Jessop cut a hole in trailer's fiberglass topper and inserted a 5-gal. bucket with the bottom cut off to serve as a fill spout.

Pickup Box Trailer Turned Into Rolling Grain Bin

"I found a new use for the long time best friend of many a small farmer - the pickup box trailer," says Joe Jessop, Ray, Minn., who converted a pickup trailer with topper into a rolling grain bin.

"I bought the pickup trailer at an auction for $100 and it was already road ready," says Jessop. "I cut a hole in the fiberglass topper and inserted a five gallon bucket with the bottom cut off to use as a fill-spout. Roofing tar around the bucket weatherproofs it and the lid still goes on to seal it," he says.

"I cut a piece of plywood to go just inside the tailgate to stop any feed from sifting out the bottom of the tailgate. I scoop feed out through the sliding glass windows in the front or rear of the topper.

"The trailer is easily filled through the bucket fill-spout. I can take the trailer anywhere without worrying about the weather," says Jessop.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Joe Jessop, 4647 Hwy 53, Ray, Minn. 56669.

"Calf Sling" Weighing Belt

"My new calf sling weighing belt takes much of the work out of weighing newborn calves. It can also be used just to transport calves without weighing them," says Reg Gibbs, Billings, Montana.

The Fastweigh belt can be used to weigh calves up to 130 lbs. It consists of a 36-in. long, 14-in. wide vinyl-coated canvas that's attached at both ends to triangle-shaped metal frames equipped with handholds. An adjuster bar, which bolts onto the rear bumper of any truck or pickup, is used to support the scale and can be adjusted in height depending on the animal's size and weight.

To weigh the calf, the operator places the canvas under the animal's belly, then uses both frames to lift the calf off the ground and hook it onto the scale.

"It eliminates the need to tie the calf's legs and wrestle him off the ground and onto a scale. It also keeps most of the 'calf slime' off your clothes," says Gibbs. "The adjuster bar has 20 inches of adjustment so it'll fit almost any bumper height. I find that I sell about 15 slings for every complete unit that I sell. Ranchers who buy the slings separately generally use them around calving barns to assist in carrying calves. Those who buy the complete unit are generally purebred producers, who want to keep detailed birth weights while saving their back from lifting too much."

Sling consists of vinyl-coated canvas that's attached at both ends to triangle-shaped metal frames equipped with handholds.

The calf sling alone sells for $40 plus S&H. The complete unit, including adjuster bar and weigh scale, sells for $125 plus S&H.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Reg Gibbs, Brightsun Inc., P.O. Box 20253, Billings, Montana 59104 (ph 406 252-6651; email: reggibbs@bresnan.net).

Video System Makes Stock Trailer Easy To Handle

"I don't know how I got along without it," says Clendon Nichols, Union, Ky., about the video system he set up on his pickup and gooseneck livestock trailer.

Using components he picked up at Circuit City, Best Buy and Radio Shack, Nichols mounted two cameras in back of his pickup, trained on the gooseneck hitch from two different angles. The cameras feed into a fold-down video screen mounted in the cab of the pickup. The split screen picture, showing the gooseneck hookup from two different angles, lets him hook up the first time every time.

What's more, Nichols also mounted two cameras inside his stock trailer and two on the back of the trailer for easy backing up, even in the dead of night, thanks to backup lights mounted at the rear of the trailer.

He has a bank of toggle switches in the cab that lets him switch between cameras and between a single screen picture and a split screen. He can also flip a switch to turn lights on inside the trailer and at the back of trailer.

"Some of the stockyards don't have any lights and I often pull up in the middle of the night. This system makes it easy to back up at any time," says Nichols.

One camera mounts right behind the cab, focused down on the gooseneck in the middle of the pickup box. The other camera is down at eye level, pointed right at the ball.

Inside the trailer, he has a camera in each compartment, along with floodlights, so he can check on the animals at any time from the cab. And the lights on back of the trailer give a wide range of view, for easy backup.

"I spent about $1,000 on various components. Cameras and flip down TV's have gotten much cheaper in recent years and you can do just about anything with them," says Nichols.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Clendon Nichols, 12226 Kite Lane, Union, Ky. 41091 (ph 859 485-7676).

PhotoHunter Helps Scout, Enjoy Wildlife

TrailTimer Co.'s new "PhotoHunter" is an infrared 35 mm camera that allows you to enjoy wildlife without disturbing it – or if you're a hunter, it allows you to spy on your future trophies to determine what their patterns and location preferences are.

"The system will monitor deer trails, scrapes, rubs, bear baits or elk wallows 24 hours a day. We believe it is the quietest unit on the market and by far, the most affordable. It is simple, self-contained and easy to use."

The PhotoHunter (model PH-3500) includes a fully-automatic, high quality 35-mm film camera in a durable, weather-resistent case. Its camo finish makes the unit blend in with the surroundings. The camera has "auto flash" and "auto film advance" features. Positioning is made easy, thanks to a red alignment light that reveals the lens aim. The conical infrared sensor beam has an approximate 60-ft. range, reaching a maximum diameter of 4 ft. at its furthest. The beam senses both the body heat and movement of game, and activates the shutter on the camera.

The system includes a built-in 250-event counter and "PhotoCheck," a feature that lets you chart the number of pictures taken without removing the unit from the tree. In fact, a unique slide window even lets you change film, battery or settings while the unit is mounted to the tree. PhotoHunter also has a a time/date stamp, and a variable 1, 5, and 10 minute picture event frequency delay. By setting it to record activity only every five or 10 minutes, it won't take too many pictures of the same thing, preventing one animal from filling a whole roll of film.

"PhotoHunter" is an infrared 35 mm camera that senses an animal and then automatically takes a photo of it.

PhotoHunters can also be used to catch thieves by setting it up in any area where you've had a problem.

Price for the PhotoHunter is $249.99 plus shipping. TrailTimer also sells several models of infrared monitors separately.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, TrailTimer Co., P.O. Box 28722, St. Paul, Minn. 55128 (ph 651 738-0925; fax 651 439-7299; email: info@trailtimer.com; website: www.trailtimer.com).

Bicycle Speedometer Adapted To High-Clearance Sprayer

When the speedometer on his high clearance crop sprayer failed, Merritt Wade, Lexington, Ky., saved money by replacing it with a bicycle speedometer.

He mounted a series of magnets on one of the sprayer's undriven wheels. A bracket holds the speedometer's sensor close to the path where the magnets pass. The miles per hour - shown in tenths of a mile per hour - is displayed on a digital monitor on the operator's console.

"A new replacement speedometer would've cost about $150, and a commercial radar-type, ground speed monitor $400 or more. I spent a total of only about $25," says Wade.

"I got the idea one day when I was installing a digital speedometer on my son's bike and wondered if I could make it work on my sprayer. Normally there's a single, spoke-mounted magnet that passes a sensor with each wheel revolution. The digital readout displays the speed in increments from 1 to 99 mph."

To fit the sprayer, Wade mounted five magnets, equally spaced around the wheel rim. He recalibrated the unit so it would read in tenths of miles per hour (i.e. 4.5, 8.3, etc.). He sanded off the paint on five equally spaced locations on the rim and then epoxied a magnet onto each location. He made a small bracket to hold the sensor close to the path where the magnets pass. Then he ran a wire up to the digital readout in the cab.

He measured the rolling diameter of the sprayer tire and divided by five (the number of magnets). He then multiplied by the calibration factor given in the manual and divided by 10 to give tenths of miles per hour.

"It lets me spray much more accurately than I used to and maintain a constant speed in all conditions, whether I'm going up hill or downhill or on dry or muddy ground," says Wade. "I bought the magnets at Radio Shack and the speedometer at Sears.

"I've used this same type of bicycle speedometer on other implements. I made a unit for my vegetable planter where live plants are planted by hand. I have to plant vegetables at very slow speeds - 1.2 to 1.7 mph - and a steady speed is important for maximum productivity. The speedometer I use on the vegetable planter is calibrated to read in hundredths of miles per hour (i.e. 1.34 mph)."

Sprayer speed - shown in tenths of a mile per hour - is displayed on a digital monitor on the operator's console.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Merritt Wade, 1651 Elkchester Road, Lexington, Ky. 40510 (ph 859 254-4512).