

## WEED BARRIER FABRIC LAYING MACHINE INSTRUCTIONS

The machine can be set up for putting down 4-foot or 6-foot wide fabric. There is a large box end wrench in the tool box for loosening bolts on the tool bar so that arms can be slid inward or outward as necessary to accommodate fabric width. This needs to be done with the implement off the trailer and lifted off the ground by the 3-point on the tractor. In the past, I have marked the arm locations for 4-foot and 6-foot fabric widths, but these quickly weather or rub off. You can see where things are for the 6-foot wide fabric set up, and figure the various arms should be moved inward about a foot on each side, or if machine is set up for 4-foot fabric, arms should be moved outward around a foot on each side.

The large plows are for anchoring the fabric by covering the sides (which if all is working right, have been pushed down into a trench) with dirt and go on the outside arms. Line up the fins on the top of each plow parallel with the way the arm runs after making the bend (I'm doing this from memory, so hope I'm telling you right). These plows should be set a bit lower than the packing wheels. The two smaller plows are for digging a trench for the packing wheels to push the fabric down into and go on the inside and should be set at about the same depth as the packing wheels. If the ground is hard, or the plows are digging too deep, it's not uncommon to pop bolts. There are extras in the plastic bins on top of the tool box.

Fabric should unwind off the axle from beneath, not above, and feed under the packing wheels into the trench dug by the front plows. A trench should be dug perpendicular to the direction of travel and the beginning of the roll of fabric put in this trench and covered with dirt at the start of each row (maybe 3 or 4 feet in front of the first tree or shrub). I also suggest that you dig two short trenches forward toward the packing wheels from the perpendicular trench, put the sides of fabric in these trenches, and cover with dirt. This duplicates what the front plows and packing wheels will do once the machine gets going, but when you are just getting started with a new roll, you are working behind these so need to do by hand. A trench also needs to be dug where one roll of fabric ends and another begins should you run out of fabric in the middle of a row (put the end of the last roll and the start of the next roll in the same trench and anchor with dirt. Also, dig the short forward trenches for the new roll. At end of tree row, cut off fabric from roll with a utility knife 3 to 4 feet beyond the last tree planted, dig a perpendicular trench, put end of fabric inside, and cover with dirt.

The seat is for a person to ride on who either cuts a slit in the fabric (in direction tractor is moving) with a utility knife or sprays a dot of paint as each tree is covered with fabric. Utility knives and paint are in the tool box. Either way, someone needs to follow up with a utility knife to cut an "+" slit in the fabric and pull the tree or shrub up through it. If the paint method is used, feel around for the base of the stem, and then carefully make a slit in the direction the fabric was laid, pull the tree up through, and then make a perpendicular cut to create the "+". I've found that when I tried to make both cuts before bringing the tree up through, for some reason the second cut usually comes out ahead of where the base of the stem is. Some people like to put a shovel of dirt near the front or back of each hole to hold the fabric around each tree down on the ground better. Ideally, fabric should be lying flat on the ground and there is no air space between the ground and the fabric, but this is often difficult to achieve. If it is sunny, it is important not to wait too long before pulling trees up through the fabric. It gets very warm beneath the fabric, and this can quickly "cook" your trees.