



Johnson's 4-ft. long bucket digs a trench 10 in. wide and 14 in. deep. Back side of basket is partially open to allow trenching in either direction.

Low-Tech Backhoe Buckets

"My home-built backhoe bucket is simple and unlike anything on the market. It makes a trench 10 in. wide and up to 14 in. deep mounted on a small skid steer," says Larry Johnson, Ontario, N.Y.

Johnson's bucket is used on a Bobcat 310 skid loader that's only 3 ft. wide. The bucket measures about 4 ft. long and 3 ft. high and is partially open on the back side. It's made from 1/4-in. plate steel and 10-in. channel iron.

"It works great for digging in electric lines and other shallow trenches. You can use it to dig in either direction, although it's easiest to dig pulling backward," says Johnson. "If I want to get more dirt in the bucket, I can bolt on a steel plate to completely block off the back side. But I usually leave it open to be able to dig in forward or reverse."

Johnson built a similar but larger bucket for a larger Bobcat skid loader. It lets him dig trenches 2 ft. wide and up to 4 ft. deep. The bucket is open at both ends and can also be used to dig in either direction.

"I built it for my son who is in the landscaping business. He uses it a lot and says he couldn't do without it," says Johnson. "He uses it to dig trenches and also to build footers for stone walls, to strip off soil, and even to dig up small trees. The back side of the bucket is equipped with welded-on teeth (not shown in photo). I spent \$100 for the mounting plate. My total cost was about \$300. Conventional backhoe buckets sell for several thousand dollars."

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"It works great for digging in electrical lines," says Johnson, who spent just \$300 on the digger.



Johnson says he can dig shallow trenches much faster with his digger than with a conventional backhoe.



Larger bucket is open at both ends and digs trenches 2 ft. wide and 4 ft. deep. Johnson built it for his son to use in his landscaping business.



"Drago" promises 5 to 6 more bushels of corn per acre and knives that last 50 percent longer than conventional headers.

"Ferrari Of Corn Heads"

Conventional corn heads can't compare with the "Drago" high performance corn head that's now available in the U.S. in limited supply, says the Iowa importer of the European header.

Referred to as the "Ferrari" of corn heads, the Drago boasts a number of special features that sets it apart from the rest.

Thanks to a spring tension mechanism, the Drago has automatic self-adjusting stripper plates on each individual row. As with any header, the corn stalk is pulled down between the knife rollers and a plate set to the width of the corn stalk strips the ears off the stalk.

However, with the Drago, each of the plates automatically adjusts to the differing stalk widths found in various soil types and conditions across the field, and the payoff is better harvested yields. Corn loss is minimized by as much as 50 per cent, depending on field conditions, because more cobs are stripped from the stalk before any shelling can occur. Early farmer reports for the 2003 crop is 5 to 6 bushels more per acre, compared to conventional corn heads, says importer Dennis Bollig of Dragotec U.S.A.

An Iowa State University study has shown that misadjustment of only 3/8 in. on the stripper plates can reduce corn yields by as much as 12 bu./acre.

The Drago's knife rollers are also 50 percent longer, making it possible to run them at slower rpm's, virtually eliminating ear

bounce and greatly reducing shelling.

"Drago has the lowest deck angles in the industry," according to sales manager Tom Shafer, of Arnold's in Kimball, Minn. "That, combined with the angled gathering chains, makes the Drago more aggressive in down corn. The corn head is set in a low profile and that creates better feeding action, helping prevent ears from being lost out of the corn head."

Also of major significance is the unit's stalk chopper option, which eliminates the need for a separate pass to chop stalks.

The corn head fits all makes of combines and has a simple component design, which makes repairs quicker and easier, shortening down time.

"It has a higher standard of quality than any corn head in the world," Shafer says. "It's competitively priced, with or without the chopper. This is a 50-something-year old company in northern Italy, and all they do is build corn heads. They have specialized, and it is very, very well designed. It allows you to maximize more grain yield than any other corn head."

According to Bollig, the network of dealers in the U.S. will continue to expand.

"We're looking for dealers that reflect the quality that's built into the Drago," he says.

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Larger-Than-Life Christmas Lights

If you're looking for a unique new way to decorate for Christmas, you might want to try these "Larger-Than-Life Christmas Lights" from Hammacher-Schlemmer.

The festive lights are oversized versions of the familiar C9 Christmas tree bulbs that were popular well before the debut of the tiny lights more common today.

More than a foot tall from top to bottom, the lights can be used indoors or outdoors. Clips at the base allow them to be attached to tree branches, or they can be hung from a ceiling or porch roof or positioned around the yard on ground stakes (included). Lights are spaced at 36-in. intervals on a 14-ft. cord, which plugs into AC; up to 30 can be connected end-to-end. The internal bulb is replaceable.

The colored "globes" are made from durable molded plastic. The entire set of four bulbs (red, yellow, blue, green) weighs only 3 lbs. and sells for \$29.95 plus shipping. Ask for item number 68129.



Giant lights can also be hung from tree branches or a roof.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Hammacher-Schlemmer, 9180 Le Saint Drive, Fairfield Ohio 45014 (ph 866 426-6224 or 513 860-3397; fax 513 860-3396; email: customerservice@hammacher.com; website (on-line catalog): www.hammacher.com).