

Podium Newsletter

December 2009



Who is Zack Peterson?

First off, I am, like many people I've known, completely obsessed with antique tractors. I grew up in Corvallis, Oregon, which is a small town in the heart of the Willamette Valley. I did not grow up on a farm, but did grow up outside of town.



I received a toy tractor on my 1st birthday – a John Deere 4020 that I still own to this day. That sparked the initial interest in tractors. By the age of 13 I had amassed a huge collection of toy John Deere tractors. Then, almost overnight I wanted to own the real thing. As the story in The Antique Tractor Pull Guide mentions, we bought a 1939 John Deere H when I was 15 yrs old. It's a lovely little machine that I still own, but not a great pulling tractor. After being a John Deere expert most of my young life, I became interested in Minneapolis Moline tractors, the brand my dad had on the farm where he grew up in Ontario, Canada. In the late 90's we began to buy more and more Minneapolis Moline tractors. Today, our collection has ballooned to over 100 tractors. People always ask me, "What do you do with these old tractors?" The answer is always, "We collect, restore, and tractor pull." I have had several adventures in finding rare and unusual tractors, spent countless hours doing restoration work, and all the while focused on tractor pulling – an aspect of the hobby that has always fascinated me. I will share many more stories of my successes and challenges in future newsletters. For now, here are a few more interesting tidbits of information about me:

Welcome to the Podium Club!

As a member of the Podium Club, you have made a very smart decision to access extremely exclusive information related to Tractor Pulling. The information found at antiquetractorpullguide.com is like no other information out there. The tips, tricks and secrets of successful tractor pulling are designed to improve your performance at the next tractor pull, while having more fun at the same time.

I'm now 32yrs old and currently live in Gresham, OR with my lovely wife Lisa (married 07-07-07). I earned a degree in Mechanical Engineering from Oregon State University, graduating in 2000. I currently work as an engineer for a large semi truck manufacturer in the Portland area. In 2004 I attended the Western College of Auctioneering and became a certified auctioneer. Every year I conduct a charity auction with the Oregon Two-Cylinder Museum Foundation. I am an Eagle Scout. I enjoy running, playing sports, and golfing. I love to entertain and inspire people and am also exploring a career in professional speaking. And finally, I happen to be left handed. It hasn't been easy growing up in the Right Man's World – it all started with scissors that wouldn't cut. OK, back to the tractors...

Zack's pulling tractors and current projects

As I've mentioned before, I've used many tractors in the past for tractor pulling. The list includes the JD H, JD 60, Minneapolis Moline ZT, Minneapolis Moline ZB, Cockshutt 30, Minneapolis Moline BF, Allis Chalmers CA, Minneapolis Moline ZA, and Massey Harris Mustang. When I first started tractor pulling, I just picked a tractor out of our collection that ran well, attempted to raise the drawbar a bit, and tried my best. As time went on and my appetite for winning grew, I became a bit more picky about the tractors I chose for a pulling machine. I pulled the Cockshutt 30 for a long time, and it did great. What happens over time though is the competition becomes tougher. I started running into power problems on the harder tracks with the Cockshutt 30. I went so far as to adjust the available gearing by adding a factory creeper transmission to it. This worked well, but the only available gear for a really hard track was the 1.5mph lowest gear. It didn't run out of power, but it wasn't very competitive. This is the reason why I decided to look for another tractor to pull, ultimately choosing the Minneapolis Moline ZA. Why the ZA? I chose the ZA for these reasons – 1) I already owned it, 2) It is light enough to balance properly in a 4000lb class, 3) It has a larger factory engine displacement for it's class size, 4) It has the longest factory engine stroke out of the tractors in it's class, 5) And finally, it has a fantastic gearing advantage over other tractors. My goal was simply to be able to pull



1947 Cockshutt 30



1949 Minneapolis Moline ZA

using a regular 1st gear speed and not run out of power, no matter the track conditions. To my delight, after an engine rebuild and a few tips mentioned in *The Antique Tractor Pull Guide*, this tractor will not only handle 1st gear, on some of the softer tracks it will also handle 2nd gear.

The tractor that I have been pulling in the 3000lb class is a Massey Harris Mustang. I had successfully pulled my Allis Chalmers CA for years in that class, winning many trophies. The CA had the opposite problem of the Cockshutt though, in that it favored a hard track because of its lower gearing. I decided to start my search for another 3000lb tractor about a year ago, using criteria such as weight, engine size, gearing and tire size. I ultimately chose the Mustang and it has nothing but potential. Right now, its engine is tired and it will get a rebuild during the winter. See future newsletters for updates.

One other project on the back burner is a Massey Harris 444 that I picked up in the Fall. I'm planning a return to the 6000lb class with it in the spring. Again, it was chosen as a pulling tractor for its gearing. Stay tuned for more information on that project.

Learning the Hard Way

Each newsletter I will share a story from my past where I learned a valuable lesson, usually by damaging something, hurting myself, or embarrassing myself. This month's story I mention in the interview with Larry Hagemeister in which we discuss electrical equipment.

In 1999 we bought a Cockshutt 30 at the Two-Cylinder Club Expo in Missoula, MT. I had to laugh, since it was the cheapest running tractor that sold in the auction. Shortly after getting it home, I decided to use it to pull in the 4000lb class. My goal was to win in the lighter classes, similar to the success with my John Deere 60 at 6000, 7000 and 8000lbs. Back then at the Sublimity Harvest Festival, they had a 3500lb class. The Cockshutt 30 is a light enough tractor and pulled easily in that class. That year I was able to win the class, which marked a major achievement in my pulling history. The following year I entered the same class again. I hadn't done so much as keep the battery charged on the Cockshutt. It had original frayed wiring, loose connections, a charging system that didn't work, and corroded battery cables. At the Sublimity Tractor Pull, I was in the 3500lb class with about 4-5 other tractors. When it was my turn to pull, the Cockshutt was running great as I backed up to the sled. After easing the slack out of the sled chain, I gave the tractor a bit of throttle, I took a deep breath and engaged the clutch.

The tractor purred peacefully as I began my trip down the track. I was using 1st gear at the time as I hadn't yet installed the creeper transmission. As I got down to about the 175ft mark, the tractor suddenly stalled as if somebody had flipped a switch. To my horror, I coasted to a stop. Confused, I looked down at the controls, wondering what to do. I pressed the starter button and nothing happened. I turned to see the crowd in the grandstands staring at me, also wondering what had happened. Then I heard the announcer call for a tow tractor. I shifted the tractor into neutral and dismounted. Together with the flagger, we rolled the tractor backwards a bit to unhook it from the sled. A newer Kubota tractor pulled up with a tow strap and I was towed off the track as the crowd looked on. In the pit area I again tried to start the tractor while being towed. Nothing. I went back out to the track where I watched my competition pull as I bit my nails in nervousness. Was my pull far enough even though the tractor gave up early? Oddly enough, it was, and after a major electrical failure I was still rewarded the first place plaque. Later I figured out that one of the lousy old corroded battery cables had suddenly lost contact with the battery. After cleaning the battery terminal and cable clamp, the Cockshutt fired up effortlessly.

From that incident I learned the value of a good, reliable electrical system. Shortly after that, the Cockshutt electrical system was completely rebuilt and rewired.

Tractor Tip Follow Up: Using Labels

I've had several requests from people who have viewed the Label videos asking for more detail on how to create them. Here are detailed instructions of the steps using Microsoft Word to create labels for entry forms, trophies, etc.

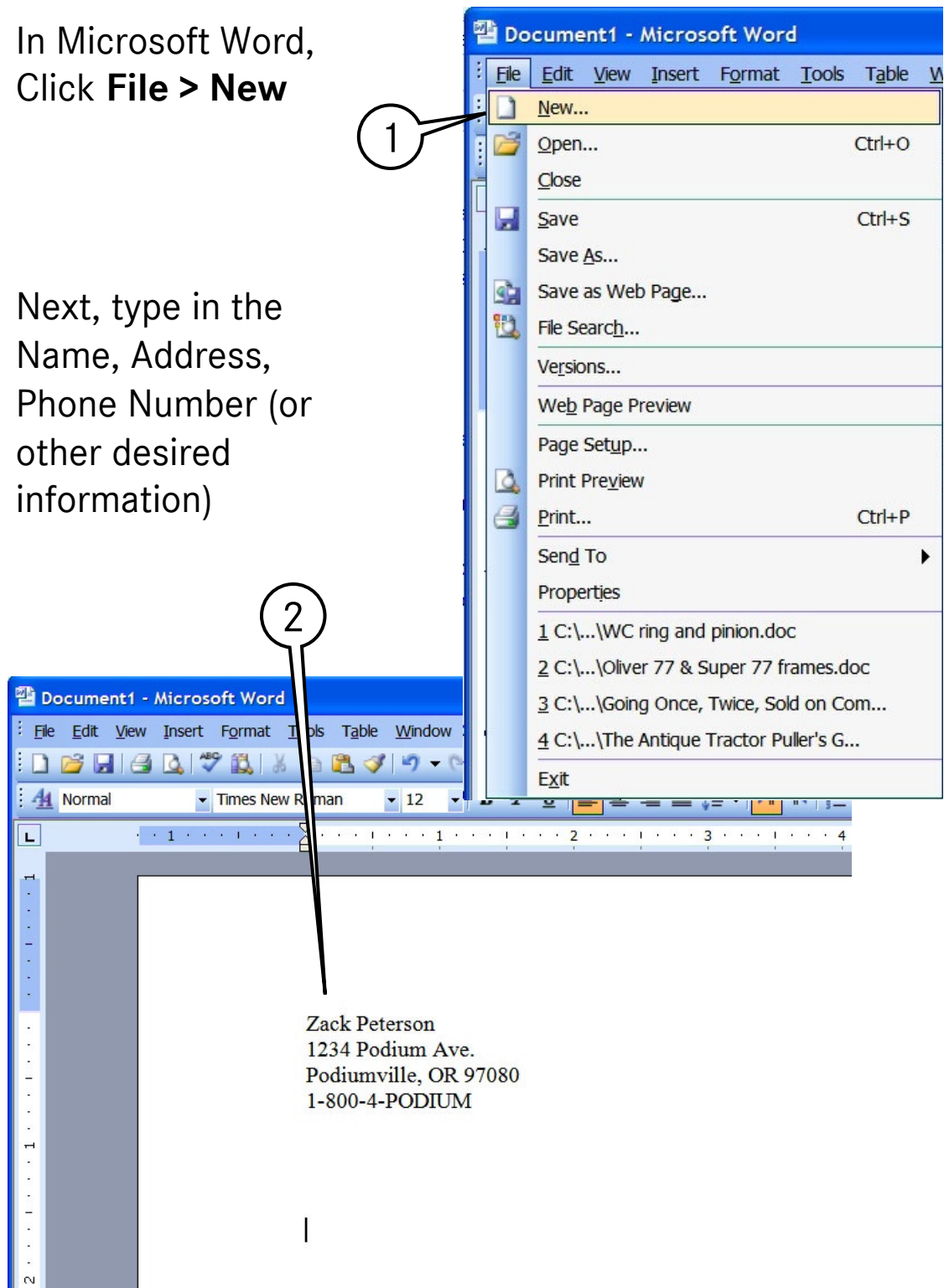
First, the labels seen in the videos are **Avery 8160 labels**, which are 1" high and 2.63" long. I bought them at Office Depot, but they are also available at Staples, Office Max or other stores that carry office supplies.

See next page for screenshots showing the steps to print labels.

Tractor Tip Follow Up: Using Labels

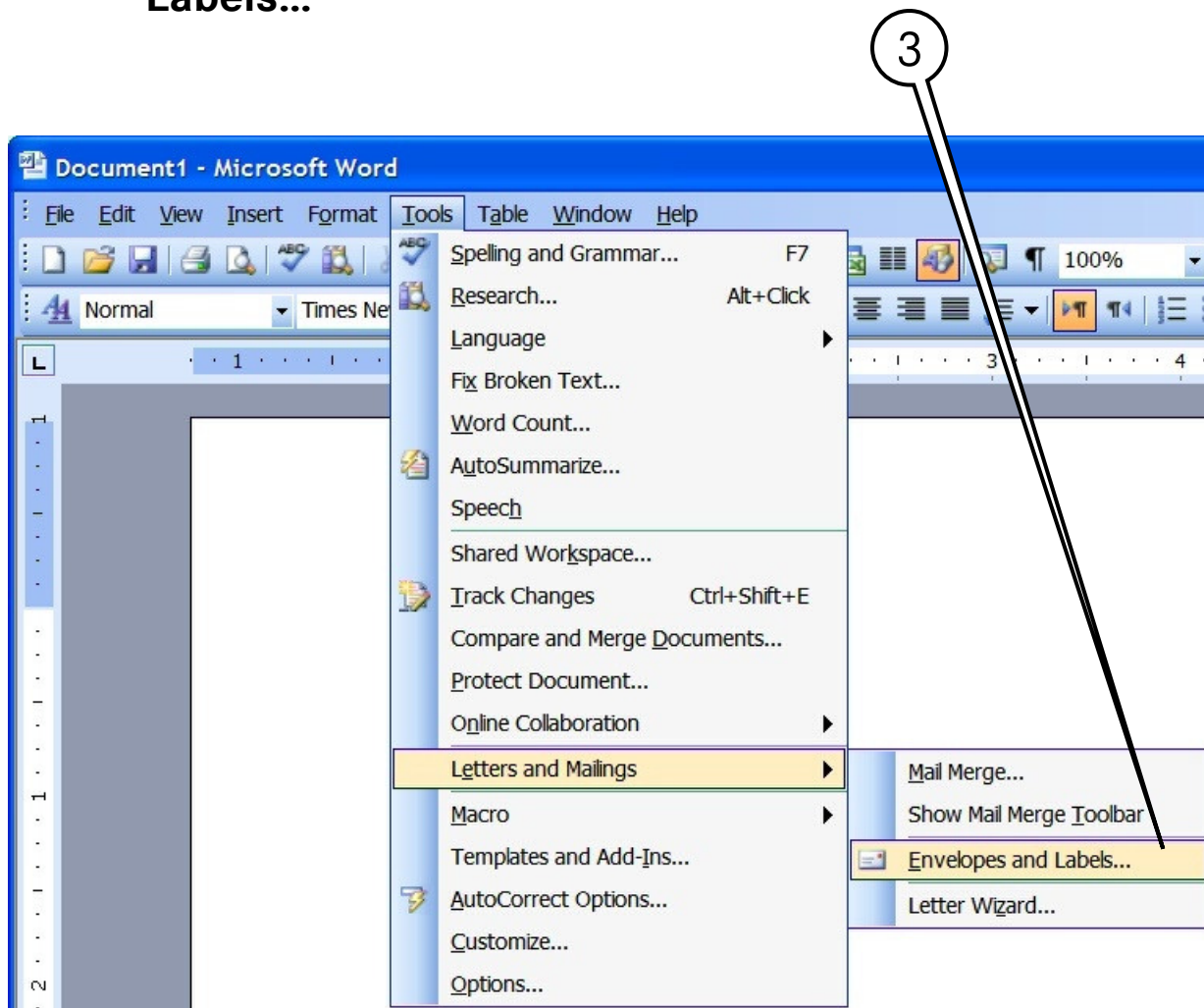
1. In Microsoft Word, Click **File > New**

2. Next, type in the Name, Address, Phone Number (or other desired information)



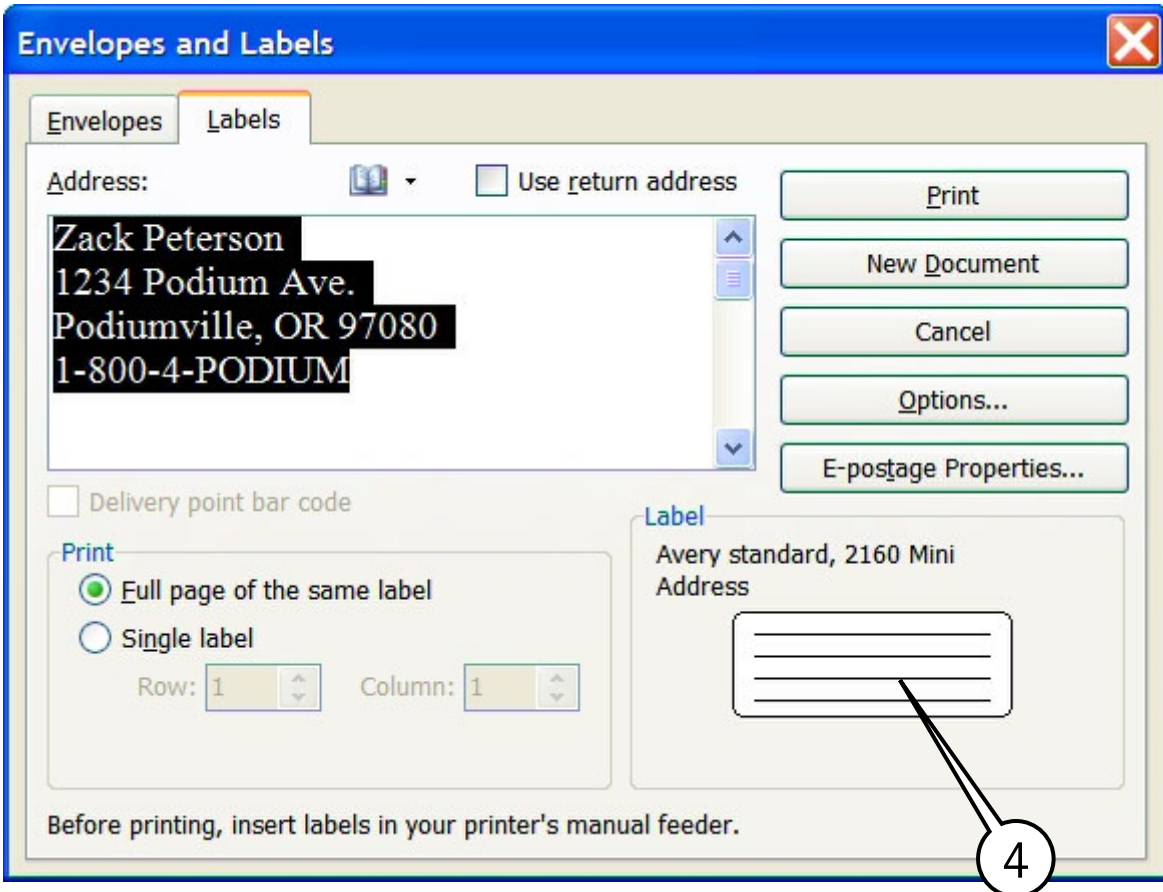
Tractor Tip Follow Up: Using Labels

3. Activate the Label command by clicking **Tools > Letters and Mailings > Envelopes and Labels...**

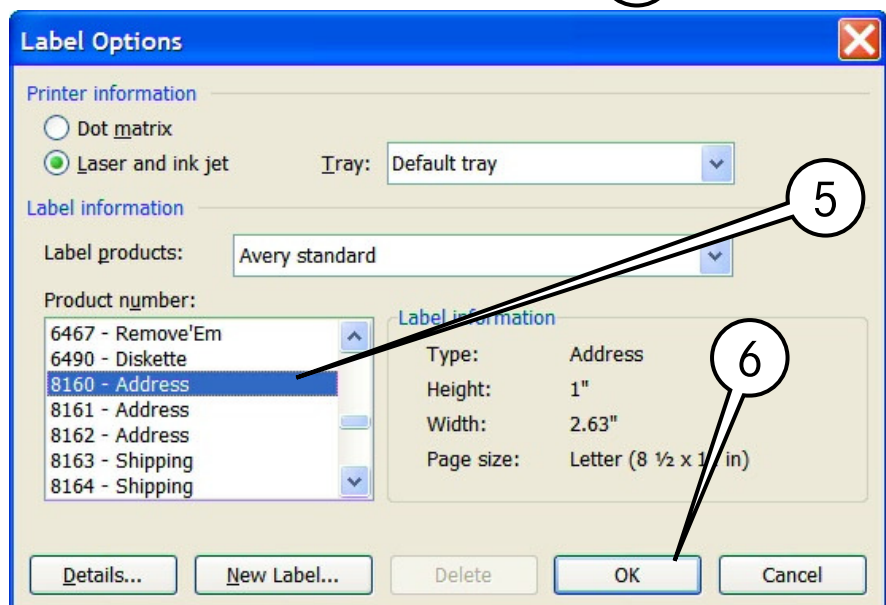


Tractor Tip Follow Up: Using Labels

The Envelopes and Labels window appears.



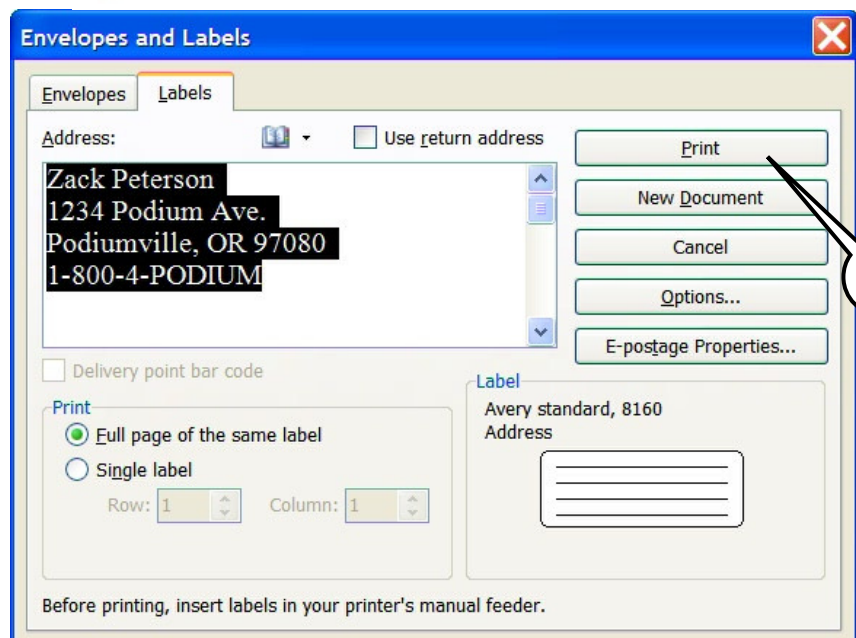
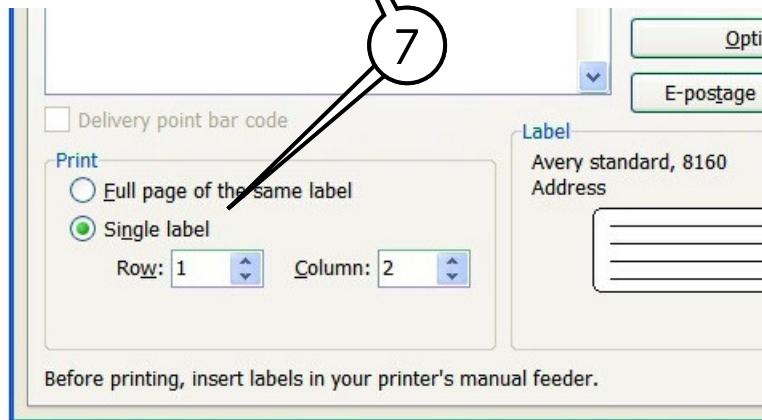
4. Click on the label to change to the correct size.
5. Select proper label size (Avery label number).
6. Click **OK**.



Tractor Tip Follow Up: Using Labels

In the Envelopes and Labels window:

7. Select either **Full page** of same label or **Single label**. With Single label it is possible to specify the exact label on the page to be printed.
8. Verify label sheet has been loaded into printer.
9. Click **Print**.



Podium Newsletter



Coming next month...

- Weight bracket fabrication
- Massey Harris Mustang project update
- Tractor Tip Follow Up
- And more...

Comments, feedback, requests?

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1956 Massey Harris 444