

# Net Wrap Cutter For Big Bales

"Net wrap is a great product, but taking it off bales is something else," says Dick Schirado, adding that it's especially difficult in subzero temperatures when feeding up to 400 head of cattle on his Glen Ullin, N. Dak., ranch.

Like the other inventions he's come up with to make chores easier, Schirado designed a net wrap cutter that worked so well he built several to set up wherever he feeds cattle. Working with a local fabricator, he plans to start selling his patent-pending cutter this fall.

A video on his website shows how it works. Schirado picks up a big round bale with the tractor's grapple fork and slides it over the top of the blade using very little down pressure. Once cut, he places the bale on the ground and repeats with more bales. When finished, he uses the grapple to pick off the netting and drop it in a pile where it

can be removed at a later date.

"The wrap balls up and doesn't get dragged around. I do a way better job of picking it up with this system than before when I just let it lay there," Schirado says.

Loaders with a hay spear also work with the net wrap cutter, he notes.

The cutter is 4 ft. tall and 7 ft. long so it's high enough to be safe around people and livestock, and it's mounted on a stable pipe frame.

Schirado welcomes inquiries from manufacturers in other parts of the U.S. interested in building the net wrap cutter for local sales. He anticipates the cutters will sell for about \$200.

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Inventor Dick Schirado uses a grapple fork to pick up bales and slides it over top of blade to cut through net wrap.

Home-built net wrap cutter consists of a 7-ft. steel blade mounted on a metal stand.

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## "Bin Bar" A Big Hit At On-Farm Wedding

By Janis Schole

North Dakota farm girl Chelsey Zeltinger's wedding this past August was extra special. You might have even heard about it because a picture of a "bin bar" the family made out of an old 1,000-bu. Butler grain bin became famous on Facebook and was seen by hundreds of thousands of people. We saw the photo and decided to get more information.

"I knew right when I got engaged that I wanted something like it at my wedding, so I kept bugging my dad, brother and fiancé to make it. They also thought it would be a cool idea but weren't thrilled that they would have to make it," says Chelsey.

Her father, Stu Richter, admits that he was hoping Chelsey would forget about this idea, "but being the persistent one, she doesn't forget," he jokes.

Only a few weeks before the wedding, during a wet spell, Stu, his son Brady, groom-to-be Michael Zeltinger, and a co-worker, Neil Backman, began the project.

"They surprised me by doing it while I was away from home and feeling pretty stressed. The sentimental value of them doing this for me made it even more important and special," Chelsey explains.

According to Stu, the small bin is probably 50 years old and hadn't been used for at least 30 years. It was just sitting out in the pasture.

"We brought it home with a tractor loader and set it down in the shop. We started by suspending the bin 6 in. off the ground and using a Makita grinder with a cutting blade to remove the bottom foot because it was rusty."

After setting the bin on solid ground again, the team used their grinder to cut the wall half way up, and all the way around, effectively dividing the bin into a top and bottom section. They left a 36-in. opening by using five 8-ft. sections of sucker rod as pillars.

"We welded 3 brackets to each of the sucker rod bottoms, and 3 more to their tops, then bolted them to the inside of the bin. We had an ample supply of sucker rod because we also use it for our feedlot fencing," Stu explains. "While installing the sucker rod braces, we had to do a little door work and physically push the lower wall back into the round position because it was egg-shaped by that time. Then, for extra reinforcement inside the bin, both on the top and bottom, we welded more sections of sucker rod horizontally, between the upright wall braces, forming pentagons. After setting the building on a level gravel base, we covered the bottom braces with gravel so no one would trip."



When Chelsey Zeltinger got married last year her family made this "bin bar" out of an old 1,000-bu. grain bin. They cut the bin in the middle leaving a 36-in. opening. The top is held in place by 8-ft. sections of sucker rod.

At this point, it was time to install a counter top so the bin could be used as a bar. The group did this by mounting scrap 2 by 6-in. boards all around the top edge of the building's bottom half, using 4-in. shelving brackets.

The final touch was stringing lights around the top and bottom of the opening. The family then used an old, empty electrical spool as a table for the bartenders to mix drinks on, and put a couple of big coolers inside for beverage storage.

"The bar was the talk of the wedding," Stu says. "Everyone was commenting on how cool and great it was. It also turned out to

be a fun family project that means a lot to Chelsey. My wife, Vicki, wants to do some landscaping around it and use it as a gazebo, and Chelsey wants one for her house, too, so I guess we might have to make at least one more. It would be a good winter time project. We might even make them for sale."

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