

# Proper Tire Maintenance Can Maximize Field Performance

Between 2006 and 2011, the average size of Canadian farms increased 6.9% from 728 acres to 778 acres. So there is a higher demand placed on the equipment that is used to work in the fields, especially the tires on the machines. With fall harvesting in full swing, farmers are encouraged to properly maintain their ag tires to promote optimal equipment and crop yield in the field.

Mike Pantaleo, Customer Engineering Support Manager for Michelin North America, says having the right tire pressure and sufficient tread are the most important considerations.

- **Over-inflation** – Over-inflated tires can cause excessive soil compaction that can harm healthy root development, as well as result in a less comfortable ride due to bouncing and vibration. Too much air pressure can also increase the amount of tire slippage, causing excess fuel consumption and excessive wear on both tires and machine.
- **Under-inflation** – Under-inflated tires can lead to problems as well, including irreversible damage to tire casings and even tire failure, excessive wear during road travel, increased rolling resistance, and difficulty in maneuvering at field speeds.
- **Tire tread** – It's recommended that farmers check their tire tread at the start of the growing season. Replace worn tires. You don't want to be caught needing tires during the season and find your tire dealer not available for a service call. Operating on worn tread can cause a lack of traction, reduced fuel efficiency increased tire slippage and susceptible to punctures.
- **Tire pressure checks** – It is recommended that farmers check their tire pressures regularly in order to run at best efficiency. Ambient temperature will significantly affect pressure levels in the tire. Industry standard states that in an average passenger tire the pressure is affected by 1 psi for every 10 degrees Fahrenheit change. An Ag tire is significantly larger in volume than a passenger tire with volumes 10 to 100 times larger so the variation in pressure will be much larger. 90% of the work in a pneumatic tire is done by the air, so running flat or under inflated can cause irreparable damage and slow leaks will not be caught before a failure.
- **Visual checks** – quick visual checks will save you time and money. If you spot something unusual or any unusual deformity, it's best to catch this early and get your tire dealer out to advise and or repair so your production is not interrupted and unnecessary costs can be avoided.

Following these simple maintenance checks can go a long way to help protect farmers' investment in their tires and maximize their crop production. Farmers should contact their local tire dealer for questions about the right tire pressure for their operation or other tire performance issues.

