
Customer reference case

Potato harvester

SKFY-bearings



SKF agricultural Y-bearing eliminates potato harvest downtime

Five-lip sealing design boosts potato harvester reliability and reduces maintenance costs.



Facing the challenge

Harvest season is hard on potato harvester machines, especially during the last 10 to 14 days before winter when the potato harvester is running 24-7. Breakdowns can be extremely costly.

One particular SKF customer, Kjargaarden, was experiencing 10 to 15 bearing-related breakdowns throughout the harvest season. Stopping to replace bearings was significantly decreasing productivity. Replacing a bearing could take several hours, especially if the bearing was in a difficult-to-access location. This process could take even longer if the bearing had to be replaced during evening operation at the crucial end of the season.

SKF analyzed the issue and discovered that water, detergents and potato materials were breaching the bearing seals, eventually leading to premature bearing failures and costly unplanned downtime and repairs.





Agricultural Y-bearings from SKF

Under increasing pressure to stay productive, Kjargaarden worked with their SKF distributor partner, Grene, to replace all bearings in their potato harvester with agricultural Y-bearings from SKF before the start of the harvest season. Developed specifically for agricultural applications, SKF agricultural Y-bearings are designed to withstand the toughest operating conditions, reduce downtime and reduce environmental impact.

A proven solution

SKF Y-bearings for agricultural applications feature a relubrication-free, five-lip seal design and zinc-coated rings for further corrosion resistance. In previous SKF field and lab trials, Y-bearings with five-lip seals lasted 30-50% longer compared to conventional agricultural competitor bearings.* SKF agricultural Y-bearings will typically last five agricultural seasons in the field.

By extending service life and increasing reliability, SKF agricultural Y-bearings enable farmers to spend more time in the field, and help reduce maintenance and ownership costs. OEMs can also benefit by differentiating their machine designs with SKF quality bearings and delivering improved reliability.

Because they require no re-lubrication, SKF agricultural Y-bearing units can also significantly reduce grease consumption, saving up to 200 kg* over the service life of a machine – all while helping to reduce environmental impact.

Results from the field

The SKF Y-bearings eliminated bearing-related failures throughout the entire harvest season for Kjargaarden's 420 hectares of potatoes.

Because the Y-bearings have so dramatically improved reliability, the head of procurement and service for Kjargaarden, Ole Madsen, is confident that the decision to install them was a good one.

"We have seen a significant change in quality – for the better. Now we harvest a whole season without replacing any bearings. It saves a lot of time that we are able to harvest without any downtime throughout the whole season. The new Y-bearings have given us more reliability and savings in man-hours. I warmly recommend them."

* All figures and graphs are rounded off and based on SKF testing against conventional bearings. Savings and results will vary in specific applications.

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