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AGCO's Fendt IDEALDrive Eliminates the Steering Wheel in IDEAL Combines

Joystick steering solution delivers greater visibility for less operator fatigue

SAN ANTONIO, Texas (Feb. 27, 2020) -- [AGCO Corporation](#) (NYSE:AGCO) introduced the Fendt® IDEALDrive™ steering system to North American producers during the 2020 Commodity Classic. IDEALDrive is the first joystick steering system on a combine from a major manufacturer. It gives the operator an unobstructed, end-to-end view of the combine header for less stress and fatigue during long hours harvesting.

"Time is of the essence when harvesting, and operating a combine for long hours day after day can take a toll on the combine operator," says Zach Stejskal, product specialist at AGCO. "IDEALDrive takes away a lot of the physical stress and reduces fatigue because the operator can see the entire header feeding and control everything from a comfortable position in the cab."

Finger-tip control and quick response improve productivity

With IDEALDrive, the left hand steers the combine by moving the joystick left or right. Force feedback guides how far to move the joystick for the desired effect. The IDEALDrive joystick responds quickly and precisely to the operator's hand movements, allowing accurate steering with less body movement, compared to turning the steering wheel lock-to-lock an average of four times.

"The joystick turns a headland, 180-degree turn into light work," Stejskal says. "Compare that with spinning a steering wheel four or five times ■ joystick steering will definitely reduce operator fatigue."

Because IDEALDrive steering is so responsive, a slight movement of the hand is all that is needed to make a steering adjustment when operating in the field, improving harvesting efficiency. University studies have shown that productivity increases 6% with the IDEALDrive joystick versus conventional steering systems, while operator steering workload is decreased by 65%. The comparison is based on the time it took drivers to complete a circuit on a simulated track with IDEALDrive versus conventional steering.

Controls typically found on the steering wheel or steering column are now on the joystick at the operator's fingertips. For easy access, control buttons on the top of the steering joystick operate turn signals in road mode and row-finder lights in field mode; buttons on the back are for dim and high-beam lights, the horn and track guidance.

The steering sensitivity adjusts based on the speed of the machine to optimize the operators control whether the combine is harvesting or in transport mode.

Better visibility of the header and feeding process

With nothing in front of the operator but brake pedals and foot pegs, there is a clear view of the entire combine head, especially the center of the header where the crop enters the feeder house. The clear view helps ensure crop is flowing smoothly into the machine for optimum productivity and grain quality. In addition, the wide-open view makes it easier to see and avoid obstacles in the field or on the road, reducing the potential for machine damage and improving safety.

Unmatched ergonomics and comfort

From the moment an operator gets into the cab of an IDEAL combine equipped with IDEALDrive, the differences and benefits are apparent. Both left- and right-hand controls are within easy reach and are designed with operator comfort in mind. The left armrest folds down into place and adjusts forward or back to put the steering joystick in the palm of the operator's hand. The right-hand hydrostat controls the machine speed.

The seat can be adjusted forward or back as needed, so the operator can sit in an upright and relaxed position, without having to lean forward to steer or to see over a steering wheel and column. Foot pegs provide a comfortable place for the operator's feet to rest.

Finally, joystick steering with IDEALDrive reduces the muscle activity required for steering and is easier on the operator's wrists, forearms, shoulders and back. Better visibility also means less eye strain.

Ready for harvest 2021

IDEALDrive is optional and can be ordered as the steering solution on Fendt IDEAL combines in mid-summer 2020 for delivery in 2021.

Fendt IDEAL combines are backed by Fendt Gold Star Customer Care that includes a three-year full machine warranty, maintenance and 24-hour uptime assurance plan -- the industry's best customer support package.

For more information about IDEAL combines and the IDEALDrive steering system, visit [Fendt.com](#) or contact your local dealer.

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