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Aviation Safety - Central Region

Date: February 21, 2024

Subject: Inspector's Findings

Contact: Jonathan Petitjean

FAA Inspector Jonathan Petitjean responded to the accident site and provided the following information concerning the on-field landing on N99PL.

- The pilot reported to the FAA that the door popped open inflight, and he decided to land on a road between fields of corn so he could secure the airplane door. The pilot stated that he lost control of the airplane during landing. He later told the FAA Inspector that the door opened up and papers were flying out the airplane.
- Inspector Petitjean traveled to the accident site on June 16, 2023. The airplane was located in a corn field near an unimproved road. Ground scarring was consistent with the airplane landing on a road traveling west and then entered a corn field on the south side of the road. During the excursion into the corn field, the left main landing gear collapsed.
- Examination of the airplane found that the right wing fuel cell contained no noticeable fuel. The left wing fuel cell was nearly full with fuel. No evidence of a fuel leak was found on the ground surrounding the airplane.
- The flight control operated normally.
- The airplane interior had only a pilot seat installed.
- The fuel selector knobs and labelling were not present on the fuel control panel.
- Most of the cockpit area was not installed.

- Fuel lines to the engine did not contain any fuel.
- When airplane power was applied, both electronic fuel pumps were heard operating.
- When airplane power was cycled, fuel pressure and oil temperature gauge indicators fluctuated. Fuel quantity did not fluctuate.
- The airplane door was open and was found to be difficult to close.
- No loose papers were found in the airplane or surrounding the accident site.

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