. At the time, there were only two thousand tractors built in the U.S. It was a great time for Harvester to introduce their new demonstration models. A re-design was needed and the Type D was produced. This model was rated at 45 hp. It needed a name - a name to match its brute power.



1979 Cub Cadet Front End Loader



The Titan was produced in 1910 with versions ranging from 10 to 60 hp. Harvester tractors dominated in sales to 1916 with more than 80,000 Titans in fields across North America. Other manufacturers produced tractors that could compete in style and price. The small, sleek and light-weight Fordson tractor was its main competition. Henry Ford had secured sales contracts from county war boards in 1916 which led Harvester to redesign the Titan with a smaller model - Titan 10-20 in 1916 and from 1918-1921. During these years, Ford and Harvester were in a tight competition for sales but Ford had a slight edge in the market. In 1921, Ford slashed prices forcing Harvester to reduce their price to just \$700 on the Titan 10-20. Harvester

even threw in a free plow in the hopes of swaying buyers to purchase their model. Unfortunately, this plan did not entice buyers and Harvester remained in second place behind Ford.

Harvester was not to be outdone and the Titan evolved into a new, redesigned and rebranded model by McCormick - Deering tractors.

LAST OF THE IHC SERIES.....

International Harvester is best known for farm equipment but they also manufactured other items. Home appliances were for everyone and around 1945, the IH Refrigeration Division started to produce refrigerators, air conditioners, and freezers. IH had followed other car manufacturers at the time in the home appliance production. Philco was a division of Ford, General Motors had Frigidaire while American Motors had Kelvinator, to name a few.

The intent for home appliance production was to make commercial-grade items to farmers continuing on serving farmers. Since the government had been busy with providing the infrastructure for electricity service to rural areas, most of the farmers would now be able to keep their milk and meats refrigerated. IH started with milk coolers and walk-in freezers. Kitchen refrigerators were produced and even available in the latest designer styles. Spokeswoman Irma Harding introduced these products but unfortunately, IH sold this division to Whirlpool Corporation in 1955.



IH also expanded their production to weaponry and military vehicles. In early 1951, they were contacted to produce M1 rifles and were able to provide the Army Ordnance Department with 337,623 rifles in total during 1953-1956. Military trucks were also sold to US Navy and Marines in 1942 as well as some 3,500 2.5 ton M-5-5-318 cargo trucks, most to the Soviet Union and China.

In 1959, IH created a jet turbine-powered tractor. This International HT-341 was eventually donated to the Smithsonian Institution in 1967. Could this have been the start of Tractor Pulls?

Recently, I was able to attend the show in Ilderton on July 8, 2023. Though the weather did not cooperate, the organizers and volunteers did well to deal with the rain. Working extra hours to remove the water from the pulling track, they were able to hold their pulls on Friday night.

While on our walk around the grounds, we happened to spot some International Harvester tractors, hit 'n miss engines and even a Scout vehicle. I enjoy seeing the equipment and vehicles of all makes that are lovingly restored by their owners. Depending on where our members can travel, it is interesting to see the different exhibits that may not be at our show. I've included a few pictures for you.

Please keep in mind that if you spot something that is unique or not seen at Steam-Era, please share so that I can share with our members in the Boiler Bulletin. Joan

