Reader Letters

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Here's a gravity box mounted on a tandem-axle gooseneck trailer that's great for hauling corn on the highway. Pulled with my 1-ton dually pickup, it's handier and easier to hook up than the conventional gravity wagons we previously pulled behind our tractor. Plus, because it's got brakes and brake lights, it's safer to use at night.

The rig consists simply of a 450-bu. capacity Parker Brothers wagon mounted on the gooseneck trailer frame.

This set-up is exceptionally good for hauling corn on the road. It's not much in soft fields, however, because when the box is full it's quite a load and it bogs down pretty easily. ***(Jim Cook, 10201 710th Ave., Zearing, Iowa 50278; ph 515 487-7505)***

When I decided to screen my corn as I augered it into my bins to reduce the amount of fines going into the bin, I also decided I didn't want the fines lying or blowing all around my bin sites. So I came up with this simple,

yet effective, method of dealing with the problem.

It's a "trough" that mounts underneath the bottom half of my 61-ft., 8-in. dia. grain auger where the screens are located. It's made from a 14-ft. long piece of corrugated roofing metal that's bent into a U-shape 1 ft. deep. It attaches to the auger with 1/8 by 1-in. pieces of strap iron.

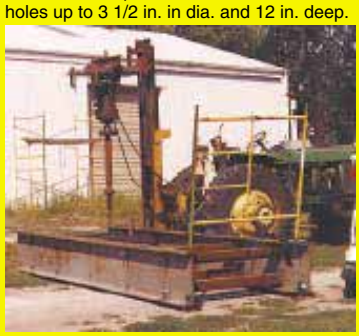
There's about 8 in. of clearance between the auger tube and trough at the top and about 12 in. at the bottom. That's enough "fall" to drop the fines onto a 12 ft. sq. tarp I place on the ground underneath the bottom end of the chute.

I simply scoop the fines up off the tarp with a loader, dump them in a wagon and dispose of them in a field. Works like a charm to keep fines away from bin sites. Didn't cost a cent to build since it was all constructed of scrap materials. ***(Carroll Meimann, 66717 160th St., McCallsburg, Iowa 50154; ph 515 434-2583)***

As my "made-it-myself" projects have grown larger, it has become harder to do some jobs with my regular drill presses.

So I decided to convert a heavy-duty post hole digger into a mobile drill press. It attaches to a home-built forklift I mount on the 3-pt. hitch of my Deere 4520.

I started with a heavy-duty Hyline post hole digger. Everything from the hydraulic gear drive down is home-built, including the adapter mandrill I designed and had made for me out of hot rolled steel by Heritage Machine Works & Welding (1001 West Locust, Bloomington, Ill. 61701; ph 309 828-0400). I welded up the adapter, which has four face plates (two on top and two on bottom) myself. The mandrill allows the drill to accept up to a #6 Moris-taper drill bit which I use to make holes up to 3 1/2 in. in dia. and 12 in. deep.



A solid steel 4 1/2-in. dia., 40-in. long shaft keeps the bit from chattering when it's being used.

The Hyline drive attaches to the forks on the lift, which is equipped with a three-stage, 15-ft. Hyster mast.

When not being used as a drill press, the rig can still be used as a posthole digger for sinking holes up to 10 ft. deep and 20 in. in dia.

The converted digger is really handy for mobile drilling and cost only about $1,400 to build, including $1,100 for the used post hole digger.

If you'd ever consider building a machine like this yourself, I have just one caution: Don't buy cheap drill bits; a rig like this will eat them for breakfast. ***(Roger Wessels, RFD 1, Box 26, Fairbury, Ill. 61739-9705; ph 815 692-2008)***

In our opinion, Deere's HZ hoe drill is the worst drill known to man for seeding into residue. However, at the same time, we also believe it's absolutely the best drill for use in our part of the country because it's one of the few drills you can use to seed deeply in dry conditions and still achieve good germination.

To solve plugging problems, we introduced an add-on "Residue Aid" for these drills at the recent Spokane Ag Expo in Spokane, Wash.

It consists of a pair of chain-driven, 10-in. long spokes that attach to the main frame of the drill on a bearing assembly. The spokes rotate the same speed as the packer wheels and run between each of the packer wheel assemblies. They feed residue into the packer wheels so packers "step" on residue to pull it through the assemblies. There's a slip clutch assembly on the main drive cross shaft that allows the spokes to free-wheel in case they hit a rock or other obstruction.

Spokes are made of mild steel flat bar and the axle is made from a solid #4140 alloy. One end of the axle has a head like a disk axle and the other end is threaded to accept a nut. One man can easily install the kit on five drills in one day. Installation requires drilling six holes per drill in the main frame for mounting the bearing bracket.

The kit sells for $750 per drill. ***(Dave Barnes, Barnes Welding Inc., P.O. Box 614, Waterville, Wash. 98858; ph 509 745-8588)***

We've received many inquiries about our "hide-away" livestock chute since FARM SHOW featured it in your Vol. 22, No. 4 issue.

Unfortunately, some of the details were incorrect.

For example, it weighs only 375 lbs. It collapses down to just 5 in. against the wall. And it sells for $675.

Just wanted to set the record straight. ***(Dennis Fisher, DSLA Co., R.R. 3, Box 115, Sisseton, S. Dak. 57262; ph 800 387-3752)***

FARM SHOW readers might be interested in the heavy-duty deer stands I make. I built the first one for a neighbor last fall and have since built several more for others.

What makes them different from conventional deer stands is mine are made out of 14 ga. 1-in. and 3/4-in. sq. tubing instead of wood so they'll never rot. The expanded metal seat telescopes down into the ladder for easier transport.

I make both a 4 and 8-ft. deer stands. They sell for $165 apiece. ***(Bob Joiner, Box 87, Chesterfield, Ill. 62630; ph 618 753-3419 or 3396)***

If you work on a computer a lot and have trouble with craning your neck, you might want to check out a desk like the one we bought at

an Office Max store in Springfield, Ill.

It has a pane of glass on the desk top. You place your monitor on a slanted shelf underneath. This placement relieves neck strain and since the glass is slightly tinted it cuts down on glare.

The desk cost less than $200 and we absolutely love it. ***(Milton Ruppert, 14401 Ill. Rt. 185, Hillsboro, Ill. 62049; ph 217 534-2502)***

My wife and I are both avid bird watchers and we grow field corn for them. To dry the corn and keep it form spoiling, I came up with this

aerated garbage can that uses the same principle as a drying bin to suck air through grain.

I started with a standard garbage can. I cut a hole in one side of the can at the bottom and mounted a 3 by 3-in. dia., 1/10 hp fan out of a copy machine in the hole. I got the fan a long time ago for $5 at a local Xerox surplus store. Then I drilled a series of 3/8-in. holes just below lid level.

To keep corn dry, I simply plug in the fan and pull air through the grain with the lid on the can.

It works amazingly well. ***(Richard Marley, 445 County Rd. 25009, Mahomet, Ill. 61853; ph 217 586-5750)***

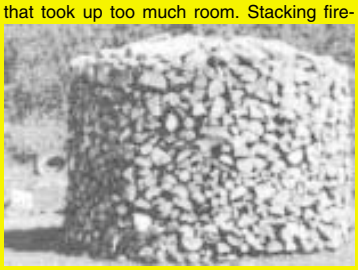
Here's a 1940's International H tractor we've had around for years and modified in a couple ways to better meet our needs.

First, we changed the pto from the rear to the right side. We did so by removing the belt pulley and installing a splined pto shaft in its place. This way it's easier to connect to the 10-in. dia., 22-ft. bin unloading auger we use.

We also upgraded to live hydraulics. We equipped it with a heat exchanger for cooling the oil behind the radiator. We also fashioned an additional 5-gal. oil reservoir in addition to the belly-mounted tank. The upgrade makes the system more suitable for use with our hopper auger and, because it's live, you don't lose hydraulics whenever you use the clutch. ***(Charles Goodall, R.R. 2, Box 84, Sidell, Ill. 61876; ph 217 288-9523)***

I've been stacking wood in cylindrical piles, or "Holzhaufens", with great results since I read about the idea in FARM SHOW 20 years ago (Vol. 3, No. 2).

I stacked firewood in a long row before, but that took up too much room. Stacking fire-



wood in 6 to 10-ft. high cylindrical piles takes up only a fraction of the space. The wood also dries more evenly and quickly because of the "chimney" effect created at the center of the pile, which draws air in from the bottom of the pile.

Here's how to do it.

First, cut wood into 12 to 24-in. lengths. Next, split the wood. Then, select a level piece of ground for the stack.

Lay the wood in a circle by placing the narrow edge toward the center and the wider edge to the outside. Form a circle in a predetermined diameter, which can range from 4 to 6 ft.

Place a center pole into the ground, approximately the height of the stack. (A good height is 10 ft.). Use wedges to maintain no more than a 1-in. inward slope. Make a roof by placing several pieces of wood, bark-side-up, at the top of the cone.

A typical 10-ft. stack will shrink to about 8 ft. in about three months, and when the stack has shrunk by 20 to 25 percent, the wood is ready to bring in and burn.

I cut as much firewood as I think we need to heat our home with our wood-burning furnace every heating season. ***(Wylie MacClellan, Economy, Colecester County, Nova Scotia, Canada B0M 1J0; ph 902 647-2834)***