

General

Due to the nature of the constant flexing that gentle cone harvesting requires, fingers have a limited life. The plastic fingers have been designed to be soft enough to minimize damage to the branches yet stiff enough to be make cone raking efficient. After some time, fingers will break. Usually the performance of the powerrake will not be significantly affected when only 2 or 3 fingers are missing.

Fingers break prematurely when they constantly bang on branches that are stuck in the frame.

Suggestions to increase finger life

1. Remove any branches that have been caught in the rotors and are being hit by the fingers. Remove all stuck branches every time the powerrake comes in to unload.
2. Keep the rotors stationary when ferrying. Rotate the rotors only when needed to strip branches.
3. Use the reverse rotation sparingly.
4. Minimize the amount of rotor stalling (in congested branches).
5. Do not run engine unnecessarily fast. The engine speed at maximum throttle should be 4000 rpm. (Speed can be read on the tachometer mounted on the cone side of the engine.)
6. Minimize the exposure of fingers to sunlight. If the Fandrich powerrake is to be stored for more than a few days, store it in the shade or throw a tarp or covering over the frame to keep the sun out.

Suggestions for changing fingers

The fingers come in sets a foot wide with six or seven fingers per set. Two sets of fingers make up one row. Three rows of fingers with two sets of fingers in each row make up the rotor. A branch deflector extends all the way across the two sets of fingers.

Here are our suggestions on how to change fingers efficiently. We mount a 7/16 socket in a slow-speed drill and use the drill to loosen and tighten the bolts. We use another drill with a 1/4" drill bit to drill the holes.

1. Loosen and remove bolts from one set of fingers (half of a row, ie 6 or 7 fingers), and all but two (or three) bolts in the other set (in the same row). These two bolts can be loosened but should not be removed to keep the other set of fingers and the branch deflector that extends across the whole row intact.
2. Remove only one set of fingers (half of a row).
3. Place new set of fingers into slot where old set has been removed, pounding the set in if necessary.
4. Drill 3 or 4 holes (1/4") in the new set as required. (Every second hole is not used).
5. Insert bolts into the new set.
6. Remove remaining two bolts from second set of fingers & remove second set without changing the location of the branch deflector.
7. Place new set of fingers into slot where second set has been removed, drill holes, and insert bolts.
8. Turn on nuts and tighten.
9. Repeat procedure for the other two rows of fingers.

