



Snowblower Moves Grain

When Arnold Thompson, and his sons Jack and Jim, had to move large piles of grain stored on the ground after harvest they used their tractor-mounted snowblowers.

"We almost bought a vacuum-powered grain mover but decided to try this first. It's unbelievable how much grain we moved with our snowblowers and when we were through, it looked almost as though the ground had been vacuumed," says Arnold.

The Thompsons raise about 3,000 acres of small grain and, unlike many surrounding areas, they had a terrific crop last year with barley yields averaging between 70 and 80 bu. per acre. Custom operators harvested the grain faster than they could load it into bins so 50,000 bu. of grain was piled on the ground.

To get the grain into storage, the Thompsons used a couple augers and two snowblowers. The 3-pt. mounted, two-stage

Deere snowblower on their tractor moved the bulk of the grain and a small blower on their 16-hp. Deere garden tractor helped do cleanup. They never used a shovel.

"We just kept blowing the grain toward the augers. The tractor snowblower will keep two 8-in. augers going. It doesn't cause any damage to the grain that we could notice and doesn't put any strain on the tractor," says Arnold.

Besides handling grain piles, the Thompsons have also used snowblowers to load grain into flat storage. "We dump grain into the middle of our quonset building and then blow it against the sides with the snowblower."

The Thompsons say they've only used the idea on barley and aren't sure if it would also work on corn, soybeans, and other crops. Both snowblowers have auger-type blowers.

Rake-Bunched Hay

Researchers at the Squaw Butte research station in Burns, Oregon, have wintered cattle for the past two years on "rake-bunched hay."

Associate professor Harley A. Turner says rake-bunched hay eliminates the need for most expensive hay equipment and storage. "The idea is to rake up bunches of hay in the field and let cattle winter off the bunches. There's no need to bale or handle hay in any way other than to cut and rake it," says Turner.

The researchers, and several farmers who have tried the idea, cut the hay in the morning and then rake it into bunches with a dump rake in the afternoon. Each pile is about the size of a maximum dump of a rake. From

about mid November to May, cattle are wintered on the fields, confined by New Zealand type portable electric fences which are moved from field to field. Turner says that even in 12 to 16 in. of snow, cattle easily spot the mounds of hay, because the piles ferment slightly, emitting heat which melts snow on top. "You have to have a good feel for how much hay is on each field so cattle don't get over or underfed," says Turner. He's not sure how the idea would work in Midwestern areas where it's colder and the snow is deeper.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Squaw Butte Research Station, Star Rt. 1, Burns, Oregon 97720 (ph 503 573-2064).

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**"Best
Ideas"**

Editor's Note: Have you got a "best idea" you'd like to share with FARM SHOW readers? It might be a new wrinkle in cropping, livestock, machinery or whatever. Maybe it's still experimental but looks promising. Or, maybe you've already proven it works. We'd like to hear about it. Write to: Best Ideas, c/o FARM SHOW, P.O. Box 1029, Lakeville, Minn. 55044.

Buffalo Rancher Creates Market For His Product

Wink Nyhart, Twin Bridges, Mont. decided to raise buffalo to diversify his ranching operation. He also decided to create a new market for his home-grown buffalo. With the help of his wife, he's selling gourmet buffalo meat.

The idea has "taken off" and Nyhart-produced buffalo meat is showing up in specialty food stores, airport gift shops and mail order catalogs throughout the country as the latest in specialty foods.

Labeled Western Pride Buffalo Meat, it's packaged by the Great Western Buffalo Trading Co., Twin Bridges. It's available in three forms — buffalo stew, buffalo barbecue, and cubed chunks.

So far, the Nyharts have been able to keep up with the demand

using buffalo raised on their ranch.

Paul Pratt, a partner in the company, explains that buffalo meat's popularity comes from its novelty as well as its unique flavor, and low fat, high protein content.

Since buffalo meat is unusual you won't find it on your supermarket shelf and you'll pay a bit more than you do for ground beef. If you can't find it in your area you can order directly from the company. A gift box consisting of a 10 oz. can of stew, barbecue, and cubed chunks sells for \$13.50, plus shipping.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Great Western Buffalo Trading Co., Twin Bridges, Mont. 59754 (ph 406 684-5498).

Wintertime Employment

Roger Stickert, Scott City, Kan., keeps busy during the winter renovating old run-down houses in town. Strickert's been in the renovation business since the winter of 1980. He now buys 3 to 4 houses a year and does what's needed to get them in top shape before selling them. De-

mand for his talents is great and, since word got out about his activities, people call him when they have an older house for sale. "There's good money in being a part-time renovator but, on the other hand, it doesn't take much these days to beat farming," says Stickert.