

Editor's Notebook



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Notable Finds At Recent Shows

We've been busy going to shows over the past few months. In brief, here are a few interesting "concept" products we came across:



Sickle sections attach to roller chain that runs in a continuous loop.

Rotary Sicklebar

I spotted this "roto-cut" sickle system at the National Farm Machinery Show in Louisville. It's a continuous-motion cutterbar that goes around in a circle rather than cutting back and forth, like conventional sickles have done for more than 100 years.

I checked our archives and this is actually the fourth version of a rotary sicklebar that we've featured in FARM SHOW in the past 20 years. Previous versions came close to making it to market but it turns out the standard old reciprocating cutterbar is pretty hard to knock off.

This latest version is a prototype from The Spreader, Inc., Gifford, Ill. It's based on a patent from a California inventor and features what looks like a series of half sickles rotating continuously on a roller chain. Because it travels in only one direction, it doesn't push the crop away as it cuts, says company representative Randy Duden. "There's less vibration, less shatter loss, maintenance is lower, and parts are easier to replace," he notes.

The company is looking for investment partners to finish development and help bring the new technology to market. (ph 800 428-9046 or www.thespreader.com)



Heads turned in Louisville as showgoers get their first look at this "futuristic" Ford 8N.

It's Not Your Dad's 8N

New Holland went back to a classic design with this modern day version of Ford's 8N. The "new" tractor showed up at Louisville in February and will be in dealer showrooms this spring.

The 50-hp tractor looks like a space-age 1950's tractor. It has the same coloring as the original 8N but that's about the only thing they have in common. It features a continuously variable transmission, LED headlights, and electronic gauges with a vintage look to them. A front-drive axle is standard, as is the electric pto engagement switch. It's got other fancy features your dad or grandfather never even dreamed of. The price would have wowed them, too, at an "unofficial" MSRP of about \$30,000. (www.newholland.com)

First Electric F-150

The first all-electric Ford F-150 made its debut at SEMA, a truck industry show in Las Vegas. What makes it unique is

that electric power is generated by a drive system attached to its own wheels.

Engineers removed the engine, transmission, drive shaft, differentials, and exhaust system, and then installed four 66-lb. wheel-mounted "Hi-Pa Drive" electric motors. Energy is stored in a single 1,000-lb., 40-kilowatt lithium-ion battery, mounted where the fuel tank used to be. The in-wheel drive motors capture energy used in braking, and the truck delivers 600 hp plus - more than you'd get out of a 5.4-liter V-8 engine. The truck will travel at speeds up to 100 miles on a full charge.

"This electric Ford F-150 proves that a vehicle doesn't have to be small, unprofitable or underpowered to be green," according to PML Flightlink, the British company that created the aftermarket technology. (ph 011 44 1420 548755 or www.hipadrive.com)



Electric F-150 is recharged by wheel motors, and by plugging it in through the fuel cap.

These Tires Inflate Themselves

A revolutionary new system that keeps tires perfectly inflated at all times, without any outside power source or compressor, made its debut at the recent Society of Automotive Engineers' exhibition in Detroit. The tire exhibit attracted huge crowds every day and the company, headquartered in the Czech Republic, says the idea should start showing up on vehicles in the near future.



Air tube between tire bead and rim (shown in green) pumps air into tire to keep it full.

The idea is deceptively simple. The tire has an air tube built into the sidewall, next to the bead. As the wheel turns while on the road, it works on the tube like a roller pump, continuously pumping air into the tire through a one-way valve. A "managing valve" in the tire lets air pressure out as needed to maintain perfect pressure at all times. If you need more air in the tire for hauling heavier loads, the valve can be adjusted to a higher level. Driving a couple miles will pump the tires up. (Coda Development, Taborska 51, 140 00 Prague, Czech Republic www.selfinflatingtire.com)



Wendy Burton, left, shows off a typical giant leaf on Empress tree. At right she hugs an 11-year-old tree.

New Source For World's Fastest-Growing Hardwood

Hundreds of readers responded to previous articles on the amazing Empress Splendor™ hardwood trees that produce usable lumber in 7 to 10 years, reaching heights of 50 ft. or more in that time. Leaves on the hybrids measure 2 to 3 ft. across.

Unfortunately, a few readers had bad buying experiences with the original sources we quoted. So we decided to go directly to the exclusive supplier of Empress trees. Wendy Burton, founder of World Tree Technologies in Scottsdale, Arizona, says, "We're trying to clear up a few huge misconceptions that some dealers have put out there. The truth is that Empress Splendor trees are not invasive. They're actually sterile and their tap roots go straight down to the water table. They will not damage pipes or foundations. Deer do not 'love' the leaves but will eat them if there is no other vegetation around."

Burton works with hundreds of farmers who have started cash cropping hardwoods, or are considering it. She says some farmers process the lumber with their own portable mills. The wood dries well in open air with no need for a kiln. "An acre of Empress trees will produce approximately \$90,000 worth of lumber at a rate of 300 trees per acre, planted on a 12 by 12 grid. Under the right conditions, a minimum of 30,000 board feet of lumber can be produced per acre after just 7 years. And because Empress trees will regenerate

from the stump up to 7 times after harvest, you won't have to replant for 50 years or more."

The trees can also be planted on a tighter grid for biomass production or for carbon capture programs.

For optimum growth, Empress trees are recommended for zones 6 to 11, but Burton says trees are now growing successfully in Canada. They'll survive temps down to 10 degrees below zero and up to 120 degrees.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, World Tree Technologies, Inc., 9943 E Bell Rd., Scottsdale, Ariz. 85260 (ph 888 693-8733 or 480 948-0188; www.worldtreetech.com).

Liberty Quotes

"I make myself rich by making my wants few."
Henry David Thoreau

"Force always attracts men of low morality." *Albert Einstein*
"You see, in Washington they have these bodies, the Senate and the House of Representatives. That is for the convenience of visitors. If there is nothing funny happening in one, there is sure to be in the other" *Will Rogers*

"The real destroyer of the liberties of the people is he who spreads among them bounties, donations and benefits."
Plutarch (45 to 125 A.D.)

"I cannot undertake to lay my finger on that article of the Constitution which granted a right to Congress of expending on the objects of benevolence the money of their constituents." *James Madison (1751-1836)*

"It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest." *Adam Smith (1723-1790)*

"When plunder becomes a way of life for a group of men living together in society, they create for themselves in the course of time a legal system that authorizes it and a moral code that glorifies it." *Frederic Bastiat (1801-1850)*

"School is the advertising agency that makes you believe that you need the society as it is." *Ivan Illich*

"Government will not fail to employ education to strengthen its hands and perpetuate its institutions."
William Godwin (1756-1836)

"The study of history is a powerful antidote to contemporary arrogance. It is humbling to discover how many of our glib assumptions, which seem to us novel and plausible, have been tested before, not once but many times and in innumerable guises; and discovered to be, at great human cost, wholly false." *Paul Johnson*

Two farmers were discussing politics and the first one says, "I believe in a share and share alike policy. One where we are all equal."

"Well," replied the other farmer. "I'm not sure about that. What you mean is that if you had two horses, you'd give me one?"

"Of course," says the first farmer.
The second farmer continued, "And if you had two cars, you'd give me one of them, too?"

"Absolutely!"
"So," says the second farmer. "If you had two pigs then you'd give me one of them?"

"Ah, now hang on just a minute," says the first fellow. "That's not fair. You know I've got two pigs."

An 85-year-old widow went on a blind date with a 90-year-old man. When she returned to her daughter's house later that night, she seemed upset.

"What happened, Mother?" the daughter asked.
"I had to slap his face three times!"
"You mean he got fresh?"
"No," she answered. "I thought he was dead."

A little boy wanted \$100 very badly and prayed for weeks, but nothing happened. Then he decided to write God a letter requesting the \$100. When the postal authorities received the letter addressed to God, USA, they decided to forward it on to the President. He was so amused that he instructed his secretary to send the little boy a \$5 bill. He thought this would appear to be a lot of money to the little boy.

The boy was delighted with the \$5 bill and sat down to write a thank you note to God, which read: "Dear God: Thank you very much for sending the money. However, I noticed that for some reason you sent it through Washington, D.C., and those thieves deducted \$95 in taxes."

Lena was standing in the bedroom in front of a mirror. She wasn't happy with what she saw and said to her husband, Ole. "I feel sew horrible, Ole. I'm lookin' old, fat and ugly. I really need yew tew pay me a nice compliment."

Ole thought hard for a few moments and then replied, "Well, I can say dis, Lena. Yer eyesight is darn near perfect!"