



Ford's 1520, at 19.5 hp, is in the middle of the company's compact tractor power range. It can utilize more than 50 implements and attachments.

# COMPACT TRACTORS ENHANCE FLEXIBILITY

Utility vehicles with selected attachments offer a more versatile machine you can use throughout the entire year.

by Ken Moehle

**S**electing the right mix of multi-purpose and single-purpose machines is an important decision for a landscape manager. For peak seasonal tasks, some single-purpose machines play an important role—especially in larger fleets. But to add versatility and extend year-round equipment use, utility tractors with selected attachments are a prime choice.

Compact utility tractors of 18 to 35 horsepower, when teamed with the wide range of available attachments, offer the versatility and dependability needed for many landscape maintenance tasks. Attachments to compact tractors are: standard category I three-point-hitch, remote hydraulic circuits and power takeoff units (PTOs). Of course, before choosing a combination of compact tractor and attachment, first check with the tractor dealer or manufacturer. They can advise whether or not the proposed application is safe and

effective, or if the attachment is approved for use with the tractor.

Many of these attachments allow compact tractors to use their power and compact size to help with light construction, excavating and site preparation in tight quarters. For example:

- three-point-hitch-mounted blades, box scrapers, scarifiers, rock rakes and seedbed preparation implements for clean-up and finish grading;

- hitch-mounted, PTO-powered roto-tillers for one-step preparation before reseeding lawns or planting floral displays;

- front-end loaders for loading, dozing and lifting; and

- hitch-mounted, PTO- or hydraulic-powered compact backhoes for servicing utilities, installing footings and other excavation work in close quarters.

Other attachments which make compact tractors efficient power sources for tree service and forestry:

- hitch-mounted tree planters for

reforestation, windbreak and hedgerow plantings;

- PTO-powered, mounted or pull-type wood chippers for easy disposing or recycling tree trimmings and storm debris;

- PTO-powered sprayers with the capacity to reach tall trees; and

- PTO-powered mounted or pull-type log splitters and bucking saws to economically convert surplus trees and large limbs into marketable firewood.

As compact tractors have grown in popularity, the list of attachments continues to expand compact tractor uses:

- hydraulic- or PTO-powered implements sized for compact tractors, including manure spreaders, dump trailers and lawn sweepers;

- post hole diggers, for fence building and tree planting;

- mounted, PTO-driven cement mixers, for sites inaccessible to trucks and towed mixers;

- PTO-powered air blowers for

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sweeping light snow, trash or leaves; pesticide and fertilizer sprayers and spreaders for covering large areas;

● three-point-hitch or front-mounted forklifts or hoists for materials handling;

● and sickle-bar mowers for safe and efficient clipping of weedy plots with debris and rough terrain.

With their built-in ability to handle heavy loads and adverse weather and ground conditions, compact tractors can use their maneuverability to provide excellent grass cutting performance, from the finest finishing cuts to thick, heavy weed cutting.

Additionally, these tractors offer the following benefits:

● ample drawbar pull and traction to operate high-capacity grass clippings collectors;

● built-in strength, weight and rigidity for excellent mowing performance on rolling, damp or soft ground;

● and when versatility is a key criteria, a single compact tractor can serve as the power unit for both heavy-duty mowers and fine-cut finishing mowers.

Modern mower design recognizes the need for versatility. For example,

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**One tractor can be constantly ready for high-capacity mowing and diverse loading, grading and lifting applications.**

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front-end loaders and mid-mount mowers are designed to be mounted simultaneously. One tractor can be constantly ready for high-capacity mowing and diverse loading, grading and lifting applications.

Snow removal is a fact of life for landscape supervisors in much of North America. This is one operation in which the power, durability and ability to be unaffected by harsh conditions make compact tractors an outstanding value. Workers' productivity can be increased and exposure to harsh weather decreased by using compact tractors to provide faster, more efficient snow removal. Compact tractors equipped with long-lasting, ruggedly constructed, front-mounted blades quickly remove snow

from streets and parking lots. They have the reserve horsepower and hydraulic capacity to operate rotary brooms for clean-sweep snow removal from sidewalks and pedestrian plazas. They are also designed with demanding PTO applications in mind such as snow thrower operations to remove deep, heavy snowfalls or to clear the way for future snow plowing or sweeping.

Multiple transmission gear selections further enhance PTO operation by providing slow travel speeds at full horsepower engine RPMs. And inexpensive weather brakes direct engine heat toward the operator or fully enclosed cabs increase operator comfort and productivity in the coldest weather.

In many turf care operations, compact tractors can be a very productive and economical capital investment. In larger fleets, they can extend the versatility of utility tractors to more workers, in a machine size that is economical to purchase and operate. For other operations, they bring the power and versatility of utility tractors to situations that do not require the power and size of a mid-sized utility tractor. **LM**

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