Made It Myself

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Hopper Bottom Grain Truck And Trailer

"It has much more capacity than a conventional tandem axle grain truck and is road legal hauling up to 900 bu. of corn," says Bill Mai, Sharon Springs, Kan., about the hopper bottom truck and trailer combination he built.

Mai bought a 1969 Ford 1000 cab-over semi-truck and lengthened the frame 2 1/2 ft., then built a 300-bu. hopper bottom box and bolted it to the truck frame. He pulls a 500-bu. hopper bottom trailer behind the truck. Both the truck and trailer gravity unload out the bottom.

"I use it to haul most of my grain," says Mai, who has used the truck and trailer combination for nine years. "I can legally haul 830 bu. of wheat and 900 bu. of corn. A conventional tandem axle grain truck can legally haul only 450 bu. I built it because I needed another grain truck and wanted more capacity. The problem with tandem axle trucks is that they have a road legal limit of 42,000 lbs. but already weigh 20,000 lbs. empty. The hydraulic hoist, pump, and fluid alone can weigh up to 4,000 lbs.

"Another advantage is that it's easy to unload because I don't have to back up. I simply pull over the dump pit or swing auger. Both the truck and trailer unload through a sliding gate just ahead of the rear wheels. Grain doesn't splash all over like it does on the back end of a truck. The semi truck is equipped with a 10-speed transmission and a Cummins engine. I paid $2,800 for the truck and overhauled the engine. I spent a total of $8,000 to build the truck and trailer, much less than the cost of a conventional grain truck."

Mai used sheet metal and steel tubing to build both the truck box and trailer.

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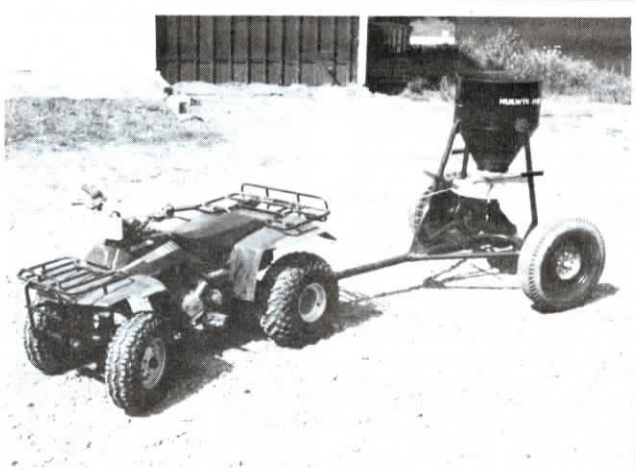

Fertilizer, Grass Seed Spreader Made From Old Car Axle

"My neighbors all want to borrow it because it pulls so easy," says Marinus Muilwyk, Lyons, N.Y., who used the rear axle and wheels from an old Plymouth car to build a ground-driven fertilizer and grass seed spreader that he pulls with his ATV.

Muilwyk removed the brake drums from the axle and turned the differential straight up, welding the shortened-up driveshaft to the bottom of a round 24-in. dia. spreader plate. The spreader is positioned below a small steel hopper with a 10-in. opening in the bottom. A pair of steel plates with matching holes cover the opening and can be rotated to change application rate.

When towed, the wheels turn the differential which turns the spreader. An extension lever which the operator can reach from the ATV opens and closes the bottom feed gate.

"It eliminates the need for a driveline and pulls so easy that I can pull it with my 2-WD ATV even on hills," says Muilwyk. "I use it to apply fertilizer and to seed grass, sow cover crops in corn, etc. The only change I'd make would be to build a cone-type dish that would throw material up in the air away from the driver."

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Bunk Feeder Built From Junked-Out Manure Spreader

The cost of an expensive automatic bunk feeder prompted John Klug, Waseca, Minn., to turn a junked-out ground-driven manure spreader into a low-cost bunk feeder.

The spreader rides on top of a steel track over a 100-ft. long bunk. A 1 1/2-hp electric motor mounted on back of the spreader is used to power the apron and beaters and to drive the spreader back and forth on the track. The operator stands on a wooden platform mounted on the front end of the spreader.

"We built it 22 years ago for $500 and it still works great," says Klug, who built the feeder with the help of Ezra Schauer. He who uses it to feed a mixture of silage and grain to 70 Holstein feeders. "We had been pushing silage down the feed bunk with shovels and garden carts which was a half hour job. We looked at automated bunk feeders but they cost too much. Also, our feed bunk is out in the open where feeder mechanisms could freeze up and we didn't want to have to spend a lot of time repairing it.

"The spreader is loaded inside a shed between two concrete stave silos. One silo holds silage and the other holds grain. The apron and beaters mix silage so well that every animal gets virtually the same proportion of grain and silage. The spreader holds about 1,000 lbs. of feed."

Klug replaced the original spreader wheels with 14-in. dia. car wheel rims, then mounted a large sprocket on one of the rims. The rear-mounted 1 1/2 hp electric motor belt-drives a jackshaft that chain-drives the sprocket. An electric cord rides along a wire suspended from the shed to a telephone pole near the end of the bunk. The wire supports the cord as it unfolds from a steel post welded onto the back of the spreader.

Klug flips a switch to start the motor, then uses a lever on the left side of the operator platform to disengage an idler, allowing the spreader to go forward. He uses a lever on the right side of the platform to engage the apron. When he reaches the end of the bunk he reverses the motor to reverse direction of the drive wheel and beaters (a slip clutch prevents the apron from running backward).

Klug replaced the spreader's rotted-out floor with a new plywood floor. He also used sections of plywood to close up the back of the spreader to keep wind from blowing feed away.

To make the track he mounted 3-in. dia. steel pipes, spaced 5 ft. apart, on top of the bunk and used lengths of channel iron to brace them every 6 ft.

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