

“Slow Feeder” Holds Bale Behind Self-Tightening Fence

By Bill Gerger, Senior Editor

“It’s an easy-to-use hay feeding system that saves time and money and represents a whole new concept in slow feeding horses and other livestock,” says Russell Getz, Robesonia, Penn., about the new hay feeder he and his wife Mary invented.

The patent pending hay feeder is designed for horses and donkeys but can also be used for goats, sheep, and possibly llamas. It’s available in 2 models - one for small square bales and one for 4 by 4 through 5 by 6-ft. round bales.

Both models make use of a chain-link fence with 2-in. sq. openings. The fence secures the hay and automatically retracts onto a spring-loaded shaft as the hay is consumed, keeping the fence tight against the hay.

The small bale model has a tensioning shaft fitted with a winding wheel that keeps the fence tight against the bale as the hay is consumed. The round bale holder uses a winch equipped with a handle.

“The only time you have to use the winding wheel or crank the handle is when loading the bale,” says Getz. “You crank the handle to relieve the tension and lock it so that you can open the fence. Once you’ve loaded the bale, you unlock the shaft and the spring automatically winds up the fence. Otherwise, no daily labor is required for either model.”

He says the new feeder design solves a lot of problems associated with feeding hay to horses, whether individually or in a group. “We’ve tested the feeders for 2 years and find they offer a lot of advantages. The hay is available 24 hours a day, waste is considerably less, the horse is more content because it eats slowly, and boredom is reduced.”

Getz says the chain link fence mimics the natural grazing habit of horses. “The horse has to pull hay through the the chain-link openings and work to get the hay, which makes it more like grazing. It eats a little bit with each mouthful and can’t eat a lot at a time, so it always has something to do and doesn’t get bored.”

The small bale holder is available as a wall-mount unit. Or, it can be equipped with legs and a trough extension and legs, allowing access to both sides of the feeder. An optional roof is available for outdoor use. Another model option is through-the-wall installation, allowing the feeder to be loaded from outside the stall. The same feeder can also be mounted between stalls for access from both sides.

A front-end loader is used to load bales into the round bale feeder. The chain-link fence is supported by a hinged track mounted under the roof. “You open the track to load the bale, and once the bale is loaded, you pull the tracks together to latch the fence in place,” says Getz.

Feeding horses in a group with the round bale feeder decreases the bossiness and feeding frenzy associated with feeding time, since hay is always available, says Getz. “Usually you have a boss horse who tries to get all the hay. With our feeder he’s not the boss any more because all the horses take their place around the feeder and are constantly able to get food.”

He says the feeder probably won’t work for cattle because of the slow feeder-type design.

The base model small square bale holder that bolts to a wall sells for \$795 plus S&H. The base unit with trough extension, legs and



Two models are available – one for small square bales and one for round bales. “Slow feeder” uses a chain-link fence with 2-in. sq. openings. Fence automatically retracts onto a spring-loaded shaft as hay is consumed, keeping fence tight against hay.

roof sells for \$1,040 plus S&H. The round bale holder sells for \$2,095 plus S&H.

Getz is looking for a manufacturing company to produce the feeders. “For now I’m building these units myself and can supply a limited number on a per order basis,” he says.

You can check out the feeders on FARM SHOW’s YouTube channel.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Russell and Mary Getz, 1576 Milestone Rd., Robesonia, Penn. 19551 (ph 610 488-6285; gruberhome8@gmail.com; www.gruberhomestead.com).

He Mounted Garden Planters On His Riding Mower

“After quite a few years of planting my half acre garden with a walk-behind seeder, I thought it was time to make more use of my garden tractor,” says Illinois gardener Victor Riggen. “I figured out a way to mount two Earthway planters on brackets in front of my garden tractor.”

Riggen built a framework out of angle iron that bolts to the front chassis of his tractor. It’s large enough to hold both of the planters about 12 in. apart and 24 in. in front of the tractor. Flat metal bracing stabilizes the planters and keeps them tracking in a straight line. He raises and lowers the planters together with a metal arm similar to a lever

on an old plow. “Now all I do is load them up with seed, set the depth I need, and go,” says Riggen. “This setup really saves me a lot of time and steps.”

The wheels of the tractor straddle the planted rows so he has a nice seedbed for growing a variety of vegetables. He keeps the rows straight by starting on one edge of the garden and moving across, using his wheel tracks for guidance.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Victor Riggen, 895 S. Stone St., Decatur, Ill. 62521 (ph 217 423-5254).



Victor Riggen mounted 2 Earthway planters spaced 12 in. apart on front of his garden tractor. Planters are raised and lowered together with a manual lever.

Underframe Rock Box For Deere Tractors

“We built a heavy-duty rock box for our Deere 4440 that mounts to the tractor frame right under the engine behind the front wheels,” says Iowa grain farmer Tim Renger.

Tim and his father came up with the design because they had removed the old rock box that had been mounted to the front of the tractor and replaced it with an auxiliary fuel tank and a frame that holds suitcase weights. “With all the rocks we’ve got around here we really needed a place to carry them on the tractor,” says Tim.

The Rengers made the simple and efficient rock box with scrap pieces of 1/4-in. thick sheet steel for the sides and 1/2-in. steel pipes for the bottom. Each cross-member pipe has flattened ends that are welded to the side supports. Pipes are spaced about 2 in. apart

to keep rocks from sliding around, yet allow any dirt to drop out onto the ground below.

Two pipes on each end and three pipes in the center welded to the top of the sides provide lateral support for the box. The box extends the width of the tractor from fender-to-fender behind the front wheels to just in front of operator steps that go into the cab. It’s secured to the tractor with two reinforced angle iron supports on the front and back that bolt to the tractor frame with 1/2-in. bolts.

“It’s a real sturdy box that can easily carry 500 lbs. of rocks or more,” says Tim. The box is also a handy place to haul extra jugs or pails of ingredients that go into Renger’s starter fertilizer tanks, since the tractor pulls the liquid tender to the planter.

“We made the whole box out of scrap metal



Heavy-duty rock carrier mounts under Deere 4440’s frame behind the front wheels. Pipes are spaced 2 in. apart to allow any dirt to drop out onto the ground.

that was on the farm, so there really wasn’t any cost involved other than labor to weld it together and paint it,” says Tim. “It’s a real handy device that gets a lot of use, not just

for rocks, but around the yard, too.”

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Tim Renger, 1002 390th St., Bancroft, Iowa 50517 (ph 515 320-3287).