

Steyr History

Agricultural tractors have been built in St. Valentin, Austria, since 1947, and the following year the factory began to also manufacture tractor implements, such as mower cutterbars. When Austria became a free nation in 1955, the Republic of Austria took over the St. Valentin plant before, in 1957, it was purchased by the Austrian firm Steyr-Daimler-Puch AG, which traced its roots to 1864 and had a history in car and bicycle production. The first Steyr automobile was produced in 1918.

Under the Steyr brand, the St. Valentin plant went on to develop numerous advanced technological concepts which helped make its machines and its customers more efficient. These included high-speed diesel engines, planetary rear axles and hydraulic controls. In 1963 the implement offering was broadened to include front-end loaders and the Hamster forage loader wagon, which became a very successful product for Steyr.

During the 1960s, Steyr developed its first four wheel drive tractor, based on its Type 190, before introducing this drive format in its next model generation. This considerably improved the ability of farmers in mountainous areas to work their land productively and safely. In 1966 Steyr adopted the distinctive red-and-white livery that remains a hallmark of its tractors today.

As the 1970s progressed, Steyr continued to develop ideas to make its tractors more productive and the lives of drivers more comfortable, with the unveiling of its first tractor with powershift clutchless transmission, the 760, in 1972. A year later work started on the development of larger tractors capable of higher outputs, using Steyr's own 6.6 litre WD 612 with turbocharger to provide power outputs of 120 to 160hp.

It was in 1974 that the tractor assembly line and tractor sales division previously sited in the town of Steyr moved to a new home in St. Valentin, where it remains today following gradual and thorough investment and expansion. Technological developments continued apace, with the brand's first tractor featuring an exhaust-driven turbocharger, the 8160a, launched in 1976, and the unique high-hp 8300, with a reversible driving position, unveiled in 1980. The latter machine represented a new mechanisation system for large farms and contractors, who could use it as a conventional tractor or, in reverse-drive mode, as a self-propelled power unit for implements such as mounted forage harvesters.

Steyr continued to take a leading position in technological advancements, introducing EHR electronic linkage control and Infomat information display systems which made operation more efficient. In 1986, Steyr-

Daimler-Puch was split into separate companies in its key business sectors, under the SDP holding company. Three years later, Steyr led the way in alternative fuel developments for tractors by making all its models suitable for use with rapeseed-methyl-ester (RME) fuel, derived from oilseed rape.

In 1990, restructuring at Steyr-Daimler-Puch led to the agricultural divisions regrouping as Steyr Landmaschinentechnik GmbH (SLT), based in St. Valentin. In 1995 a supply deal was signed with Case IH, and later that year Case Corporation purchased SLT. Some Steyr models were incorporated into the Case IH tractor line, but the brand also continued to produce its own specific product range, as it continued to do when New Holland and Case Corporation merged to form CNH, and still does today under CNH Industrial. Steyr tractors are sold in Austria, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia, Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands. St. Valentin is now the European headquarters for Case IH and Steyr.