

**Sale Name:** 14th Annual Montana Spring Auction

**LOT 63A - Authentic Montana Wartime Soybean Fiberboard Vehicle License Plate, 1944**



### Description

Original pressed soybean fiberboard vehicle registration plate from Montana featuring the distinctive forest green painted background with gold numbering. This World War II-era plate displays the identification number "44-89" with "MONTANA - 1944" in matching gold lettering below.

In 1944, amidst World War II, the U.S. faced a critical shortage of metals due to the war effort. To conserve steel, Montana, along with a few other states, produced license plates using soybean-based fiberboard. This material was created by pressing soy fibers with heat and pressure, resulting in a durable yet biodegradable product. While innovative, these plates had a downside: livestock found them edible, leading to many being destroyed.

Montana's license plate system is distinctive for using county identifiers at the beginning of plate numbers, a system introduced in 1926. The number "44" at the beginning of this plate identifies the county of registration. This plate is an exceptional artifact of American home front conservation efforts during World War II and represents a fascinating intersection of automotive history and wartime resource management.

### Condition Notes:

Remarkable preservation for a soybean fiberboard item that has survived 80+ years. The painted green surface shows expected wear with scattered scratches and minor wear at mounting holes. Gold painted characters remain clearly legible with minimal flaking. Four original mounting holes intact with some expected wear around the edges. Refer to the pictures and in person inspection for condition.

### Approximate Dimensions:

11.5 × 5.25 inches

**Quantity: 1**



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