

Elevated hay storage bin is large enough to hold the equivalent of two large round bales of ground hay.



Hinged legs allow bin to be dropped down, filled with hay, and then pushed back into upright position with a skidsteer.

Elevated Hay Deck Makes Feed-Mixing Easier

Dumping 200 lbs. of ground hay into a feed mixer to make up a total mixed ration for an 80-head dairy herd used to mean starting up a skidsteer loader for two minutes twice a day, says Dave and Keith Wampler at Mt. Sidney, Virginia.

"Since this was the only use for the loader most days, we felt it was probably causing more engine wear than it was worth in the long run," says Dave.

Still, they needed some way to load the hay into the feed mixer. After giving the matter some thought, the Wampler brothers built an elevated hay storage bin large enough to hold the equivalent of two large round bales of ground hay.

A special feature of the bin is its hinged legs, which allow it to be dropped down,

filled with hay, and then pushed back into the upright position with a skidsteer.

The elevated hay deck, measuring 15 ft. wide, 12 ft. deep and 4 ft. high, has a frame made of 2 1/2-in. square steel tubing. The floor and siding are plywood. The deck, when upright, is 8 1/2 ft. off the floor. "That's high enough that we can climb into the deck and push hay off of it into the mixer by hand," Dave says.

The legs attach to the deck and floor with hinges made by fitting pieces of 4 and 5-in. pipe together. The legs themselves are also made of 2 1/2-in. square tubing.

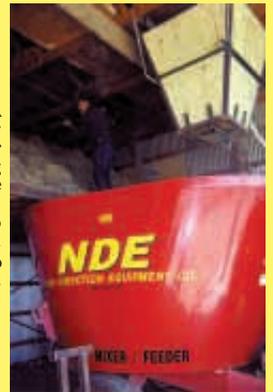
When it's lowered, it's just 4 1/2 ft. off the floor. "When we've filled it, we push on the front of the deck with the Bobcat to raise it back into upright position. Once it's fully

upright, it locks into place with two pins," Wampler says. "Filling the mixer by hand takes no more time than it did before, when we had to start the skidsteer to load the hay," he says.

To make mixing feed even easier, they added a hopper bottom bin for grain next to the hay deck. "It lets us put in the hay and grain without moving the feed mixer," he says. "It holds about 800 lbs. of grain and we use about 700 lbs. in our ration right now." An auger with a drop switch automatically refills the hopper from the grain bin after they've dumped it into the feed mixer.

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A smaller hopper hanging from the ceiling is used to add grain to the mix.



Two-piece "double door" tailgate opens from both sides, making it easy to load items onto bed.

"Double Door" Tailgate For Pickups

This new two-piece "double door" tailgate for pickups opens from both sides, making it easy to load items onto the bed.

The DoubleGate tailgate is designed to replace the original factory tailgate and is made from a fiberglass-like material formed to fit over a zinc-plated steel frame. The doors can be opened or closed with one hand. Mounting the hinges requires drilling four holes on each side of the pickup bed. The doors are lockable.

"It comes with a factory white, UV stable finish but can be painted to match any factory color. Black composite bed caps protect the upper edge of the tailgate," says Chuck Williams, Blackhawk Mfg., Bloomington, Calif. "If the customer doesn't want to have the small handle on the outside, they can install a knob on the inside but it won't be lockable.

"We also offer two models for fifth wheel RV users. One is a slotted flow-through design, while the other is solid. Both feature a large drop-down access area in the middle of the doors."

All three double door models sell for \$999 apiece plus S&H.

The company also offers a metal step that's designed to fit into a 2-in. receiver hitch and make it easier to climb into the pickup bed. Measures 14 in. long and 4 in. wide and has grip tread on both sides. It can be adjusted to four different positions depending on the type of pickup you have. Sells for \$98 plus S&H.

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"It lets me mow twice as fast," says Leonard Humphrey, who converted an MTD 20 hp mower so that he can pull it alongside his riding mower.

Garden Tractor Converted To Tag-Along Mower

"A friend of mine gave me an old 12-hp. MTD riding mower with a bad rear end. I decided to put it to use in a new way," says Leonard Humphrey, Ottawa, Kan.

"By pulling it alongside my riding mower, I figured I could get the lawn mowed twice as fast. I stripped off everything that wasn't needed and replaced the rear end of the mower with a pair of caster wheels. All I needed was the engine, frame, front wheels, battery, fuel tank, and deck. I installed a tongue on front and on the right side. Both hook to the frame of my mower, which is an MTD 20 hp with a 46-in. deck and hydrostatic drive.

"The two mowers together cut a 7-ft. swath. I can mow 7 acres in just under 3 hours. It

trims tight around trees, turns tight, backs up with no problem, doesn't scalp the ground, and mows over 2 acres per hour. The biggest benefit is that it cost much less than any commercial mower this size. With just two pins you can unhook the tag-along and mow without it. However, I have very seldom done that in the three years I've used this mower.

"I've built two others and sold one. I've still got one to sell."

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