

# Porsche tractors

**Ferdinand Porsche developed his first tractor over 100 years ago, with the Porsche-Diesel subsequently reaching its zenith in the 1950s.**

Porsche tractors have long been the hidden stars of the Porsche Museum – and Porsche brand ambassador Walter Röhrl is not immune to their charm. In October 2012, he undertook a special record attempt by completing a flying lap of the North Loop of the Nürburgring in a 14-horsepower Porsche-Diesel Junior. Röhrl counts himself among the many fans of the famous ‘red noses’, as the Porsche-Diesel tractors with the elegant bonnet are affectionately nicknamed.

In 1937, acting on the recommendation of Adolf Hitler, the German Labour Front commissioned Ferdinand Porsche to develop a small tractor. The aim was to modernise the agriculture industry by providing a universal and affordable ‘people’s tractor’ in large numbers. As with the Volkswagen, which was the subject of plans for mass mobilisation in Germany, the small tractor was intended to ensure rapid motorisation in farming enterprises. Although the initial prototype of the people’s tractor was completed by engineers at the new Zuffenhausen plant in 1938, the outbreak of the Second World War the following year prevented any further development.

Additional tractor types were created at the Porsche plant in the Austrian town of Gmünd from 1945 onwards. In 1949, Porsche issued licences for the construction of tractors to the Uhingen-based company Allgaier Werkzeugbau GmbH. This Swabian firm produced the tractors at the former Dornier premises in the Manzell district of Friedrichshafen. Allgaier Maschinenbau GmbH Friedrichshafen became Porsche-Diesel Motorenbau GmbH in 1956, with Mannesmann AG the principal shareholder. This resulted in the creation of legends such as the Junior single-cylinder models. As with the boxer engine in the Porsche 356, all the diesel engines were air-cooled. The Porsche engineers also designed special versions such as a vineyard tractor with a narrow tread and a coffee plantation tractor featuring a petrol engine for use in Brazil. Up to 1963, around 120,000 Junior, Standard, Super and Master models with single-, two-, three- and four-cylinder engines delivering up to 50 horsepower rolled off the production line in Manzell. Production was discontinued in that year due to falling demand.