

Tractor HP Recommendations

Customers often ask us what size tractor is required to run a particular spreader. While this may seem like an easy question, as with most things in life the answer is not as cut and dried as we would like.

The actual PTO horsepower required to run a Stoltzfus lime spreader is actually fairly low due to the efficiency of the drives. The most important factor in tractor selection is that the tow vehicle needs enough weight to stop the loaded spreader on your particular terrain.

The best information on the topic is published by the American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers (ASABE). This is summarized in the following rule: Loaded spreaders without brakes should not weigh more than 1.5 times the weight of the tow vehicle. Stoltzfus Spreaders recommends that for hilly terrain, road travel, or other adverse conditions, tractor weight must be equal to gross loaded spreader weight.

It may be useful to think about what other types of machinery you have on the farm that may have a similar weight to the spreader you are considering, and how comfortable you feel transporting and stopping that equipment. If your tractor is undersized, the spreader should be purchased with brakes. Whatever you decide to do, the most important rule to remember is that you always need enough tractor weight to stop your load. Stay safe!