Gerard Driesel backs his covered hay wagon feeder into the barn, fills it, and then parks it in his barnyard until the hay is gone.

Mobile Hay Feeder

Tired of feeding hay on wet ground, Gerard Driesel decided to build a new kind of hay feeder. He can back his mobile feeder into the barn, fill it and then park it in his barnyard until the hay is gone. Best of all, it holds up to 120 bales under roof for easy feeding with very little waste.

"We have a small farm and put up our own hay," says Driesel. "Using the hay wagon feeder saves two to three bales a week over feeding in a ground feeder. That can be enough to make the difference in having enough hay or having to buy hay."

Driesel's covered wagon feeder cost him nothing, other than about 50 hours labor. He was able to salvage some old 12-ft. 2 by 10-in. treated bleacher seats that were being replaced at a local college. While too splintery and worn for seating, they were fine for floor joists and flooring for the feeder.

"I set the best ones on end on 2-ft. centers, resting them on the steel channel beams of an old wagon with a rotted out bed," says Driesel. "The rest were nailed down as flooring. The steel channel beams were only 14 ft. long, so that's how long the bed became."

He built a wooden frame and trusses out of salvaged 2 by 4's. Steel roofing received when he helped clean up a farmstead became roof and siding for the hay wagon.

Hayracks are 6 ft. long and hang on each side of the rear 6 ft. of the wagon. The hayrack frames are sections of angle iron with the backside filled in with steel grating. The outward slanting side, which the cattle and sheep access, is a combination of 1-in., 3/4-in. and 1/2-in. pipe, whatever he had lying around.

Hay racks hang on each side of wagon.

"If I was using new material, I would go with 1/2-in. rod as it is sufficiently strong," explains Driesel.

The back end of the wagon is a gate constructed of angle iron framing and fence netting. When it's time to refill the wagon, Driesel simply backs into his barn, opens the gate and loads a fresh set of bales.

After two months of use, Driesel is well satisfied with his new feeder. He likes it well enough that he recommends it to others.

"I think a wagon like this would be ideal with horse owners or others who don't have hay storage on their place," he says. "If they built it on the frame of an old horse or livestock trailer, they could pull it to the farmer they buy hay from, pull it home and feed out of it until it was time for another load. You eliminate the need for a truck to haul with and a barn to store it in; yet the hay stays dry all the time."

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Rubber "Hats" Preserve Wood Posts

William Johnson got tired of having to replace rotten wooden posts all the time. So the Wiggins, Miss., farmer came up with a cheap solution to preserve them - he simply nails a section of rubber belting on top of posts to keep rain off.

Johnson uses old rubber conveyor belt from a local feedmill where he used to work. He uses a jig saw or sawzall to cut the material into squares, making the square big enough to provide a 2-in. overlap on each side of the post. For example, for an 8-in. dia. post he cuts a 12-in. dia. square. Then he nails each overlapping side of the material into the post, using nails that have a rubber O-ring under the head.

"My dad has been using this idea for a long time. He's got posts in the ground that have been there for 42 years but look just as good as the day they were put in," says Johnson. "Without the rubber hats, in our acid soil we'd have to replace wooden posts every 7 to 8 years. Moisture going down into the posts quickly rots them out."

To preserve wooden posts, William Johnson simply nails a section of rubber belting on top to keep rain off.

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Canvas covers top of feederhouse at a steep enough slant so debris slides back into header.

Canvas Feederhouse Deflector

We spotted this new feederhouse deflector at the recent National Farm Machinery Show in Louisville, Kentucky. It simply consists of a piece of heavy canvas stretched between the front of the combine cab down to the back of the header. It covers the top of the feederhouse at a steep enough slant so debris slides off the canvas back into the header. It also keeps rain off the top of the feederhouse, preventing a buildup of mushy wet material and preventing rust. It also prevents debris buildup around hydraulic cylinders and various sensors located in and around the feederhouse assembly.

It ties in place under the front edge of the cab and two large magnets hold it to the back of combine head. Can be quickly detached to remove header or to clean cab windows.

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Kerry Tamke calls this home-built, articulated, 4-WD utility vehicle the "Pugster".

He Turns Old Parts Into Useful, Fun Vehicles

Kerry Tamke is a tool-and-die worker by day who uses his skills during his free time to create vehicles for work and play.

He recently built a 4-WD utility vehicle that comes in handy for chores on his Arcadia, Wis., farm. He calls his articulated creation a Pugster, after the Pug utility vehicle he drove when he was younger.

He started with two rear axles from Ford Ranger pickups and added an engine and CV joints from a 1980 Dodge Colt. The power steering, hydraulic cylinders and hydraulic pump came from a Massey Ferguson combine. "The 4-cyl. engine came with a 4-speed manual transaxle transmission with a high-low shift, giving it eight speeds forward and two in reverse," Tamke says.

The gears and the design take him anywhere he wants to go from 1 to 30 mph. The Pugster makes sharp turns in tight spaces, and has good traction in snow, mud and sand.

Tamke uses it mostly for hauling firewood. The 6 by 6-ft. dump box holds about 3/4 of a cord. He also hauls hay and dirt. It comes in handy for hunting, too. By bolting a ladder on front, Tamke even devised a mobile system to move from tree to tree to pick apples.

He took about a year to build the Pugster in his free time. He had 80 percent of the parts for the vehicle and spent about $2,000 for new tires and steel for the dump box.

He built another unique vehicle, combining a Heald mini bike frame with an antique "hit & miss" Deere 1.5 hp model E. The little motorcycle tops out at 6 mph and even has a sidecar.

"My wife needed a place to ride," Tamke laughs. The couple rides the cycle at antique engine shows. "It gets a lot of attention and compliments."

Pugster's 6 by 6-ft. dump box holds about 3/4 of a cord of wood.

Two-seater Deere mini bike (above and below) combines a Heald mini bike frame with a "hit and miss" Deere engine.

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