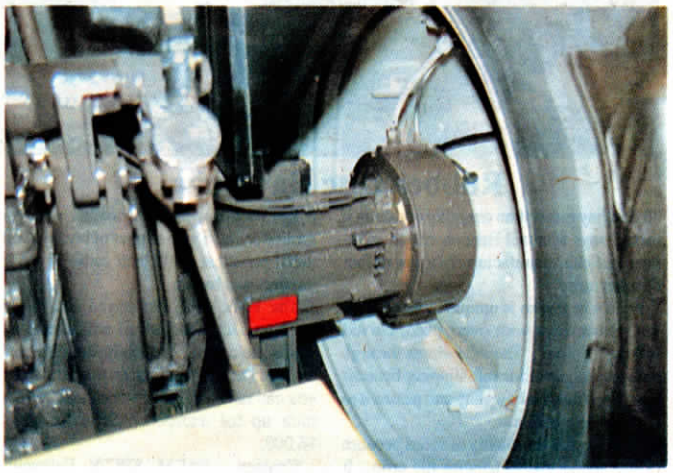
Latest New Products, Ideas From Europe

EDITOR'S NOTE: Featured here and on following pages are "best of the show" new products and ideas that caught my eye while covering the huge Agritechnica '87 farm show in Frankfurt, Germany, the latter part of November. Widely recognized as one of the biggest and best farm shows in the world, the 5-day extravaganza attracted upwards of 300,000 visitors who came from about 30 different countries to be first to learn about new products and ideas exhibited by approximately 900 different farm equipment manufacturers and marketers.

Mark Newhall, Editor



On-The-Go Tire Inflation

The first-ever on-the-go tractor tire inflation kit was on display at the Massey Ferguson exhibit at Agritechnica.

Designed by engineering student Thomas Brock, the new inflation system lets operators increase or decrease rear tire pressure as the load on the tractor changes. For instance, when you're in the field with heavy 3-pt. mounted equipment lowered into the ground, you might want to decrease pressure in the tires to increase traction and decrease compaction. But when you pick up the equipment and head down the road for home, you can increase tire pressure to better handle the load and reduce tire wear.

"The system even makes it practical to increase tire pressure on the headlands when you're turning around and then decrease it again in the field. One switch in the cab controls air pressure in both tires," Brock told FARM SHOW.

To install the on-the-go system, the existing hub is replaced with a new hollow hub. Air pressure feeds into the rotating hub from a small pressure tank and 12-volt pump that attach to the side of the tractor frame. A short length of pressure hose runs from the pressurized hub to the valve stem on the tire. If you've got duals, you can run a second air hose to the outer dual.

Key to success of the system is the design of the air-tight hub. "We had to build it strong enough to stand up to the stress of the tractor tire and tight enough so it wouldn't leak air," Brock says, noting that his calculations show the system easily pays for itself in reduced tire wear and increased fuel efficiency by reducing tire slippage and increasing traction.

Massey Ferguson is evaluating prototypes.

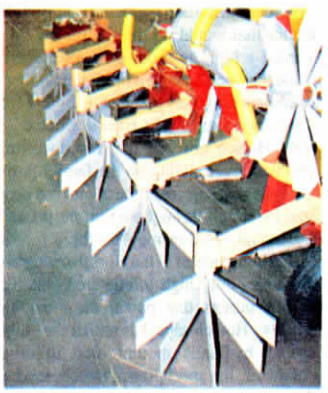
Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Tomas Brock, Massey-Ferguson GMBH, Industriehof, 3440 Eschwege, West Germany (ph 05651 810).

Slurry Incorporator

Spinning incorporator "wheels" fitted with pointed spokes bury slurry as it comes out of the tank, trapping nutrients and minimizing the smell.

Export manager Karl-Heinz Ritzi of Samson GMBH, manufacturer of the new slurry incorporator, says European farmers face increasing pressure from urban areas to keep smells to a minimum on the farm. "If they don't, laws will be passed to force them to change the way they farm," he told FARM SHOW.

Samson's incorporator wheels mount on a toolbar at the back of the slurry tank. Mounting arms hold them an angle to the ground so that they power themselves as they throw dirt over the slurry which is sprayed onto the field with several nozzles. Air pressure is used to power slurry out to the fan nozzles positioned behind the incorporator wheels. Slurry is buried by 1 to 2 in. of dirt, trapping both odors and nutrients



that might otherwise escape.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Samson GMBH, Postfach 1222, D-3054, Rodenberg, West Germany (ph 49 5723/ 5018).

New Shredder Makes "Straw Dust"

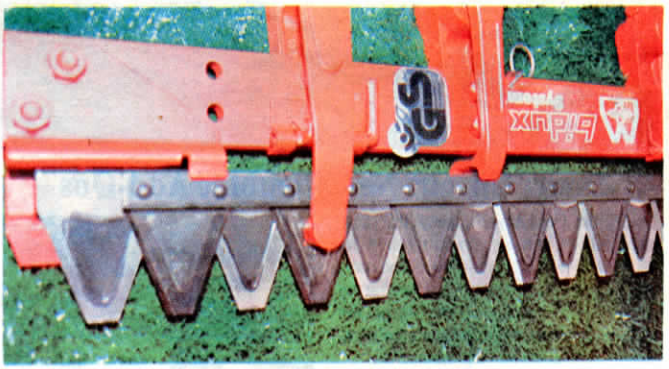
A new straw shredder chops straw up so fine it's got the consistency of saw dust.

Karl Scherz says the finely shredded straw his machine makes is much more absorbent when used as litter than the straw cut by conventional bale shredders, which generally use sickle sections to do the shredding.

Powered either by a 10 hp. electric motor or a 15-hp. tractor pto, the shredder looks like other barrel-type bale shredders. At the bottom of the shredder, two large round blades that look like large circular saw blades, overlap each other. Two long knife sections run across the diameter of the tope blade. The two knife sections shred the straw bales into small pieces which then get cut into even smaller pieces by the teeth on the two circular blades. When the cut-up straw falls down through the teeth, it's blown out a side spout.

Length of cut can be adjusted from 1/4 in. to 1/2 in. by changing blades. Sells for $2,000. The company also makes larger, stationary shredders with conveyors for handling large round bales and larger, commercial volumes of litter.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Scherz & Co., A-8530 Deutschlanddsberg, Austria (ph 03462 2920).



Double Sickle Cutterbar

"Comparing our double sickle bar with a conventional sickle bar is like comparing a Mercedes to a Volkswagen. This is without question the best cutterbar made," says Rainer Kirch, export manager for Busatis-Werke, manufacturer of double sickle bars for mowers, combines, forage harvesters, bale slicers, and any other application that uses a sickle bar.

Instead of running a single sickle through a set of guards, Busatis eliminates the guards and runs two sickles, one on top of the other. The sickles run back to back, with one facing up and the other facing down. Each section makes 1,500 cuts per minute, cutting against the sections on either side of it on the opposite cutter bar.

Kirch says the double sickle bar is perfect for farmers with near-impossible cutting conditions. "It cuts twice as much crop as any other sicklebar at speeds of 15 mph or more. It's works great under conditions that no other cutterbar can handle."

The double sickle bar require two sickle drives. The company makes both hydraulic and mechanical drive systems. Drives can be mounted both on one end, one on either end, or in the middle, depending on the application.

Busatis has been making double sickle bars for 25 years. If it works so well, why doesn't everyone use it?

Kirch answers that the biggest reason is that the bar requires more maintenance. "You've got twice as many sickle sections to sharpen and two drives to maintain. It also costs more initially than a conventional cutterbar," says Kirch.

The company can mount the double sickle bar on any existing cutterbar. The company has a U.S. distributor.

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