



A single hydraulic motor positioned between loader arms drives all 7 blades at once.



To keep debris from getting wrapped up in pulleys and drive belts, Graham made a protective shield out of 1-ft. dia. plastic pipe.

“Topper” Cuts Tall-Growing Weeds In Bean Crop

Rodney Graham, Hunt, N.Y., sells edible beans and soybeans to the organic food markets so he can't use chemicals on tall-growing weeds in his crops. Instead, he rigged up a 16 1/2-ft. cutterbar fitted with seven rotating blades that mounts on his loader arms.

The seven 32-in. flat steel blades mount on a 3 by 4-in. toolbar and are driven by a series of V-belts powered by a single hydraulic motor.

“It works great to cut off tall-growing weeds above the crops two to three weeks before harvest to reduce the amount of weed fodder that goes through the combine,” says Graham. “The cutterbar covers six 30-in. rows at a time.”

Graham made the blades from 3/8-in. thick

flat steel. They're 4 in. wide and 32 in. long. Each blade mounts on a vertical shaft that extends through the toolbar. Each shaft is fitted with two pulleys which are fitted with drive belts. A small hydraulic motor mounts between the loader arms. The blades overlap, with every other blade mounted below the blades next to it.

“It was easy to build and I spent less than \$1,000,” says Graham. “I use my Deere 2750 tractor equipped with a cab and narrow front wheels to operate it. The spinning blades throw the cut-off weeds around like spears so the cab is a must. Varying cutting height is as simple as raising or lowering the loader. I think it would probably also make a great corn detassler. The mounting bracket for the

hydraulic pump is slotted so that I can keep constant tension on the V-belt. Five Corners Repair in Bliss, N.Y., did the actual fabricating work and contributed ideas.

“Most of the shafts support two pulleys which we spot welded together. The center shaft supports three pulleys. I had a problem with weed debris lodging between the pulleys so I made a protective housing out of a 1-ft. dia. plastic pipe cut in half. It fits over the top of the toolbar.

“When I mounted the toolbar I welded a couple of steel brackets onto the loader arms where the bucket would normally hook on. A turnbuckle is used to keep the toolbar level as we raise or lower the loader. It takes only a minute or two to put the bucket back on.”



Blades mount on vertical shafts that extend through toolbar.

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Agropack bale chamber swings back and forth, packing hay in accordion-like folds. Bales are rounded on one end to shed rain and snow.

“No Plunger” Baler Just Keeps On Going

“I don't know if there's anyone else left in the country still using this baler, but after 11 years with it I couldn't be happier,” says Matt Fordyce, Alta, Iowa, about his unusual Agropack big square baler.

Several years ago FARM SHOW reported on the Agropack, which was invented and manufactured by Joseph Molitorisz (Vol. 6, No. 1 and Vol. 8, No. 5). It produces a rectangular bale about the size of conventional big square bales, but has one rounded end. You can stack the bales flat for inside storage or leave them standing in the field with the rounded end up to shed moisture.

In addition to the rounded end, Molitorisz invented a totally new baling mechanism that has no plunger. Instead, the bales are formed by a continuous folding method. In operation, the windrow is picked up by a conventional pickup and deposited on compactor rollers that compress the layers of hay and deposit them in the bale chamber, which swings back and forth 45 times a minute to fold and form the bale. The deposited layers

force the bale upward against a density control. After reaching the desired length and density, the bale is tied with 5 twine strings and discharged out the back.

Fordyce makes 4-ft. sq. bales that are 7 ft. long. Weight varies from about 1,100 to 1,200 lbs.

“I've really been impressed with it. It lets me put hay up at a higher moisture content than I could with conventional big square balers so I get nice, leafy hay,” says Fordyce. “There's no dust or mold – just clean hay.”

“Molitorisz sold about 28 balers between 1983 and 1987 before he stopped manufacturing them due to financial difficulties. The baler sold for about \$25,000. I bought my baler used in 1989 for about \$5,000 and also bought another one for parts. I've used it to make about 400 bales every year, which I feed to my 100 dairy cows. I had some problems during the first few years. Then three years ago I took it into my shop and rebuilt some of its parts. The main problem was that the pickup didn't do a good job of picking



Only 28 Agropack balers were built before the company went out of business.

up hay and also the bales weren't always tied properly. Also, I had to weave back and forth all the time in order to fill the outside edges of the bale. I replaced the original 4-ft. wide pickup with a 5 1/2-ft. wide one off a Deere pull-type forage chopper. I cut it apart and welded a series of eccentric cam fingers onto it. It now does a better job of pushing hay up into the bale chamber.

“I also improved the bale tying system by

installing an electronic box that controls an orbit motor used to swing the bale chamber back and forth. The electronic box automatically shuts off the motor to lock the bale chamber in the correct position for tying the bale.”

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