

Ditch-Cleaning Bucket Extender

"Does a great job cleaning drainage ditches," says William Bierman, Riga, Mich., about the extended ditch-cleaning bucket he built for his tractor loader.

The add-on bucket and frame attach to the tractor loader on his IH 656 Hydro tractor in place of a standard bucket. The frame extends the reach of the loader about 10 ft. Bucket tilt cylinders on the tractor loader are used to tilt the extended frame. The bucket on the add-on frame has its own tilt cylinder.

Bierman farms in a flatland area of Michigan with a high

annual rainfall. All field tile drains into ditches that eventually fill with sediment. Some of the ditches are 6 to 7 ft. deep.

"This bucket works great, especially when combined with the IH hydro tractor because you have to maneuver back and forth constantly while cleaning out the ditch," says Bierman. He built the loader frame out of 2½ in. dia. pipe.

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"Power Assist" Trailer Helps Move Chopper Through Mud

"It really proved its worth in last year's sea of mud," says New York dairy farmer Bennett Palmer Jr., who with his father Bennett Sr., and brother Greg, designed and built a "power assist" silage wagon to keep their self-propelled forage chopper moving through mud and other "tough sledding."

The conversion, which they've used for two seasons, involves their model 1900 self-propelled New Holland chopper, with hydrostatic drive, and a 10-year-old Dump Chief silage wagon. "We actually had two basic problems — not enough traction to keep the chopper rolling in muddy field conditions, and too flimsy a running gear on a 9-ton capacity dump wagon," notes Bennett Jr.

The Palmers solved both problems with their self-engineered conversion. They bought a used hydrostatic model 1890 New Holland chopper which had gone through a fire, salvaging the running gear, hydraulic pump and hydraulic motors. The fire-damaged motors and pump were sent out for reconditioning to restore them to "like new" condition.

The Palmers used a salvaged 10-wheel truck frame to make a chassis for the salvaged running gear, then set the dump wagon back on the "beefed up" new running gear with "power assist" final drives on each wheel of its two-wheel axle. About one-third of the silage load is on the chopper, and two-thirds on the wagon's axle.

A solenoid switch, operated



from the cab, controls the hydraulically-powered silage wagon wheels. Whether standing still or on the go, the operator can switch from free wheeling to full power, or vice versa. Wheels on the chopper and wagon follow the same pair of tracks.

"The only change we plan to make for the coming season is to equip the wagon with larger tires to get more clearance under the axle, going from 18.4 by 26 tires to 18.4 by 30 or maybe even 34. With this change, the power-assisted chopper should be able to go right through standing water," says Bennett Jr.

He estimates that the power assist conversion, plus beefing-up the running gear, cost about \$10,000, not including their own labor. "We probably could have salvaged final drives from a junked combine but the matchup would have been a lot more work than it was in carrying up the two related New Holland choppers."

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Auger "Boost" Helps Reach Top Of Bin

If you've got an auger that almost reaches the top of a bin — but doesn't — you might want to look at the way Clarence Koldyk, Portage La Prairie, Manitoba, solved the problem.

To reach the top of the bin, Koldyk backed two loader tractors up to the auger and put a wheel in each bucket. Both

buckets were lifted a couple feet off the ground at the same time and trucks dumped into the auger hopper between the two tractors. Saved the cost of a new auger.

Story and photo reprinted courtesy Grainews, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Hand-Cranked Feed Cart

"It works great in the tight quarters of our stanchion dairy barn," says Glen Schweppe, Syracuse, Neb., who built a hand-cranked feed cart.

The cart's frame, made of 1¼-in. sq. tubing, is 3 ft. long, 3 ft. high and 2 ft. wide. Plywood sheets bolt to it to form the hopper. Schweppe put the upper end of an old 5-in. dia. auger in the bottom of the cart, extending it out 10-in. on the side. A 3-in. sprocket on one end of the auger is driven by #40 roller chain off of a 4-in. sprocket on the hand crank, which doubles as a push handle for the cart. Each turn of the crank equals a set amount of feed, so Schweppe can measure feed to each animal. The cart rides on 10-in. wheels. A



smaller compartment at the rear of the cart holds extra protein for top dressing by hand.

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