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## Helicopter "Buzz Saw" Works As Giant Tree Trimmer

Trimming trees along power lines is a huge job. It can be done the hard way, with lift trucks and chain saws, or it can be done the easy way - with a 40-ft. long buzz saw bar that hangs from a helicopter.

Aerial Solutions, Tabor City, N.C., says its patented helicopter "buzz saw" can neatly square off any tree line. It consists of eleven 24-in. dia. circular saw blades attached to a 40-ft. long aluminum bar. The bar hooks to a steel cable suspended from the helicopter. The blades are belt-driven by a 45 hp, 2-cycle gas engine that mounts at one end of the bar. The blades spin at 5,800 rpm's. All operations are controlled by the pilot.

Malcolm Casner, who farms near Herrick, Ill., became fascinated with the cutting operation when it came to his area two years ago. The crew and helicopter were in the area for a week or so, clearing branches and top canopy growth along either side of local power lines. One day the crew asked if the helicopter and cutter rig could be parked in their pasture for the night. They granted permission.

Casner talked to the pilot, Kevin Gurley, and crew chief, Edwin Todd. They told him the company operates four such helicopters throughout the U.S. The team works 30 days, then takes 30 days off. They cut four to six miles of power line right-of-way each day. A crew follows their path, cleaning up branches and debris. The 450 hp helicopter burns 35 gal. of fuel per hour. To conserve fuel, the helicopter is stripped of all nonessential equipment which allows the pilot to stay on the job for 50 minutes to an hour at a time.

The load limit at the hook of the helicopter is 2,000 lbs. The saw blade assembly weighs about 900 lbs. During cool fall and early winter days, when lift characteristics are at



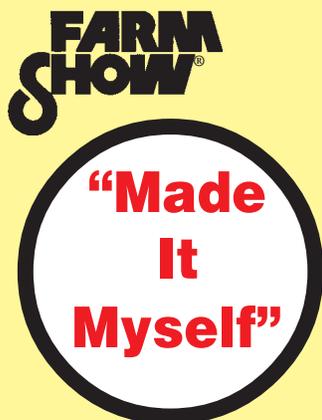
The 40-ft. long bar hooks to a steel cable suspended from helicopter. All operations are controlled by the pilot.

their peak, an additional four blades can be added to the assembly, adding another 200 lbs. to the load.

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Some of the best new ideas we hear about are "made it myself" inventions born in farmers' workshops. If you've got a new idea or favorite gadget you're proud of, we'd like to hear about it. Send along a photo or two, and a description of what it is and how it works. Is it being manufactured commercially? If so where can interested farmers buy it? Are you looking for manufacturers, dealers or distributors? Send to FARM SHOW, P.O. Box 1029, Lakeville, Minn. 55044 or call toll-free 800 834-9665. Or you can submit an idea at our Website at [www.farmshow.com](http://www.farmshow.com).

Mark Newhall, Editor



## Four Ideas For Better Combining

Smoother combining and more corn in the bin. That was the result of several changes made by farmer-inventor Robert Dunton to his Deere combine.

"All of these modifications were designed to more evenly feed crop material into the cylinder, resulting in a better job of threshing with less corn loss," says Dunton, who leaves all the modifications in place permanently, not just when conditions are difficult.

### Deck Plate Cleaners

To further even out the flow of incoming grain across the full width of the cylinder, Dunton designed what he calls "Deck Plate Cleaners." Two of them bolt onto each gathering chain.

The rectangular-shaped deck plate cleaners are made out of long-lasting VHM steel. They attach directly to the gathering chain fingers and reach across the opening over the row.

"We used them on 400 acres of corn last fall and they worked great," says Dunton. "The cleaners direct any shelled grain back to the cross auger instead of allowing it to drop between the rollers and back onto the ground. They eliminate corn loss by up to 50 percent. We're now making these cleaners for others. They sell for \$10 per row," says Dunton.



### Screened-In Fan

A screened-in fan bolts onto the feederhouse, sucking dust away and resulting in better visibility. The 12-volt fan came from a Deere 4440 tractor (it was a beater fan). It's mounted inside a triangular frame made out of 1-in. sq. tubing and is covered with hardware cloth. The fan sucks in dust and fine material and blows it down into the feederhouse. It's wired to the combine battery and is turned on or off by a switch inside the cab.

"It completely eliminates dust so I can see the cross auger from the cab at all times," says Dunton. "I made the enclosure big to draw air in from a large area, making it less likely that shucks and fodder will plug



up the screen. It works better than most commercial feederhouse dust vacuums because they're designed only to draw dust from inside the feederhouse, not outside."

### Down Corn Reel

To salvage down corn a couple years ago, he fitted his corn head with a spider-type corn reel. It worked so well he now leaves it on all the time. "Even under normal harvest conditions, it's not uncommon to occasionally find spots in the field where there's down corn," he notes.

He moved the reel back six inches, to keep it from pushing standing corn down before it reaches the head. He accomplished this by drilling another set of holes in the reel's outside mounting arms. He also shortened the reel up to keep the outside



arms from catching on fence lines and tree branches.

### Quick Feed Grabbers

One disadvantage of the spider reel was that he had to move along at a slow crawl of .7 mph because fluffy, dry stalks would pile up on top of the feeder auger. He had to climb off the combine frequently to manually remove trash.

To solve the problem, he fitted the cross auger with "quick feed" fingers (see Vol. 25, No. 1). The bolt-on fingers make the auger more aggressive so it can pull in broken, fluffy stalks. The fingers are simply flat metal strips which he bolted to the auger flighting. The strips extend about 3/8 in. past the edge.

"The fingers work so well I leave them in place permanently," says Dunton. "They keep all the stalks and fluff feeding through and result in a full-width flow into the feederhouse. As a result, there's more even



wear on the cylinder bars which also results in better threshing. I now move along at 2.5 mph in tough conditions. Even in mid afternoon, when stalks are at their driest, I had no problems last year."

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