

Simple Ideas Make Night Harvest Easier

Dale Halsey, Ligonier, Ind., says a lot of his combining is done at night so he's come up with a couple of ideas to make things go a little more smoothly.

First, to make his header easier to see - and stay on the rows better - Halsey hit on the idea of spray-painting the tips of the snouts on his corn head with a bright orange phosphorescent paint.

Second, to give him a heads-up when the grain tank is getting full, Halsey installed a flapper switch about 3 in. below the top of the hopper and wired it to an alarm and a flashing yellow light that he mounted on the cab. When grain presses against the switch, the buzzer and light tell him the hopper is nearly full.

The light is bright enough to be seen by others in the field, too. He says this lets the person with the grain wagon know it's time to empty, so they can be ready or can set out to catch up with him if he's heading towards the other end of the field.

He says the warning alarm gets your attention, in case you're not paying attention

to the grain tank. "This fall, my beans turned out better than I'd expected. If I hadn't had the alarm on the tank, I'd have run over the first tank and maybe some later because it kept filling sooner than I thought it would," he says.

The flapper switch came from his Deere dealer at a cost of about \$7. The alarm is a backup warning device from a truck. He bought that from a junkyard for around \$10. The light was a truck clearance light he bought at a farm supply store. To get it to flash, he installed a turn-signal flasher in the in the wiring.

And one more thing: "These older combines don't have dome lights in the cab. I installed one of those battery powered 'tap' lights inside the cab, so now, when I need a dome light, I just tap on the light to turn it on." The light Halsey installed runs on 4 AA batteries and can be mounted anywhere.

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To make his header easier to see - and stay on the rows better - Dale Halsey spray painted the snout tips on his corn head with a bright orange phosphorescent paint.



To let him know when his combine's grain tank is getting full, he installed a flapper switch about 3 in. below the top of the hopper and wired it to an alarm and flashing yellow light mounted in the cab.



Johannes welded a U-shaped steel bracket to each side of splitter planter frame, making it possible to quickly hook up five add-on row units.

Splitter Planter Equipped With Easy-Mount Guide System

Lester Johannes, Ashley, Ill., wanted to experiment with 15-in. row soybeans but he didn't want to spend the money for a new narrow-row planter. Instead, he built his own splitter planter that can be used as a 6-row 30-in. corn planter or as an 11-row, 15-in. soybean planter.

"My son Mike helped me build it. We designed it with an automatic guide and mounting system that makes it easy to hook up the splitter row units to make quick switches between corn and beans," says Johannes.

He started with his existing 6-row 30-in. White 5400 planter. He paid \$600 for another White 5400 planter and salvaged five of the row units on it. He used 5 by 6-in., 1/4-in. thick steel tubing to make a new toolbar and clamped the additional row units onto it. He also welded a U-shaped steel bracket to each side of the planter frame just ahead of the original six row units. A length of 3 by 8 tubing is welded to each end of the splitter toolbar and extends about 8 ft. forward. An "engagement lug" in the bottom of each length of tubing matches up with a slot at the bottom of the U-shaped brackets on the main planter.

To hook up the five add-on row units, Johannes simply backs up the planter so the

U-shaped brackets slide under the lengths of 3 by 8 tubing. Once the slots in the lengths of tubing contact the lugs on each bracket, he raises the planter and then inserts a pin through holes drilled into both sides of the bracket as well as through the tubing.

He also replaced the planter's original White press wheels with V-type ones off a Great Plains grain drill.

"It does a good job and works as well as we had hoped," says Johannes, who made the conversion three years ago. "It takes only about five minutes to hook or unhook the planter. We had three goals in mind when we built this planter. We wanted a compact planter that could follow our rolling ground. We wanted a planter with plenty of room between the row units so that we can fill the front boxes from the back side of the planter. And we wanted to be able to quickly switch from corn to beans and back.

"Mike got the automatic alignment and hook-up idea after observing an older style front-end loader that was designed with quick-tach brackets."

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Stalk Grabbers can be quickly hammered onto flighting on feederhouse auger. They make auger more aggressive to keep crop material from piling up on corn head.

Stalk Grabbers Help Feed Dry, Fluffy Crops Into Combine

Don't let dry stalks pile up on your corn head and plug it up. Bob Rottinghaus, Clever Tech Inc, Jesup, Iowa, has a better idea.

His Stalk Grabbers can be installed easily onto the flighting on the feederhouse auger. When properly put in place, they grab the stalks and pull them into the feeder house. He says they'll help feed soybean stems through the combine, too.

Clever Tech Stalk Grabbers are made of 1/8 in. thick spring steel, bent into a tight U shape. Two gripper tabs are punched out, one on either side, to make a clip to hold the grabbers in place. That means there are no holes to drill, no bolts to tighten and no hardware to lose. The gripper tabs go on the back, or non-load side of the auger flighting.

"If dry crop material is piling up on your cornhead, you just hammer the Grabbers onto the auger flighting," he says. "If you're working in weedy or wet conditions and you

don't need them, you can quickly knock them off with a hammer." Stalk Grabbers are reusable and can be used on any combine.

He cautions that auger clearance does need to be adjusted up and forward, so there's a clearance of 1/8 to 1/4 in. between the pan and the stripper bar, when the grabbers are in place.

He recommends one grabber per lineal foot in the center 40 percent of the auger and every 18 in. on the outsides. On a 20-ft. auger, that means eight grabbers on the center 8 ft. and four more on the two 6-ft. outside sections, for a total of 16.

Clever Tech sells Stalk Grabbers in bags of 16, priced at \$42.50, so one bag will be enough for a 20-ft. auger.

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