**New Planter Has No Seed Hopper**

There are a lot of planters on the market, but Richard Follmer, owner of Progressive Farm Products, Inc., Hudson, Illinois, has come up with a design that bulk seed users will want to check out.

“Every spring, we have to level the sand in order to have a useable beach area,” he explains. Most of his neighbors hire someone with a bulldozer to level and clean their beach areas, but Nelson made his own machine out of a Massey Ferguson 300 combine.

“It’s a 1974 model, with a Chrysler 225 gasoline engine and a variable speed belt drive,” he says. “I paid $400 for the combine,” he says. “I had trouble getting the engine started and when it finally did start, it just barely ran. I rebuilt the carburetor and the generator. It needed a new battery and a starter and I thought it needed a starter, but after I’d made the other repairs, the starter worked fine.”

Nelson stripped out the combine’s guts and removed the grain tank and most of the sheet metal, leaving only enough of the combine’s shell to make a rough wagon box. “I sold 2,000 lbs. of steel to the scrap yard. I kept some of the shafts and other parts that I thought might come in handy for other projects,” he says.

With low tree branches around the lake, overall height was a problem and Nelson figured he didn’t need heat or air conditioning for beach grooming, so he cut off the top half of the cab. The original steel roof makes a good weather cover to protect the operator’s station when it’s not in use.

Once he had the old combine cut down, he made a sturdy dozer blade from wood 4 by 4’s and attached it to the header lift. “It makes a good dozer that I can use to push sand and even rocks,” he says. “It does a good job of leveling, but it doesn’t dig because there’s no down-pressure on the header lift.”

Another use for the Beach Monster is to launch his 20-ft. Sea Ray boat, which he transports on a single axle trailer. It’s a half-hour drive from his cottage to the nearest ramp where he must pay to launch his boat. With the old combine engine mounted several feet up in the air, he figured he’d be able to get far enough out in the water to launch his boat right by his cottage with a ramp or boat hoist.

To make the old combine more sure-footed on sand, he inflates the drive tires to only about 5 psi. He also filled the wagon box with rocks for added traction.


**“Beach Monster” Made From Combine**

Neighbors can tell when Tom Nelson arrives at his cottage on the Michigan shore of Lake Huron in spring by the roar of his “Beach Monster.”

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**Bale Feeder Bus Ideal For Longhorns**

Coffee shop talk can be productive. Just ask Kevin Nelson, Canton, Minn.

He’d been trying to come up with a hay feeder for his herd of 60 purebred Longhorn cattle “Most of the feeders I’d looked at wouldn’t work with my cows because of their horns. And if the openings were large enough to accommodate their horns, they were big enough that the cattle could walk right into the transport,” he says.

Over a cup of coffee last winter, he and Sverre Dahl Jr., Hesper, Iowa, hatched a plan to convert an old Ford school bus into a hay feeder.

“We decided if we cut the sides out of an old school bus, it would be just about right,” Nelson continues. “It’s high enough so the cattle can’t get in. And the calves could crawl in over the top.”

Kevin Nelson’s 25 head of cattle can eat at once from his home-built bale feeder, which he made by cutting the sides out of an old school bus. He slides round bales into the bus from the back.

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Instead of a seed hopper, Rich Follmer’s new planter has an air delivery system that takes seed directly from bulk boxes to planting units.

“Till to conventional tillage,” Follmer explains. “I designed the planter with help from Don O’Neill, a Downs, Illinois, farmer, who has helped him develop other equipment in the past. Their plans are to sell 12-, 16- and 24-row versions. The 16-row version is under 10 ft. high and folds to 14 1/2 ft. wide for transport.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Richard Follmer, 19500 N 1425, Progressive Farm Products, Inc., Hudson, Ill. 61748 (ph 800 788-1564 or 309 454-1564).

**How To Compact A Trench**

Did you ever dig a ditch for a pipe or wire and find that by the next year the ground had settled, leaving a trench across your yard? After Lyle Dawson, Wheatley, Ontario, dug a 150-ft. long, 2 by 5-ft. ditch for a water drain, he totally eliminated the “year later trench problem” by using water to compact the soil immediately after the ditch was back-filled.

His “soil compactor” consists of a 4-ft. long hollow metal tube with an elbow at one end fitted with a short length of metal tubing. A short piece of garden hose fits over the pipe. It hooks up to a garden hose. A metal rod welded to the pipe serves as a handle.

Dawson starts at one end of the excavated area and slowly works his way along it, inverting the 4-ft. long pipe into the ground at 4 to 6 in. intervals. Water exiting from the end of the pipe saturates the soil, penetrating to the bottom of the trench.

“The idea is to get the entire contents of the trench very wet and muddy. Once that happens there will be very little settling of the soil later, especially if I wait for the muddy soil to solidify and then further compact it before it has dried out by walking on it or by driving over it with a truck,” says Dawson. “When the hose fitting is attached to the hose, the hose washer will compress and grip onto

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Lyle Dawson, Rt. 1, Wheatley, Ontario, Canada N0P 2P0 (ph 519 825-7339).