

## Bale Shredder For Smaller Tractors

Building a round bale shredder for smaller tractors that can handle tough, frozen bales isn't easy. If you also want it to create a minimal amount of dust, feed out evenly and be quiet, the challenge is even tougher.

Just ask Paul Fox, owner of Double R Manufacturing. He says company engineers tore the new BeddingPro bale shredder apart 8 times before getting it "right."

"Now it does everything we want it to do and more," Fox says.

And customers are noticing. Livestock farmers are using it for both feed and bedding while berry farmers use it to lay down mulch.

"There are about 18 small square bales in one 5 1/2 ft. round bale. Those 18 square bales will normally cover approximately 500 ft.," Fox says. "The BeddingPro fluffs and spreads so well that one round bale will cover approximately 1,500 sq. ft., thereby saving 36

square bales of straw."

With so many capabilities, the machine interests many types of farmers. "Cattle farmers are finding that they're using a third less straw and extending their bedding intervals because of increased absorption rates," Fox says.

He says strawberry farmers like it because the machine can lay down whatever thickness of material they require. "It's a market we didn't foresee," he says.

The 6 sq. ft. machine weighs about 1,000 lbs. and attaches to a 3-pt hitch or quick-tatches to a front-end loader of tractors with at least 40 hp. It can be powered by either hydraulics or pto. Loading 4 to 5 1/2 ft. bales is done with an optional self-loading attachment, bale spear or by rolling a bale off a wagon onto the BeddingPro.

Shredding rate is adjusted through the tractor's ground speed and the speed that the



**BeddingPro bale shredder attaches to a 3-pt. hitch or quick-tatches to a front-end loader. It shreds and fluffs straw so well livestock producers can extend bedding intervals, says manufacturer Paul Fox.**

BeddingPro turns the bale to be shredded.

The machine rotates the bale on top of a drum with knives on it that shreds the bale until there's nothing left. Fox says you can set the slice width from 6 to 18 in. Unlike some bed-type shredders, cylinders "squeeze" the bale so it does as good a job when the bale is small as when it is full size.

Fox says that both the pto and hydraulic

version sell for in the low teens. (Can.).

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## Skid Plates Protect Combine Heads

Few headers are built to stand up to rocky ground. With a good market for wheat straw bales, John Schwarz and his sons, John Jr. and David, try to cut their 320 acres of wheat as close to the ground as possible. To protect their headers, Schwarz came up with a skid plate solution.

"I can run the header right on the ground and feel every stone I run over without any damage to the header," he says.

Schwarz's skid plates fit 200 and 900 Series Deere combines, but the idea could easily be adapted to other combine headers. He designed a simple template for fabricating heavy steel skid plates. These plates are installed behind existing poly skid plates standard on most grain headers today.

### Template

Step 1. Get under the header with a 1/8-in. thick strip of steel, 3 in. wide and 24 in. long.

"Position the strip under the header, tucking the rear of the strip as far back and above the platform's rear brace tube as possible," says Schwarz. "Using hand pressure, bend the strip to produce a belly of approximately 4 in. in the front half of the template strip. Curve the front end of the strip so it tucks just behind the existing angle iron attaching the stainless steel cutter bar seal."

It is this "belly" that will slide over any rocks and keep them from damaging the under side of the header pan. If the strip is too long after forming the 4-in. bulge, check to be sure the rear end is driven as far back as possible above the rear support tube. If satisfied with the rear positioning, mark the excess, cut it off and try again to fit the front end of the strip just behind the angle iron.

"The template should now fit correctly between each set of cutterbar support arms across the header," says Schwarz.

Step 2. Measure and record the width of each individual pan section under the header. Schwarz points out that they are not all the same width. Measure the distance between support arms, and deduct 1/2 to 3/4 in. from each measurement to allow clearance and "wobble room" at skid plate installation.

Step 3. Take the template and net width measurements to a metal shop to cut the needed number of skid plates to the proper dimensions and roll-form them to the proper shape.

"The number of plates will vary according to the width of the header," says Schwarz. "I would recommend that 3/16-in. thick, hot rolled plate be used for skid plate fabrication. This thickness can withstand the full weight of the header as it rides over on a field stone."

### Installation

Step 1. Remove the two factory-installed



**Schwarz's skid plates fit 200 and 900 Series Deere combine headers, but the idea could easily be adapted to other combine brands.**



**Heavy steel skid plates are installed behind existing poly skid plates that are standard on many grain headers.**

carriage bolts and replace with similar Grade-5 quality, but 2-2/12 in. longer carriage bolts. Schwarz warns against using common Grade-2 carriage bolts.

"Stack just enough flat washers on the bolts to cover exposed non-threaded areas on the bolt neck," he adds. "Then reinstall the original flange-style hex nuts removed from the shorter carriage bolts. Tighten the flanged hex nuts against the washers to temporarily secure the bolts in the header pan so they can be used to indicate where bolt holes must be drilled in the new skid plates."

Step 2. Select a skid plate to match the pan width. Center it equally between the two ad-



**It took only two hours for Keith Schole to make this wire unroller. He used five pieces of 2 by 4 to build the unit.**

## "My Dad's Unroller Works Great"

By Kyle Schole, 11-Year-Old Subscriber

"What once was hard is now easy!" Those are the words of my dad, Keith Schole, after he made a wire unroller that slashes the time needed to string fence wire.

The unroller rolls out wire easily, and in the near future, he hopes to attach a hitch to the handle so he can pull it with an ATV.

To make the roller, my dad used five pieces of 2 by 2 fir board. The 55-in. long frame is supported by the handle and two cross beams, leaving an inside width of 13 in. Next, he drilled two holes, easily large enough for a 1/2-in. rod to act as an axle connecting a pair of 9-in. rubber tires. In addition, he finally drilled another set of holes for another metal rod to act as a second axle for the roll of wire. There's a bolt on one end and a cutter pin on

the other, which makes the rod removable.

To install a roll of wire, you simply unhook the pin, slide the rod back, insert the roll, slide the rod forward, and replace the pin. Once the handle is lifted, the roll easily clears the ground.

All this for just \$50 worth of supplies and 2 hrs. of construction time!

The only improvements my dad says he'd like to make is to install a disk on each side of the roll to prevent it from swaying as it unrolls.

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acent cutterbar support arms. Slide the rear edge as far back and above the header's rear brace tube as possible. Tap with a hammer to force it as far rearward as possible. Schwarz notes that some skid plates may need corners trimmed or notches added to clear existing header hardware.

"Use a paint stick or other marking instrument to paint two 2-in. diameter circles on top of the skid plate in the approximate area where holes are needed for the carriage bolts," says Schwarz. "Swing the front edge of the plate upward. When the top (painted) side of the skid plate comes in contact with the carriage bolts, the bolt threads will leave a 'witness mark' where the hole should be drilled."

Also attempt to visually confirm that the front edge of the skid plate will tuck up and just behind the factory-installed angle iron that attaches the cutter bar stainless seal.

Step 3. Remove the skid plate and drill 1/2

to 3/4-in. thru-holes for the two carriage bolts using the witness marks for guides.

Step 4. Re-install the skid plate to the header pan over the carriage bolts without removing the previously installed and tightened down hex-nuts and washers. No more than 1/2 to 3/4 in. of carriage bolt thread should protrude through the skid plate. If necessary, lower the plate, remove the hex nuts and add more washers. Reinstall the hex nuts and raise the plate back into position.

"Once the plate is in position, secure it by jamming two locking type hex-nuts on each carriage bolt to cover and protect all the thread," advises Schwarz. "Just repeat the process for each plate. Steel and metal work shouldn't cost more than \$250 to \$300."

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