



Grapple fork looks like an eagle's claw and can be used for many jobs. It can be quickly removed, allowing you to use the bucket for other work, says inventor Mark Underwood, noting that the grapple teeth are unique because they pivot from side to side.

Skid Steer Grapple Fork Quick-Taches To Any Bucket

Most commercial grapple forks for skid loaders are designed to bolt onto the bucket, which makes it difficult to use the bucket for other jobs. Also, most grapple forks fit only a particular size or brand of bucket.

Mark Underwood, Burr Oak, Kansas, says he's come up with a state-of-the-art grapple fork that will quick-tach to any bucket, no matter what size or make.

"I'm a believer in universal equipment. My grapple fork can be quickly removed, allowing you to use the bucket for other jobs," says Underwood. "I designed it mainly for grabbing and holding trees and posts, but it also works great for handling round or big square bales as well as loose hay and even rocks."

His grapple fork looks like an eagle's claw or talon. Four curved teeth mount on a cross bar that bolts to each end on a pair of angled steel arms. The arms are tilted up or down by a pair of 2 by 10-in. hydraulic cylinders. The top part of each tooth oscillates on a roller bearing, allowing the tooth to angle off to either side which makes it easier to pull out of a bale or grab onto a load of rocks.

Quick tach brackets with lock-down pins fit to brackets bolted onto the back side of the bucket.

"I plan to soon offer other attachments, including bale spears, stump grinders, and sweepers, which will bolt on in place of the cross bar and teeth. It's built heavy to take a lot of abuse. I designed it with claw-shaped teeth because geometrically that's the strongest design in nature. The teeth open up more than 6 ft. so they can grab a big load," says Underwood.

The grapple fork sells for \$2,300. "Most commercial grapple forks sell for \$1,200 to \$1,700. However, they don't come with universal quick tach brackets and they can't be used with other attachments," notes Underwood.

An optional brush guard sells for \$210.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Second Look, Rt. 1, Box 127A, Burr Oak, Kansas 66936 (ph 785 647-5454; fax 785 647-5438; E-mail: secondlook@msn.com; Website: www.secondlookinc.com).

Manure Pit Agitator Slips Down Between Floor Slats

An Illinois hog producer made his own two-wheeled, pull-type manure pit agitator using a unique "fold-up" impeller blade design.

"It stirs the pit up good and runs smooth and quiet. It cost much less than a comparable commercial pit agitator," says Gary Lorton, Greenfield, Ill., who has a farrow-finish operation.

The machine is equipped with a two-bladed impeller that's shaft-driven by an orbit motor that operates off tractor hydraulics. A flow divider is used to adjust motor speed. The impeller blades are made from 10-gauge stainless steel sheet metal and are designed to fold flat whenever the power is off. The blades unfold by centrifugal force as the shaft starts rotating.

Lorton's hog barn measures 120 ft. long by 36 ft. wide and is divided into 10 rows of 12-ft. wide pens. It has a 10-ft. wide by 120-ft. long pit covered by slats spaced 1 in. apart.

"It isn't as aggressive as a commercial manure pit agitator but it does the job," says Lorton. "The pit is about 4 ft. deep. The agi-



Rig's two impeller blades are designed to fold flat when power is off, allowing them to slip down between floor slats.

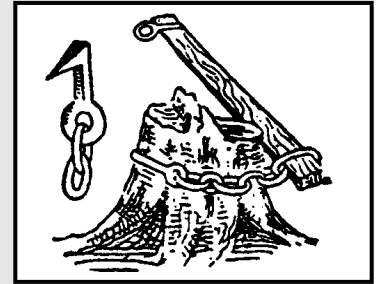
tator reaches down far enough to agitate most of the manure. It takes about an hour to get it ready to pump. We move the agitator every 8 ft. or so and use it twice inside each pen. We park the tractor in front of the building and have enough hydraulic hoses that we can do three or four pens before we have to move the tractor."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Gary Lorton, Rt. 1, Greenfield, Ill. 62044 (ph 217 368-2168).

Slick Way To Pull A Stump

Here's an old idea from the days of farming with horses. There's no reason it won't work as well with a tractor.

To twist a stump out of the ground, get a piece of log chain long enough to wrap around a tree stump. Put a catch point at one end of the chain that you can drive into the stump to anchor the chain. Attach a strong metal lever to the other end of the chain in such a way that when you pull on the free end of the lever, it will twist the stump out of the ground.



Converted Moldboard Plow Makes Super Stump Puller

Don Winship and his son Craig sell and replant thousands of Christmas trees each year, which means they have thousands of stumps to dig out before they can replant their fields.

When they couldn't find a tool they needed to handle different size stumps with minimal soil disturbance, they decided to design their own.

They started with an old three-point mounted Ford two-bottom plow. They removed the front beam and everything but the shank from the rear beam.

"We replaced the moldboard with a tool we had made by a local machine shop," Winship says. It consists of three spikes about 8 in. long welded to a plate that bolts onto the plow shank.

"We just drive over the stump and lower the plow about 2 ft. behind the stump. The spikes go into the soil and the stump at an angle. When the spikes are imbedded in the stump, we continue forward in first gear as we raise the stump puller," he says.

"Usually, the stumps fall off the spikes onto the ground, but once in awhile, we have to pull them off," he says.

The Winships have used their stump puller on thousands of stumps so far, most of which are 5 in. in diameter or less.

"We usually leave the stumps on the field for a few months to dry and then gather them up with a front end loader for disposal," he says.



He says the puller is faster and requires less labor than other methods of removing stumps they've tried. "There's very little soil disturbance, so it takes less work to get fields ready to replant," he notes.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Don and Craig Winship, Pine Top Plantation, P.O. Box 271, South Dayton, N.Y. 14138 (ph 716 988-5050; E-mail: ptp@utec.net).



Cast iron tub eliminates need to dig a hole and also keeps grain from spilling onto the ground.

Old Bath Tubs Make Cheap Grain Pit

Old bath tubs can be used to make cheap pits for unloading grain out of bins, says Ed Mies, Loami, Ill.

He dug a hole next to a 12,000-bu. bin and placed an old cast iron tub in it. A 5-ft. length of tile hooked up to the tub's drain is used to allow rain water to drain away. The water drains into a layer of filler rock.

To unload grain, he simply sticks one end of the auger into the tub.

"I've used it for five or six years. It eliminates the need to dig a hole for the auger," says Mies. "After I'm done unloading the bin I use a shovel and a 5-gal. bucket to clean out the tub. I use a similar tub on another 5,000-bu. bin. I got the tubs free from a carpenter who was remodeling a house."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Ed Mies, 14810 Maxwell Hall Rd., Loami, Ill. 62661 (ph 217 435-7091).