

Chinese scientists develop new plow

Chinese metal scientists announced they had developed a plow using a new steel alloy.

Plow was initially used in China over 2,000 years ago, centuries earlier than in Europe. However, Chinese farmers nowadays would rather pay over the odds for imported plows because of their better quality and durability.

The situation may soon change, thanks to the new research.

Yan Desheng, of the Institute of Metal Research under the Chinese Academy of Sciences, said the new metal was developed on the basis of boron steel, with micro-alloying elements and fine carbide added, so as to increase its hardness while keeping its high ductility.

The new material had been used to make over 1,000 farming tools, such as moldboard plows and rotary blades.

These tools have been used in farms in Inner Mongolia, Xinjiang and Jiangsu for tests and evaluation since 2012, Yan told Xinhua earlier this week.

"The new material has at least doubled the durability of plows compared with the traditional home-made ones, at only half the price of imported ones," he said.

The edge of the plow has a better ground-breaking angle and has helped reduce abrasion and fuel consumption, according to a technician with a Hulun Buir-based farm in Inner Mongolia, which has tried the tools.