Why buy a Dutchman?

When buying a Dutchman Spade it is important to purchase one that will maximize your digging production. Since various nurseries can have various digging conditions, climates, and habits, we at Dutchman are committed to ensuring that you buy the right spade for your application. If your spade needs to be altered, or changed slightly to meet your nursery requirements, we can accommodate. Below are answers to facts or concerns and are crucial to know when buying your tree spade.

We built it for ourselves first.

As a 1000 acre nursery digging over 50,000 trees per year, we wanted to produce a spade that had everything that one would look for in a spade. We wanted to be sure that it met all that others were lacking. Even though some spades were beneficial in some conditions, they could be detrimental in others. The goal was to find a design that would give us the best possible production in all circumstances. The result was a durable, solid weld tree spade.

Dutchman's 1 to 1 ratio.

You may have heard us mention the 1 to 1 ratio on our tree spade blades and wondered what this means. This means that the amount of blade that is welded to the tower is equal to the digging depth. This ensures that the torque placed on the blade while digging is properly supported. This will keep the blades from bending, warping, or (in the worst case), fracturing.

Electric or Manual Valves are the best in the Business

Throughout Dutchman's history, we have tested and sampled various electric and hydraulic valves. Although many valves have different features, we have found the the steel valve, with individual control functions, work best and last the longest. Dutchman valves are the only ones that have an "Unloader" on them to ensure that the hydraulic oil does not heat up. When digging 10 hours a day, this can mean the difference between digging every order, or replacing seals on a valve.

Best gate hinge in the industry

The gate hinge has been modified over the years to provide better durability. It is designed as a "finger-lock" rather than the old plate-over-a-plate design. The old design was much like the competition that had a plate that folded over another plate. The trouble with this design is that it required constant cleaning to allow the plate to completely close over the other. Otherwise the blades would gap from each other. The old design would also stress the gate pin and it would wear, get lose, or facture. The new gate design eliminates all of these issues. Although we always recommend greasing, this gate system could go without greasing because it is manufactured with replaceable bushings that can be easily changed at a later date.

Visibility and keeping the Hook-up close

In order to maximize the size of tree spade on your skid steer, Dutchman makes certain that the hook-up plate is as close to the tree spade as possible. Every inch closer make a huge difference in the tipping factor. We also cut the top of the hook-up plate to allow the operator to view the entire tree while sitting comfortably in his/her seat. The ability to view the entire plant is the same reason we keep the gate cylinders to the outside of the frame. Gate cylinders placed on the inside of the spade frame can restrict visibility and make it increasingly more difficult to center a tree.

Are you tired of clipping roots from your spade blades?

The Dutchman spade shears virtually every root, every time. Even the toughest locust trees are no match for the Dutchman blades. The Dutchman blades are designed to follow their straight-line travel path every time they are pushed into the ground. Any unforeseen obstacles will be shifted as the blades pass so as to ensure blade overlap for years and years.

No maintenance or adjustments

All of our spades are straight welded eliminating any moving parts like nuts, bolts, bushings, or pins. All of these unfortunately can wear or break after a short period of time leading to distorted blade configuration or worse; bent

blades. We do not put any threaded adjustments on the blades either. These, at best, offer a band-aid fix and will wear back quicker the second time.

Are the Dutchman electronics inferior?

It has been our goal throughout the last five years to produce a more "User Friendly" electronic control system. In 2001, Dutchman introduced its new electronic control system that involved half the amount of wires with far better flexibility and durability. It also included new control boxes and a plug connection so as to allow the controller to sit in the cab at all times. Trouble shooting lights allow the operator to isolate problems within minutes and issues can be fixed in the field now. Dutchman is committed to continue their focus on providing an even better control system for the future.

Never bend a blade

Because the Dutchman blades are supported and guided using a "Tube within a Tube" design, the blade will always want to follow a straight-line travel path. All the blades are pushed into the ground; the torque is compensated on the tower. Blades, when pushed into the ground want to spread outward if allowed. This is why most spade blades will spread after a while on the bottom. This "Tube within a Tube" design prevents the blades from spreading and keeps the blades overlapping for years.

Does the Truncated Design Lose Soil Out of the Bottom?

Contrary to popular belief, the Dutchman spade can dig in some of the sandiest conditions and hold the soil together well. As long as the blades always meet together, the compression at the bottom of the blades lock in the soil and allow you to put into a basket.

What kind of root-ball is produced?

There's nothing worse then having to crimp the bottom of your basket because your truncated spade does not quite fill out the bottom. Eventually the tree wants to fall over. As a nursery, we wanted to see a root ball package that was both round on the top as well as the bottom. Wire baskets are made like this so it would only make sense to produce a spade that would fill out as much of the basket as possible. This leads to little or no crimping, allow you to stand the tree upright, and the root balls will sit properly on a trailer when shipping.

Is the Dutchman Spade too wide?

Most spade competitors place the cylinder on the towers so that it pushes the blade into the ground. This gives the spade a fixed height. We invert the cylinder, give it a larger bore size for more power, and pull the blade into the ground. That will make the height of the Dutchman spade shorter as the blades move into the ground. What many people soon realize however is that the Dutchman spade is wide enough to get around heavy conifers, and not too wide to damage other trees beside the one you are digging. The Dutchman spade is built on a 22 or a 25-degree angle rather than a 30-degree cone, which can be far too wide for your row spacing.

Does a curve blade dig better than a truncated blade in dry, hard soils?

Simply put: NO. A curved blade is always changing the angle of deflection as it is pushed in the ground. As such, it builds an extreme amount of resistance that literally forces it upward as it digs. This can lead to root ball fracture and a shallow dug ball. Conversely, the Dutchman blade glides straight into the ground never changing the angle of deflection.