

Wagon-Mounted Bin Fan Dries Wildflower Seed

Andrew Swanson grows native wildflowers on his Nevada, Iowa farm. To reduce shatter losses, he often has to harvest when the plants are still immature and with a high moisture content. To dry the seeds fast, he installed a perforated metal false floor in a wagon and mounted an ordinary bin fan on back.

The fan installs in the wagon's endgate. Swanson built a metal housing that directs air flow under the false floor.

"I use this idea on several of my wagons. It works a lot better than laying the seeds on the ground and turning them in the sun, which I had been doing," says Swanson. "Sometimes I harvest just the seed heads, and other times the entire plant. Often there will be a lot of trash mixed in with the seeds. I use a pitchfork to turn the material over occasionally. Depending on the weather, it can take



To dry wildflower seeds fast, Andrew Swanson installed a perforated metal false floor in a wagon and mounted an ordinary bin fan in the endgate.

anywhere from one or two days to a week to dry the entire wagon. Then I run the seeds through a cleaner and bag it. Some of the fans I use are 3-phase, and some are single phase."

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Door at one end of pen has a cable and spring so hogs can get in, but not out.

Traps Built Tough To Catch Wild Hogs

Growing numbers of feral hogs in Southern states have boosted sales in the past few years of hog traps manufactured by All Seasons Feeders in San Antonio, Texas.

"It's an epidemic," says Chris Traugott, the company's general manager. Wild hogs have two litters a year, and there are more of them than game hunters can control. The hogs tear up land, destroy crops and kill game birds, eggs and even fawns.

All Seasons Feeders sells two traps, one that sets on the ground and one on wheels. The 200-lb., 4 by 8 by 3-ft. tall pens are framed with angle iron and covered with hog panels on the sides and cattle panels on top. A door on one end has a cable and spring so hogs can get in, but not out. Traugott has heard of traps catching 14 hogs at a time.

Hogs are attracted to the pens by bait. Plain corn works great in South Texas, Traugott says, though some people add other aromatic ingredients. The traps are best set out in the open; hogs seem to be more wary of them when they're hidden in the brush.

After they are caught, the hogs are killed. Though large hogs (they grow up to 600 lbs.) aren't suitable for food, hogs less than 150

lbs. are good eating, Traugott says. All Seasons Feeders also sells a game crank with an 800-lb. winch that attaches to the back bumper of a truck. It lifts the hog for field dressing, then swivels to set the hog in the pickup bed.

Because of the demand for wild boar in Europe, some hog trappers prefer the hog trap on wheels. Crank the pen down to the ground to trap the animals; crank the pen up and it's ready for the road. After the hogs are trapped, they can be delivered live to a processing plant and sold for export.

The company has sold the traps for about 20 years, Traugott says, adding that the design is very simple and hasn't really changed because it works well. "These traps are mainly for population control and easy pork sausage," Traugott adds with a laugh.

The basic hog trap sells for \$349 and the hog trap on wheels runs \$1,395. Dealerships are available.

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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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To build a powered dump cart Joe Roller stretched out a Bolens 1256 garden tractor, then mounted an old pickup box on it.

Powered Dump Cart Great For Yard Work

To handle jobs around his farm yard, Joe Roller mounted an old pickup box on a stretched out Bolens 1256 garden tractor. It didn't cost anything, and the Bolens made the job extra easy.

Roller says the Bolens has a tough 12 hp engine that had been sitting unused for four to five years. He replaced the battery, filled up the gas tank, and it started right up.

The beauty of the Bolens is its main frame, which is nothing more than a 2 1/4-in. pipe, and the hydrostatic transaxle. To stretch the frame out for the box, all he had to do was add pipe. Roller also wanted to put the seat ahead of the engine and the front axle, which meant he had to remount all three. Again that was easy, given they were simply bolted to the pipe in the first place.

"All I had to do was lengthen the rods that regulated forward and reverse speeds, as well as the throttle and choke cables," says Roller. "With the steering wheel now in front of the steering axle, I had to weld an ear on the axle to activate the tie rods and lengthen the rod

from the steering gear to the tie rods."

Roller mounted the pickup box on pivots over the transaxle. He has a latch that holds it in place at the front, which he can easily trip from the operator's seat. It is balanced so it will tip backwards and dump when loaded and the latch released.

Roller uses it for everything from cleaning up orchard prunings and hauling compost and leaves to getting the mail. The rig works just about perfect, but he has a few changes in mind anyway.

"The Bolens has a hydraulic cylinder that was used to raise and lower the original mower. I plan to hook that to the box," he explains. "Also, I have an extra set of wheels, and once I get tires for them, I will add them to give me duals in back. This will give me a wider footprint for less tracking on the lawn and also give me more stability."

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Simple Gearbox Drain Plug For Center Pivots

Draining the water from gearboxes and drives on center pivot irrigators can be a messy, time-consuming job. This new "easy-drain" gearbox drain plug makes the job as easy as turning a 1/2-in. wrench.

"It eliminates the mess of using a standard drain plug," says inventor Dan Kennicutt.

The "Easy-Drain" gear box plug threads into any type of gearbox or center drive to replace the existing plug. It's made from 6061 grade aluminum which is formulated to withstand weather extremes and chemicals applied in the field.

To open the plug, simply place a 1/2-in. wrench on a flat "stem" that screws into one side of the plug, and rotate it one full turn. The water will begin draining out of a slot on one side of the plug. When you see oil begin to drain from the drain hole, close the drain by rotating the stem back one full turn.

"There's no need to ever touch the drain plug by hand," says Kennicutt. "Once the



To drain water from gearbox all you have to do is turn a wrench.

water is all out and you thread the stem back in, everything closes up tight so oil can't leak out."

Models are available to fit all center pivot brands. Retail for \$20 per drain plug.

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Simple Yard Trailer

"I made a 2-wheeled trailer out of a 275-gal. fuel tank," says Charles Malecha, Pittsville, Wis.

"All materials were salvaged or recycled except for the ball hitch. The axle has torsion bar suspension, making for an easy ride on bumpy logging trails. We reinforced the edges of the tank opening with 3/4-in. strap metal and rods from an old dump rake."

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Charles Malecha turned a 275-gal. fuel tank into this 2-wheeled yard trailer.