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ASPECTS OF SEED TRANSFER WITHIN

A DIRECT DRILLING COULTER (OPENER).

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree
of Master of Agricultural Science
in Agricultural Mechanisation at
Massey University.

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1982
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ABSTRACT.

A number of laboratory and field experiments were conducted in order to identify and quantify seed and seedling spacing variations produced by an experimental direct drill. Seed contact with both stationary and moving components of the coulter assembly was considered to contribute to the increased variability of seed spacing that resulted from the positioning of a chisel direct drilling coulter beneath a "Nodet Gougis" seed selection mechanism.

Alternatives for transferring the seeds from the seed selection mechanism to the soil were considered. The simplest of these alternatives, a seed-transfer tube, was tested in a number of different shapes and positions. It was found that the seeder required modifications to its release characteristics in order to satisfactorily incorporate the tube transfer system. A number of deflector plates were fitted to the seeder to control seed release trajectory. A 40 degree seed deflector plate was found to produce a seed path that was most compatible with a straight vertical seed-transfer tube.

A video recording technique was used to assess the effects of seeder modifications on seed release trajectory.

The modified seeder and the tube transfer system were combined with the chisel direct drilling coulter, and seed spacing performance was retested. Seed spacing variability was found to be considerably less than with the original experimental drill in the laboratory, although field performance was not improved to the same extent. It was considered that this effect
may have been attributable to the effects of soil flow with the direct drilling coulter and the manner with which the seed was released into the soil, which differed with the tube system compared with the unmodified coulter tested initially.
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I am sincerely grateful to the following individuals and organisations for their assistance and interest throughout the course of this project:

To Dr John Baker, Reader in Agricultural Machinery, Agronomy Department, Massey University: For patient hours of supervision, guidance, criticism and encouragement and for his initiative and expertise in this field.

To R.C. MacDonald Ltd and Development Finance Corporation: For financial assistance with research expenses.

To academic, technical and clerical staff members of the Agronomy Department, Massey University: For their various contributions to this project, especially Julie Vickers; for many patient hours during the typing and compiling of this thesis.

To Mr G.C. Arnold, Mathematics and Statistics Department, Massey University: For understanding and guidance with statistical aspects.

To C.B. Norwood Ltd: For the loan of equipment.

To Mr T.I. Cox, M.A.F. Horticultural Research Centre, Levin: For co-operation and assistance.

To Mr T. Hedderwick, Forestry Research Institute, Rotorua: For information and discussion.

To Central Photographic Unit, Massey University: For technical assistance with photography and presentation.

Finally, to my wife, Mary, and to my family and friends: For their continuing encouragement, interest and understanding.