

# WILDLIFE TRENDS

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## Selecting a Tractor for Your Hunting Property

By Aubrey Iler



This 7210 John Deere tractor is a 95 horsepower 2 wheel drive machine. It is used for open field work like disking fallow fields, planting food plots, and mowing. The enclosed cab keeps the operator out of the dust, weather, and chemical drift.

So it is finally time to buy a tractor to start working on those jobs around your property. Most people know about the basic functions of a tractor, but if your experience with a tractor is limited then take time to look at your needs for a tractor and weigh the options carefully. A tractor

which is too large or too small for the situation can be frustrating to work with on a regular basis. Tractors too large for the job can be cumbersome and difficult to maneuver, not to mention more expensive to operate and maintain. Tractors on the small side may not perform well because they are underpowered or the associated implements are too small and take more time than needed. Occasionally using a tractor which is too large or small for the job at hand is normally not a big deal. However, constantly asking a tractor to do more than is intended is costly in many ways, and potentially dangerous. Also, using larger tractors for small or detailed work is frustrating for the operator and more costly. So how much tractor do we need?

If starting from scratch with no tractor available to gauge performance, start by looking into the implements which will be used frequently with the tractor. Try to get an estimate of the weight and horsepower requirements of each known implement. Find out which implement requires the most tractor. This will give a good idea which size range of tractor to look into buying. Remember at this point that the commonly used implements have been measured and look at a tractor that is **slightly larger** than needed. There are two reasons for this: 1) horsepower requirements are usually prescribed for ideal conditions, and 2) as time passes more will be expected of the tractor as new tasks develop on your property. Usually when the firebreaks need to be harrowed it is slightly wet or dry, and the little extra power gives the extra needed to still do a good job. Also, as the jobs become routine there will inevitably be new projects that present themselves and more often than not a little more tractor is needed.

When an older tractor is being replaced it is easy to relate how it performed to a new and improved model of similar size. Obviously, if the old tractor lacked power to do certain jobs then a larger tractor might be in order. However, new technology has given even tractors new advantages. Newer tractors are more fuel-efficient and have better load capacities. They are offered with modern options such as front wheel assist, and are much

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