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American

# Dairymen

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# Looking for Spreader Options? Take Your PIK (RITE)

## Manure Handling Equipment for Versatile Applications

Article and photos provided by Pik Rite

**P**ik Rite has a proud 40-year tradition of pursuing agricultural innovation. Had the company's origin story been related to manure handling, it might have been named "Spread Rite." But it started with tomatoes, not manure.

In the mid-1980s, farmer Elvin Stoltzfus and welder Joe Yoder set out to create a mechanical tomato harvester suitable for the East Coast's often challenging growing conditions. In 1986, the year the company was incorporated, they built three. Then they made improvements and built more. The fledgling company honed its practice of listening to customers, refining equipment, and adding features—a philosophy still core to all Pik Rite equipment today. Now a market leader in tractor-driven vegetable harvesters, Pik Rite offers models for tomatoes, peppers, chili peppers, cucumbers and more.

In 2000, Pik Rite expanded into manure spreading equipment with its Hydra-Ram series, built on the proven plans of John Deere's highly popular—though discontinued—Hydra-Push spreaders.

"Taking over the Hydra-Push models was a great way for Pik Rite to add a product line," says Kevin Baker, Vice President of Engineering, Sales, and Service. "Our spreaders met a customer need from the beginning. Even today, we get part requests for those classic Deere models."

Since their launch, Pik Rite's Hydra-Ram spreaders have been a favorite of dairy farmers. The two-stage design combines hydraulic cylinders and a moving floor that delivers even, consistent material to the beaters—defly handling the sloppiest of pen pack.

Innovations include vertical beaters for a

wider spread pattern and a contoured pusher that nests into the beaters for improved clean-out.

One loyal user is Pennsylvania's Eric Weaver, better known as the 10th Generation Dairyman. With more than 460,000 YouTube subscribers, Eric documents operations on his 250-acre Lancaster County dairy farm, home to 175 milking cows. His spreader of choice? The Pik Rite Hydra-Ram HR 400.

Purchased in 2020, the HR 400 replaced a John Deere horizontal beater model. Spreader duties for Eric include pen pack field application as well as stockpiling. The dimensions allow him to operate the spreader in tight quarters, including his compost storage barn and some cow barns. Beyond manure, Eric uses the HR 400 to lay down bean stubble and corn fodder bales for fresh bedding.

To give farmers more options, Pik Rite introduced the Hydra-Pull series in 2009. Designed with heavy-duty apron chains and vertical beaters, these spreaders can handle a wide range of materials. Standard features provide excellent rate control, while options like weigh scales, hydraulic flow control, and ISObus-compatible controller systems enable precision nutrient application.

Versatility made the Hydra-Pull an ideal fit for Powerview Farms, operated by Denis Beachel and his son Denver near Danville, Pa. Representing the third and fourth generation of dairy farmers, they have 110 milk cows

and about 250 total head of cattle overall. As with many family dairy farms, the Beachels had an interest in adding other livestock to hedge against the ups and downs of milk prices. With the encouragement of his bank to diversify, the farm started raising turkeys about 8 years ago.

"The turkeys support our dairy addiction," Denis jokes.

Their HP 500 has reliably served both the dairy and poultry sides of the operation for five years. "We've had no problems, no breakdowns," Denis says. "The spreader's heavy-duty construction holds up, and we maintain it well. The vertical beaters really rip through straw bedding pen pack and give a great spread pattern."

"In 2021, we doubled our turkey flock size; they now produce 1,200 tons of litter yearly, and the spreader works well for that dry litter," Denis continues. Application rates are controlled by the metering gate and variable chain speed combined with tractor speed.

One of their wish list items with the bigger turkey operation is a larger capacity spreader. They are looking to step up a size with a new HP 700, which is another mid-size offering in Pik Rite's chain spreader lineup.

Pik Rite builds 13 spreader models to serve everyone from hobby farmers to custom haulers. Innovation remains constant, driven by customer input that fuels improvements and new products. Pik Rite has a trusted dealer network of more than 100 locations nationwide and has an interest in signing on new dealers in strategic geographies to better serve additional farmers. More information is on the web at [www.pikrite.com/AD](http://www.pikrite.com/AD).

**Pik Rite On-Road  
Liquid Manure Hauler**  
*Delivering for Community Digester Initiatives*



Renewable natural gas (RNG) digesters are creating new opportunities for dairy farmers—and Pik Rite is ready to support them.

Pik Rite built a specialized liquid manure hauler for Peaks Renewables, an energy company operating the first community renewable natural gas dairy digester in the state of Maine. The digester receives liquid manure from numerous farms in the state, thereby allowing family farms to participate in a scaled operation not feasible for smaller dairy farms.

The trailer is designed for on-road transport, and its 8,500 gallon stainless steel tank is equipped with a top fill as well as 10-inch vacuum and pressure boom and high-speed pump driven by an onboard diesel engine. The set-up is capable of filling the 8,500 gallon tank in 2.5 minutes via suction boom.

There is growing interest in community digesters, including legislative initiatives in Pennsylvania that would allow smaller farms to share a digester. Pik Rite's equipment is poised to help make this possible. ■

**pikrite**  
SPREADERS

**PROUDLY  
AMERICAN MADE**

**13 MODELS WITH CUSTOM OPTIONS FOR EVERY APPLICATION**  
**WORKMANSHIP | RELIABILITY | VALUE**



**HR 550**

**Hydra-Ram**  
SPREADERS

**2-Stage Hydraulic Push**

**Capacity 604 cu. ft. (heaped)**  
**Max Load 16.6 tons**  
**Loading Height 7 ft. 3 in.**

**Hydra-Pull**  
SPREADERS

**Heavy-Duty Apron Chain**

**Capacity 1,205 cu. ft. (heaped)**  
**Max Load 24.5 tons**  
**Loading Height 9 ft.**



**HP 900**

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