

## Vintage Tractors

By the early 1800s the invention and use of farm machines pulled by large working horses had changed the way farmers did their work.

Later steam, petrol and electric engines helped farmers do their work even better. Because the equipment was better, farmers could cultivate larger and larger fields and produce more crops. Work that had taken weeks, took a couple of days.

### The First Tractors

The first engine-powered farm machines used steam. They were stationary engines, in other words they did not move, and were used to provide power for farm equipment like corn-threshing machines. Richard Trevithick, the Cornish engineer, designed one of the first of these in 1812.

In the 1850s the first self-propelled traction engines came into use. These machines were very heavy and not suitable for moving across fields. They were used in pairs as ploughing engines, one on either side of the field, hauling a plough back and forth between them on a wire cable.



Steam-powered agricultural engines remained in use well into the 20th century until reliable internal combustion engines had been developed.



A steam-powered traction engine on a Cornish farm

### John Froelich

In 1892 John Froelich, from Iowa in USA, is said to have invented the first petrol-driven tractor.





Froelich's machine developed into the Waterloo Boy tractor and eventually into the famous John Deere two-cylinder tractor.



John Deere two-cylinder tractor

### **Charles Hart and Charles Parr**

Charles Hart and Charles Parr built the first factory in the United States which made only petrol traction engines. Hart-Parr are thought to have introduced the word 'tractor' for these machines. The firm's first tractor was made in 1901.



1918 Hart-Parr tractor

## **Ford Tractors**

After 1910, petrol-powered tractors were used extensively in farming.

In 1917 Henry Ford, who famously produced the first mass-produced car that ordinary people could afford, the Model T, began to manufacture the first small, mass-produced tractor. His Fordson tractors were built in the USA, Ireland, England and Russia, and by 1923, Fordson had 77% of the US market. By the 1920s, tractors with petrol-powered internal combustion engines had become the norm.



Another famous name in tractors, Massey Ferguson came to rival the Fordson. Their first mass-produced tractor was the Ferguson TE20 with a petrol engine.



In 1958 Massey Ferguson began to produce the MF35. These tractors were massively popular and sold across the UK, Australia, Ireland and the United States. Some of these little red tractors are still in use on Cornish farms.

### **Activities**

Make a tractor cake

Things you will need:

1. Tractor photo
2. Printer

3. Paper
4. Scissors
5. Cake mix
6. Rectangular tin
7. Knife
8. Icing
9. Food dyes (green, yellow, black, brown)
10. Spatula
11. Piping bag and tips (optional)
12. Oreo cookies
13. Marzipan
14. Cocoa
15. Toothpicks

1. Find a photo of a tractor that you like and print it off so you have something to look at and work from. Blow it up to the actual size of the cake you'd like it to be. Cut out the shape of the tractor.
2. Bake the cake of your choice in a rectangular tin. Place the tractor photo over the cake and use it as a guide for cutting the cake. Cut out the shape of the tractor body from the cake, leaving a space for the wheels.
3. Cover the cake with icing, dyed green. Smooth the icing over all the edges to make sure it is completely covered. Use yellow and black dyed icing to create the tractor details.
4. Take the biscuits and cover them with brown dyed icing. Place in the rim spots of the tractor to serve as wheels.
5. To finish off, knead cocoa and marzipan to create a brown dough-like substance from which you can mould a seat and steering wheel. Use toothpicks to stick these onto the top edge of the cake.

Or you could make a tractor cake like this!



### **Another Activity**

You could make a model of a tractor from recycled materials such as a plastic bottle, cardboard tube, jam jar lids, corks, wood, dowel, elastic bands. Can you make it move?

This one was made by some African children.

