Pasture vacuum has a 22-in. impeller which provides enough suction to pick up manure, even in thick grass, and mulch it before blowing it into a hopper.

Pasture Vacuum Makes Manure Clean-Up Easy

If you've got a few animals on a limited amount of pasture, you know that as time goes by it gets more and more difficult to keep your shoes clean.

After listening to his wife, Lona, complain about messy loafing areas and pastures that her alpacas had to live in, John Frank, Beaverton, Oregon, decided to help out.

The Franks had purchased their small farm after he retired from owning and operating a company that produced equipment for the lumber industry.

Frank tried cleaning up after Lona's alpacas with a rake, a shovel and a wheelbarrow, but he says, "That was just too slow and was tough on the grass."

Instead, he developed a pasture vacuum, which he has since trademarked as the Ultra-Vac.

This tractor-mounted vacuum has a 22-in. impeller, which provides enough suction to pick up manure, even in thick grass, and mulch it before blowing it into a hopper so it can be hauled off the field and piled for composting. Frank's vacuum is pto powered, and requires at least a 25 hp tractor to run it.

It has a 20-ft. long, 6-in. vacuum hose attached to the left side that gives the operator about a 200-degree working area behind and to the left side of the tractor. Operating the unit with two people is faster and easier as one person drives the tractor and the other operates the hose. "One person can use it, but it means a lot of getting on and off the tractor," he says.

Once people heard about it, he began to get orders. Rather than spend all his time making pasture vacuums, though, he turned manufacture of the Ultra-Vac over to a small company. There are several versions of the Ultra-Vac available, with various impeller and hopper sizes and you can order them in colors to match your tractor. Prices range from $3,800 to about $5,000.

Contact: FARM SHOW Follow-up, John Frank, 22750 SW Rosedale Road, Beaverton, Oregon 97007 (ph 503 649-2128). You can also look at some of these items and see Lona's alpacas, too, on the Internet at www.alpacatv.com.

A pair of baffles, one on each side, close off ends of the 25-ft. wide drag.

"Water Drag" Drains Sloughs, Potholes

"We had a lot of potholes on our farm and I just got tired of having to work around them," says Rodney Clay, Langenburg, Sask., who came up with what he calls a "water drag" to solve the problem.

The patent pending water drag is a 25-ft. wide steel frame designed to be pulled by a 150-ft. cable behind a tractor. The tractor driver pulls the drag up next to the water hole, and then drives the tractor around to the other side. Then the drag is pulled through the water. It pushes water ahead of it as the driver pulls the drag out onto surrounding crop land.

A pair of baffles, one on each side, close off the ends of the drag. Once the water reaches the same speed as the drag, gravity takes over and a layer of water escapes under the back and sides.

"It collects up to 4,500 gallons of water," at a time," says Clay. "After the water is redistributed, the water hole is often dry enough that you can bale hay through it later on. The tractor always stays on dry ground, traveling across the field going around the pothole while the drag goes through the middle, rolling the water forward. A big benefit is that the drag doesn't create ruts and it levels gopher mounds along the way.

Driver pulls drag up next to water hole and then drives tractor around to the other side. Then the drag is pulled through the water. It pushes water ahead of it as driver pulls drag onto surrounding crop land.

"The best time to use the drag on hay fields is just as the grass is coming through the surface. The drag also works well on fields with standing stubble. The drag slides well on the vertical straw stalks."

Sells for about $8,300 (Canadian).

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Clay Agra Systems, Box 795, Langenburg, Sask., Canada S0A 2A0 (ph 306 743-2996; E-mail: jclay.dsk@sk.sympatico.ca)

Claas 8500 C, a 3-section 30-ft. mower, mounts on front of the company's Jaguar self-propelled forage harvester.

Pottinger Multicat 9000 is fitted with three 10-ft. sections of disc mowers and drum-type conditioners. All three sections can be mounted on back of a bi-directional tractor.

Self-Propelled 30-Ft. Disc Mowers Demonstrated At Empire Farm Show

The "Big M" 30-ft. self-propelled disc mower from Krone Niemeyer has been getting a lot of attention at farm shows for the past couple of years. Some new competition was on display and also demonstrated in the field at the recent Empire Farm Show near Seneca Falls, N.Y.

The Pottinger Multicat 9000 is fitted with three 10-ft. sections of disc mowers and drum-type conditioning units. All three sections can be mounted on back of a bi-directional tractor. On conventional tractors equipped with front and rear 3-pt. hitches, one section can be mounted on front of the tractor and the other two sections pulled behind the tractor on either side. It leaves three separate swaths that are later raked.

"It works great with a bi-directional tractor because the driver can watch all three mower sections without having to turn around," says dealer Bob Searles.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Lakemor Equipment, 2256 Sisson Road, Penn Yan, N.Y. 14527 (ph and fax 315 536-6413; cellular ph 315 729-1084).

The Claas 8500 C, a 3-section 30-ft. mower, is designed to mount on front of the company's Jaguar self-propelled forage harvester. Or it can be used on a bi-directional tractor or a conventional tractor with one section on front and two behind.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Claas of America, Inc., 3030 Norcross Dr., Box 3008, Columbus, Ind. 47201 (ph 812 342-4441; fax 3525; Website: www.claasofamerica.com).