

## “Ball To Pintle” Hitch Adapter

Have you ever tried to tow something but didn't have the right type of hitch? Robert Heslop did, so he machined a homemade adapter that allows him to haul ball hitch trailers using an ordinary tractor drawbar.

He came up with a 10-in. length of channel iron that has a welded-on ball hitch at one end. “By pinning the channel iron onto my tractor drawbar I can quickly switch to a ball hitch without any tools,” says Heslop. “A welded-on solid metal spacer keeps the channel iron from flopping up and down on the drawbar.”

He says he built the unit because he got tired of having to bolt a ball hitch onto his tractor every time he wanted to switch trailers. “One day I might be pulling one trailer on the highway using a ball hitch, and

the next day pulling another trailer through the woods or fields using a ring hitch. It was always a hassle to unbolt the ball hitch from the tractor drawbar.”

That's where his adapter comes in. “It speeds up the process of switching over because the ball hitch stays welded to it,” says Heslop. “I simply pull one pin to remove the entire unit, leaving the drawbar ready to be used for ring hookups. I've had ball hitches unhitch when the trailer caught a stump or rock in the woods, and if that happens when the trailer is loaded it's no fun hooking back up.”

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Heavy-duty adapter slips over drawbar to tow ball hitch trailers.

## Wheel Locks Stop Trailer Thieves

Rack'Em Manufacturing's Lock'em wheel locks are a simple solution to securing trailers and wheeled equipment. The reversible set of jaws locks down on wheels from 12 to 20 in.

“One wheel lock works with lots of different equipment,” says Glenn Johnson, Rack'Em Manufacturing. The wheel lock consists of twin sets of two arms and half a locking mechanism in the middle. The smaller arms work with 12 to 15-in. wheels while the larger arms work with 15 to 20-in. wheels.

To secure a wheel, the wheel lock is unlocked and separated. The appropriate size arms are placed over the wheel with the

locking mechanisms sliding together. Once snug to the tire, the mechanism is relocked and the key removed. The opposite arms prevent the wheel from turning by striking either the ground or the body of the vehicle, causing the tire to start skidding.

“If a driver forgets to remove it before driving away, it lets you know,” says Johnson, who admits forgetting it himself once. “It did just what it was supposed to do. The wheel bound up and got my attention without damaging the trailer or the tire.”

The standard Lock'em wheel lock with individual key is priced at \$135.86. Keyed-alike Lock'em locks (\$146.31) are available

for individuals or businesses with multiple trailers. Whether five units or 50, all the locks respond to a single key.

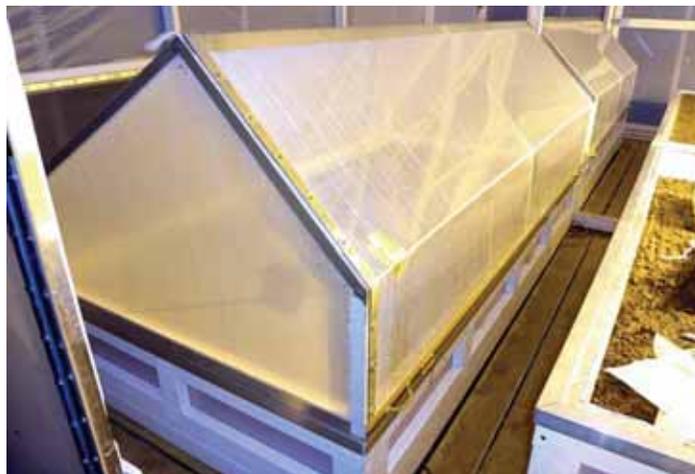
Johnson says the wheel locks can be ordered directly from the company website. Their nationwide network of dealers and distributors is also available on their website.

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Wheel lock clamps onto wheels from 12 to 20 in. dia.

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Earl Senchuk says his combination of a state-of-the-art greenhouse and heated planting beds should make year-round gardening possible no matter where you live.

## Greenhouse Expert's Goal: Year-Round Gardening

Earl Senchuk is a man on a mission. He wants to make it easy for everyone – even folks in northern states – to garden all year long.

Senchuk has been in the greenhouse business for decades. Long-time FARM SHOW readers might remember the popular mini greenhouses he developed in the late 1990's (Vol. 23, No. 6).

He says his latest combination of a state-of-the-art greenhouse and heated planting beds makes year-round gardening possible for the average person, no matter where they live.

Senchuk developed his heated planting beds 4 years ago and has been growing crops in them outside from March to December in northern Michigan. The stand-alone, waist-high planting beds, which he calls “Boomer Bloomers”, have removable canopies that cover 32 sq. ft. of growing space. “Loose pin” hinges allow the canopy to be raised from either side so you never have to reach more than 24 in. from either side. The canopy is sealed around the perimeter to trap heat and comes with adjustable vents.

He says Boomer Bloomers work great when used on their own outdoors. “They let you regulate the climate so plants remain at 75 degrees even when it's 25 degrees outside,” says Senchuk. “Tilling, weeding, seeding, and harvesting can all be done while standing up. The system is so self sufficient that after you plant the seeds it practically takes care of itself.”

The planting beds come with soil heating cables that automatically maintain soil temperature by means of a sensor and thermostat controller. They also come with an automatic watering system that uses capillary action to moisten the soil from the bottom up. Watering is accomplished simply by pouring water into a side-mounted, stainless steel trough. A moisture meter measures the soil wetness at any level. All operations are controlled automatically with sensors to keep the soil temperature and moisture content at the desired level.

By combining the raised planting beds with his new “Yoopertopia” greenhouse, Senchuk

hopes to expand the growing season to a full year. The standard greenhouse measures 16 by 20 ft., with room for 6 Boomer Bloomer raised planting beds inside.

The greenhouse comes with a 10-ft. wide, 4-ft. high triangular vent at the top on both ends; large 88-in. tall, 44-in. wide doors at both ends; and across-the-front vents that are 2 ft. tall and 20 ft. long. He notes that his greenhouse has more ventilation capability than any other structure of its type on the market. All vents are screened to keep out insects.

The system is currently being tested by Shelter Bay Tomato Co., a local vegetable grower. “The normal growing season for the Upper Peninsula of Michigan is barely more than 3 months. But for the past 4 years I've been successfully growing a garden outdoors for 9 1/2 months out of the year. It costs just 2 to 3 cents per hour to operate a Boomer Bloomer planting bed outdoors in below freezing temperatures.”

When used inside the greenhouse, a digital

thermometer registers the time of day, outside and inside temperatures, as well as the highest and lowest temperature range both inside the canopy and outside. The temperature values can be cleared periodically. “Tracking such temperatures is useful to determine proper ventilation requirements in a given zone,” says Senchuk.

He says he hopes his gardening system will help people create more income for themselves by growing and selling produce locally.

Stand-alone outdoor-style Boomer Bloomers sell for \$1,800 apiece. A complete Yoopertopia greenhouse sells for right at \$25,000.

Check out a video of Senchuk's greenhouse system at [www.farmshow.com](http://www.farmshow.com).

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“Loose pin” hinges on stand-alone planting beds allow canopy to be raised from either side, so you never have to reach more than 24 in. from either side.