

## An ancient Farmall tractor in Hope, New Mexico.

Gail and I were driving through the desert of southeastern New Mexico today.

Don't ask how that happens.

It just does.

It was 75 degrees warmer than Minnesota.

Hope is mostly a ghost town.

Federal Highway 82 is the main street of Hope.

We stopped to look at this beautiful Farmall tractor.

Almost 100 years ago, the International Harvester Company (IH) was testing out an incredibly unique tractor design.

Up until the mid-1920s, farm tractors were big, bulky, clumsy and expensive.

What IH was trying to invent was the "row crop" tractor.



An original market test Farmall

A tractor that could be versatile and nimble enough to plant corn, cultivate row crops and mow hay.

Before the 1920's those farm tasks could only be done with horses.

IH named their new tractor the "FARMALL".

The company executives were somewhat embarrassed by the looks of the FARMALL.

It was a great departure from the square and boxy tractors of the time.

Some said it was "ugly as the Devil".

IH managers were also timid about taking a roll of the dice on the FARMALL.

It was a great business risk.

So, in 1924 and then again in 1925, IH test marketed several hundred FARMALLS into Texas. West Texas in fact, probably because that was far from the limelight.

This beautiful old tractor, resting along Highway 82, near the west Texas border, is one of those early FARMALLS.

If you look really hard, you can make out the letters that spell FARMALL on the side of the tractor's fuel tank.

This tractor was only painted once, and that was at the IH factory in Milwaukee.

The serial plate fell off long ago, but it has all the right features.

Down to the special Texas style steel wheels.

The lug pattern on the rear drive wheels was never used in the Midwest.

This pattern was specially designed for the hard, rocky cotton fields of west Texas.

The first model of IH's row crop tractor was branded just FARMALL.

It was not until later that IH marketers realized that they needed more model names.

In retrospect, this first member of the FARMALL family became known as the "Regular".

By 1928 IH was selling 25,000 Regulars per year.

By the 1950s, IH had sold over 3 million Farmall tractors of all sizes.

Tom



FARMALL is still visible after 100 years of Texas sunshine



Special Texas lugs for hard, rocky ground