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Sears Mower Converted To "Wrecker"

"I use it for pulling garden tractors that won't start into my shop where I can do service work on them. It's a lot easier than pushing tractors by hand," says Doug Brown, Columbia, Tenn., who converted an old Sears Craftsman 11 hp riding mower into a "wrecker" by bolting a hand-operated hydraulic hoist on back of the tractor.

Brown bolted part of the frame off an old riding mower on front of the tractor to hold concrete blocks for weight. On back, he added a hand pump hydraulic lift off an old handicap lift. The hoist is equipped with two hydraulic cylinders mounted on a pair of metal arms. By getting off the wrecker and pumping up and down on a handle mounted on the hoist, Brown can raise the front wheels of a tractor off the ground.

"It lets me pick up even the biggest garden

tractor and tow it wherever I want to go. I used it one time to pick up a 24 hp Sears riding mower and dragged it home from a neighbor's place to my shop," says Brown. "It cost almost nothing to build. The hydraulic lift was originally designed for handicapped people. I was able to buy it for \$5 at an auction for hospital employees."

"I bought the Sears mower for \$50 from a friend who often picks up scrap at dumpsters. Someone had thrown the tractor away, even though it was in immaculate condition. The engine was still shiny, and you could tell the tractor had never had a bad day's care."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Doug Brown, 2904 Luke Moser Rd., Columbia, Tenn. 38401 (ph 931 388-1314; dkbrown13@earthlink.net).

Cat-Killing Bird Decoy

Growing populations of wild cats across North America have sparked controversies in some areas, such as Wisconsin, where proposals have been made to make it legal to shoot any outdoor cat on sight. So when FARM SHOW noticed an ad for a new cat-killing decoy, it caught our attention.

The DSE Cat Killer is a combination caller and decoy that operates on four AA batteries. The unit emits a constantly changing sequence of chirps, while at the same time a replaceable bird decoy is moved around by a small electric motor. Every time the bird chirps, it moves. Eventually it pivots a full 360 degrees.

"It's the next best thing to live bait and it works not only on cats but also on such predators as coyotes and foxes," says Dennis Stilwell, DSE Outdoor Products, Indian Valley, Va. "It can be used to bring predators in to be shot, or placed inside a cage-type trap."

The caller decoy sells for \$39.95 plus \$3.95 S&H. A 3-pack of replacement birds sells for



The decoy emits a constantly changing sequence of chirps while it is moved around by a small electric motor.

\$9 plus \$3.95 S&H.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, DSE Outdoor Products, LLC, P.O. Box 30, Indian Valley, Va. 24105; ph 540 789-4800; dstilwell@i-plus.net; www.dseoutdoors.com).

Some of the best new ideas we hear about are "made it myself" inventions born in farmers' workshops. If you've got a new idea or favorite gadget you're proud of, we'd like to hear about it. Send along a photo or two, and a description of what it is and how it works. Is it being manufactured commercially? If so where can interested farmers buy it? Are you looking for manufacturers, dealers or distributors? Send to FARM SHOW, P.O. Box 1029, Lakeville, Minn. 55044 or call toll-free 800 834-9665. Or you can submit an idea at our Website at www.farmshow.com.

Mark Newhall, Editor

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Large Animal Composter Grinds Up Carcasses

When Dutch Industries engineers started working on a safe and inexpensive way for large hog operations to get rid of carcasses, they ended up with a design that resembles an oversize black funnel.

In June, it won the outstanding new invention prize at the Western Canadian Farm Progress Show in Regina, Sask.

The composter stands 10 3/4 ft. high and 8 1/2 ft. wide. It's equipped with a chain hoist that lifts carcasses into the funnel. A skid steer or front-end loader with a lift height of 11 ft. 4 in. can also be used to dump the carcass into the composter, says John Gibson, Dutch sales manager.

Inside, metal teeth on a bar grind up the bones while some added straw or sawdust with a high carbon-to-nitrogen ratio breaks down the flesh. A 5 hp electric motor churns everything around a friction bar to aerate the funnel. Two electronic radiant heaters keep the temperature consistently between 130 and 155 degrees F.

After about a week, compost comes out the bottom of the unit through a sealed door. "If you add 2,000 lbs. of dead animals and add 400 lbs. of straw, you can expect about 480 lbs. of compost after a week," Gibson says.

"The compost will have between 8 and 11 lbs. of nitrogen per 2,000 lbs. of product," he says.

With an operating cost of about \$.015 per



"If you put in 2,000 lbs. of dead animals and 400 lbs. of straw, you'll get about 480 lbs. of compost after a week," says John Gibson.

lb. of material including electricity and cost of the bulking agent, it's inexpensive to operate, Gibson says.

Sells for \$42,000 (Can.).

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Dutch Industries, 300 Portico Drive, P.O. Box 568, Pilot Butte, Sask. S0G 3Z0 Canada (ph 800 663-8824 or 306 781-4820; sales@dutchind.com; www.dutchind.com).

Steel-Handled Spades

Tired of breaking wooden handles on shovels and spades, Jon Chick, Sr., Shelbyville, Tenn., replaced them with a steel pipe. He simply removed the broken wooden handles from the shovel heads and welded pieces of 1 1/4-in. dia. pipe in their place.

"The steel handles won't break and are heavier than the original wooden ones so they help the spades dig better," says Chick. "I've tried this idea with two different spades. On the first one I replaced the original 3-ft. long wooden handle with a steel one of the same length, then welded the T-handle back in place on top of the pipe. On the second one I welded in a 6-ft. long pipe. It works great with a posthole digger for digging post holes or ditches, especially in hard dirt. The big advantage is the weight of the handle. If the dirt is so hard that I can't step through it, I can pick it up and shove it into the bottom of the hole to break up the soil."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Jon Chick Sr., 2398 Fairfield Pike, Shelbyville, Tenn. 37160 (ph 931 389-0038; jonchick@charter.net).



"The steel handles won't break and are heavier than wood so they help the spades dig better," says Jon Chick, Sr.

Winch weighs 35 lbs. but can pull 1,800 lbs. with one line and up to 3,000 lbs. with a doubled-up line.



Portable Gas-Powered Winch

This new portable winch requires no electricity, allowing you to take it anywhere. It looks like a chain saw and is powered by an Echo chain saw gas engine.

It weighs just 35 lbs. yet can pull 1,800 lbs. when equipped with a single line, and 3,000 lbs. when equipped with a double line. Average line speed with no load is 32 ft. per minute. A cable tie-down equipped with two hooks is used to anchor the unit. A nylon tie-down/carry strap and a ground anchor are also available. Other options include an extension cable with hook, pulley block, cable pulling clamps, and nylon tow strap.

"It works great any time you can't get a vehicle back in the woods, so hunters and loggers really like it," says the company. "Hunters can use it to pull game out of the woods, and loggers can use it to pull in small logs."

Made by Rule, the winch is available at Cabela's and Northern Tools.

Sells for about \$600.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Rule Industries, Cape Ann Industrial Park, Gloucester, Ma. 01930 (ph 978 281-0440 or cell 949 636-8173; fax 978 283-2619; dan.gudalaj@itt.com).