



Heavy-duty ditcher can be equipped with either a 42 or 72-in. dia. flywheel.

Tractor-Mounted Rotary Ditcher Cuts Trenches, Builds Terraces

Several years ago, Gilbert Nadeau designed and built a rotary ditcher with a 36-in. flywheel to dig drainage ditches on his Fannystelle, Manitoba, farm. His inspiration came from a similar machine made by a German manufacturer.

When his neighbors saw what he'd made and how well it worked, they encouraged Nadeau to make more for sale.

He says there are several advantages to a rotary ditcher over a scraper or blade for cutting drainage channels. One is that a rotary ditcher throws soil up to 200 ft. away from the trench, so it doesn't create a mound of dirt that stops the flow of water. Another is it doesn't smear and seal heavy soils in the trench like a scraper or blade would. It also operates more quickly with less horsepower.

When he began making ditchers for sale, Nadeau increased the flywheel to 42 in. dia. and made two models - one for tractors with 540 rpm pto's and up to 150 hp, and another for tractors with 1,000 rpm pto's and up to 185 hp. Last fall, he began selling a 72-in. flywheel rotary ditcher, for use with tractors with at least 200 to 380 hp. It will cut a trench 48 in. across and 12 in. deep. One operator on a 200 hp tractor can remove and spread about 600 cu. yards of soil an hour. At maximum depth and width, that's a ditch

about 4,500 ft. long.

He recently introduced a 24-in. model that's sized to work with 18 to 30 hp tractors with 540 rpm pto's.

Nadeau's ditchers will work on any soil a tractor can get through, even standing water.

The 72-in. ditcher has two adjustable rippers to loosen soil ahead of the flywheel, which has eight knives that throw soil away from the cut. The knives are fastened to the flywheel by two shear bolts, which protect them from rocks and other obstacles.

Nadeau says operators can make additional passes to dig drainage ditches deeper or wider. The ditcher can also be used to level ridges and old fencerows. Or, with an optional deflector, it can be used to build terraces.

The 72-in. model sells for \$19,000. The 1000 model 42-in. ditcher is priced at \$10,995, while the 540 model sells for \$7,250. The 24-in. model can be purchased for \$3,000. The terracing deflector, which fits all models, adds another \$1,995. (All prices are in Canadian dollars.)

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Gilbert Nadeau, Rotary Ditchers Ltd., Box 40, Fannystelle, Manitoba, Canada R0G 0P0 (ph 204 436-2469; fax 204 436-2466; E-mail: nadeau@mb.sympatico.ca).

Automatic Gate Opener

Farmyard gates can be a hassle to open and close, but not for Kent Elder. For the past 15 years, his automatic gate opener has kept him behind the wheel of his truck instead of climbing in and out. It has worked so well and trouble-free, the Mulvane, Kansas, farmer set up similar gates for friends and neighbors.

"I've looked at automatic gate openers, and they cost \$500 or more," notes Elder. He can set one up for a lot less using an ordinary garage door opener.

"The toughest part of the job is finding the right angle for the opener rail support," he says.

On his gate he mounted the drive unit and opener rail on a 2 by 6 plank with the power head end attached to the post on which the gate hung. A 1 1/2-in. pipe was welded to the trolley arm that normally attaches to the garage door.

The pipe runs to an eyebolt clamped to

the top rail of the gate.

To open and close without binding, the plank needed to be mounted at just the right angle from the closed gate. After several tries, the rancher settled on an arc of 117 degrees from the closed position or 27 degrees from the open position. When the driver unit engages, the trolley arm travels the length of the chain drive rail assembly, pulling the gate open and then reverses direction to close. Elder also fashioned an all weather cover for the power head from a plastic file box.

Elder also attached two coil springs over the gate end of the pipe, one on either side of the eye bolt. Collars at the end of the springs maintain enough tension on the gate to keep it closed to cattle or horses trying to push through, yet allow it to open enough for a man on foot to slip past.

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Triple "S" Ditcher cuts a 60-in. wide flat-bottomed drainage ditch that's up to 6 in. deep.

New-Style Ditcher Makes Flat-Bottomed Trenches

The Triple "S" Ditcher™, available in the U.S. and Canada, cuts a 60-in. wide flat-bottomed drainage ditch up to 6 in. deep in one pass, says James Lundon, Lundon Distributing, Crookston, Minnesota.

Lundon worked with Adolf Vaags of A-V Sales, Dugald, Manitoba, to design the ditcher. The two have contracted with McTavish Steel Works, Rosenort, Manitoba, to manufacture the ditchers.

The Triple "S" name stands for scraper, spinner and spreader. A scraper blade lifts soil into paddles that break it up and direct it into a spinner-spreader. The blower spreads soil without leaving a berm on either side of the ditcher. It requires a tractor with at least 150 hp, but will work on tractors with up to 250 hp. Coulters on either side of the scraper

blade cut off crop residue to keep it from dragging and accumulating piles of trash in the field.

The ditcher can be leveled hydraulically from the tractor seat. It can also be hooked into a laser leveling system to dig drainage ditches with a precise grade.

Lundon says the scraper has been used for digging drainageways, cleaning existing ditches, and for rebuilding terraces. It sells for \$22,000.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, James J. Lundon, Lundon Distributing, 619 Lowell St., Crookston, Minn. 56716 (ph 218 281-2570); or in Canada, FARM SHOW Followup, Adolf Vaags, Box 88, Dugald, Manitoba, Canada R0E 0K0 (ph 204 853-7755).



Blower spreads soil without leaving a berm on either side of ditcher.



Kent Elder uses ordinary garage door openers to build his automatic gate openers. "The toughest part is finding the right angle for the opener rail support," he says.