Converted pickup lets Steve Prins haul small amounts of gravel and blade it down with the same machine.

Pickup Makes Nifty Driveway Grader

After Steve Prins, Holland, Michigan, took on a couple of driveway maintenance jobs in his spare time to supplement his full-time job, he decided he could be more efficient if he could haul small amounts of gravel and blade it down with the same machine.

He already had a 1986 Ford F-350 4-WD pickup with a rusted-out box on it.

He took off the old box and had a local fabricator put together a 2-yard dump bed to put in its place. It's made of 8-gauge sheet metal over a steel tube frame, and lined with a pickup bed liner. He used a hydraulic scissors hoist from an old farm wagon to dump the box.

Then he searched around for a small belly-mount grader blade he could hang under the F-350. When he couldn't find anything that small, he went looking for parts to make one. He found an old horse drawn grader in a fence row. "Except for the center circle the blade hung from and pivoted on, it was completely worn out," he says. Still, that center circle was just the right size to fit under the pickup.

He made a compact blade to hang on it out of the cutting edge of a wing-style snowplow.

He mounted the blade between the two small lift cylinders to pick it up when not in use. Two other cylinders are used to adjust the angle and pitch of the blade.

To get hydraulics to lift the blade and dump the box, he added a hydraulic pump driven off the pickup's engine. "That took a lot of horsepower to run, and it had to be running all the time, so it used up a lot of gas," he says.

To solve the problem, he switched to a pump driven by an electric motor. "With the electric powered pump, I only turn it on when I need the hydraulics," he says.

All the controls are electric-over-hydraulic, so Prins only had to run electric wires to his cab and install switches.

Prins says the 2-yard box wasn't always big enough, so he eventually put together a small dump trailer he can pull behind the pickup. It, too, uses hydraulics from the pickup.

Prins designed the blade mounts intentionally to be easy to remove. He disconnects four hydraulic hoses, pulls three pins, and it's off. Because it's small, he can pull it from under the pickup and out of the way without help.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Steve Prins, 4542 44th St., Holland, Mich. 49423 (ph 269 751-8619; email: steveprins@iserve.net).

As one cylinder splits the other retracts, letting MacKay split wood twice as fast.

"See-Saw" Wood Splitter

"My father Fred MacKay built this one-of-a-kind wood splitter. It's built out of a pair of one-way, 4-in. dia. cylinders that mount on separate steel I-beams which are bolted together. The cylinders are plumbed together so that as one cylinder is extended, the other retracts," says William MacKay of Pictou, Nova Scotia. .

Hydraulic power is supplied by a tractor.

"We built it this way because all we had on hand were one-way cylinders and we didn't want to spend the money for a new two-way cylinder," says William. "The cylinders came off an old front-end loader. We can operate both splitters at the same time. While one side is splitting we're loading wood into the other side."

The MacKays used part of the 1-in. thick steel blade off a road grader to make the wedges on both splitters.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, William MacKay, RR 1, Pictou, Nova Scotia, Canada B0K 1H0 (ph 902 485-4717).

Three of the new Modern Flow® high-clearance choppers recently worked their way through a seed corn field in Illinois.

"Over-The-Top" Choppers Harvest Male Rows Only

By C.F. Marley, Contributing Editor

In 2003, Jim Anderson and James Young, Newman, Ill., launched a first-of-its-kind business using "over-the-top" machines for chopping out male rows in seed corn fields. They're turning what would normally be a waste product into quality feed.

Taking out the male rows lessens the chance for "genetic thievery" and it also lets the grower use larger machinery at harvest. The easiest solution in the past was running the male rows down. Now Young andAnderson use Modern Flow® high-clearance choppers, built by Paul's Welding in Villa Grove, Ill., to harvest the male rows for silage.

There's a 1-row "chop and throw" unit on each side of machine.

The complete removal of the male rows has additional benefits for growers looking at a corn-on-corn rotation. Not only do you eliminate the volunteer corn but you also reduce the possibility of disease from the male rows that were run down during the growing season.

The service is worth enough to the growers that Young and Anderson do not pay a fee to the grower. They sell whatever silage they are able to take out.

Paul's Welding built the high-clearance machines, each of which is fitted with a Deere cab and a 275-hp. Cummins engine. Hydraulic-powered chop and throw units mount on each side of the machine. The frame and choppers adjust to varying row widths, from 120 to 160 in.

Hoppers mount on high-dump scissor hoists that reach 13 1/2 ft. at the bottom when fully extended. The 600+ cu. ft. boxes can easily dump into semi trailers or dump carts.

Anderson and Young deliver silage to livestock producers and also offer a silage bagging service. Their 12-ft. bagger can produce 200, 250, 300 and 500 ft. bags. At the present time they operate in Illinois, Indiana, Texas and Wisconsin.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Jim Anderson & James Young, Millennium Agricultural Services, Box 260, Newman, Ill. 61942 (ph 217 837-2622 or 217 251-2931; email: jyoung@starband.net); or Paul's Machine & Welding Corp., 650 N. Sycamore St., Villa Grove, Ill. 61956 (ph 217 832-8417 or 217 871-5236).

Hydraulic-powered choppers blow silage into hoppers on back of machine.

High-lift hoppers mount on scissor-hoists that can easily dump into a semi trailer or dump cart.