



Bale unroller clamps to grapple fork and can be left in place permanently.

## Bale Unroller Mounts On Grapple Fork

"Our new grapple fork-mounted bale unroller lets you carry a bale out to the field and then quickly unroll it, all by using your loader," says Tim McManaman, Spalding, Neb.

McManaman is working with Mark Carraher, a local farmer who invented the patent pending bale unrolling device. It consists of a 5-ft. long, 6-in. dia. metal roller mounted on a 6-ft. length of channel iron that clamps onto the outside prongs of a grapple fork. A 1-in. dia. shaft inside the roller rotates on 1-in. mounted bearings. The channel iron attaches to the grapple fork with 1/2-in. U-bolts and rigid 1/2-in. mounting plates.

"It's convenient to use because it doesn't require any hydraulics, and because it's never in the way if you want to use your loader bucket to do other jobs," says McManaman. "You just drop the bale on the ground, then lower the grapple fork and drive forward to unroll the bale. It works



After dropping bale on the ground, you lower the grapple fork and drive forward to unroll bale.

better than 3-pt. mounted unrollers, which have to be disconnected if you want to pull anything else behind your tractor. The channel iron mounting bracket is wide enough to fit any grapple fork."

Sells for \$649 plus S&H.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Mark Carraher, 81523 503<sup>rd</sup> Ave., Spalding, Neb. 68665 (ph 308 750-8847; Mzman1@frontiernet.net).



Gas-powered scooter uses parts off a rear engine riding mower and has bicycle handlebars.

## Scooter Built From Riding Mower

"I'm quite proud of my gas-powered scooter. People are always asking where we bought it," says Gary Spallinger, Waterloo, Ind., about the scooter he built from an old riding mower.

The scooter measures 30 in. wide by 40 in. long and is 36 in. high at the handlebars. It's powered by a 3 1/2 hp Briggs & Stratton engine.

"I built it because we go to a lot of tractor shows, and my wife was having trouble walking long distances. I started looking for something for her to ride," says Spallinger. "We wanted something different from a golf cart or electric-powered chair. At a show in Ohio I met a man named Ed Cox (Sidney, Ohio ph 937 492-1856) who had a little gas-powered scooter. He makes the base frame and sells them for about \$150, and then people can make their own scooter from there. So I bought one from him."

Spallinger already had the scooter's 3 1/2

hp Briggs & Stratton engine, front tire and a seat. He found a rear engine riding mower with a differential, wheels and tires. He made a jackshaft to go between the engine and differential. The engine belt-drives a 9-tooth sprocket that chain-drives the rear axle. He mounted a pulley and foot pedals to use as a dead man clutch for safety.

"For steering I used the handlebars off a bicycle. There's also a bicycle basket on the handlebars," says Spallinger. "For brakes I mounted another pulley on the jackshaft and used a piece of V-belt fastened to the frames and up to a pedal to stop the scooter."

"We really enjoy riding it at shows. I can get the ground speed down to a fast walk. I added a hitch on back to pull small carts or trailers."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Gary Spallinger, 3933 CR 26, Waterloo, Ind. 46793 (ph 260 837-2702).

## Build Your Own Hydroponic Garden

"We started hydroponic gardening because of the porous soil in our area. It was like pouring fertilizer down a black hole," says Nathaniel Burson of Big Sandy, Texas.

Since he couldn't find a small-scale hydroponic system, he built and designed both horizontal and vertical models for his family's use. They worked so well he now sells instructional DVD's to teach others how to build their own.

The horizontal "hydroponic lettuce run" is 4 by 10-ft and costs about \$200 if you buy everything new, including seven 10-ft. pipes, a holding tank, pump and other parts.

"It's easy to put together, and you don't have to know much about gardening to do it," Burson says. "It's a good start-up for a small business." Besides building plans, the DVD includes information about where to purchase fertilizer and how to grow lettuce and herbs.

The plants grow in cubes with a water and fertilizer mix continuously flowing by. Burson notes that his 10-ft. long setup grows a "phenomenal amount" of lettuce and/or herbs. "It's more than several families can consume," Burson says. "In peak production, it is not at all uncommon to pick 10 to 20 pounds of lettuce off this bed - every other day."

He adds that there is a growing demand for gourmet lettuce at stores and restaurants. "There's no dirt, so the lettuce is perfectly clean," he adds.

Lettuce grows in temperatures between 40 and 110 degrees Fahrenheit. The hydroponic system can be built at any height for grower comfort.



Nathaniel Burson teaches others how to build both horizontal and vertical small-scale hydroponic systems.



In horizontal "hydroponic lettuce run", plants grow in cubes with a water and fertilizer mix continuously flowing by.

The biggest advantage may be the small amount of space it requires. Burson's vertical design only needs 1 by 4-sq. ft. of floor space. It is ideal for growing strawberries, but can also grow lettuce and herbs.

Cost for the vertical garden DVD is \$25; the horizontal garden DVD is \$30. Burson is also finishing a DVD of plans for a self-watering garden.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Easiestgarden.com, 10758 St. Hwy. 155 S., Big Sandy, Texas 75755 (www.easiestgarden.com; orders@easiestgarden.com).



Laray Vanderpool built this loader to fit his Deere 110 garden tractor. "It works great for moving dirt and other material," he says.

## He Put A Big Loader On A Little Tractor

Laray Vanderpool didn't like having to watch his wife push a wheelbarrow full of dirt. He figured there had to be a better way so he built a loader to fit their Deere garden tractor. Now she has a 3-ft. wide bucket to move dirt and other material.

"But the only things I had to buy new were some hydraulic hoses," says Vanderpool. "I had a 1967 Deere 110 garden tractor that I had rebuilt. A neighbor was junking out a plow, and I got two cylinders from it and a third with control valves from an old combine. The hydraulic pump is from a log splitter."

Vanderpool took advantage of the design of the 110. While patterning his loader after full-size units, he modified the design slightly. His loader slips into the slot at the front of the tractor where snowblowers and blades were meant to be mounted. At the tractor's midpoint, he mounted upright posts for the loader arms in the holes to mount a belly mower.

"I can pull two pins and back right out of the loader when I want to use the tractor for something else," he says. "I can lift the bucket about 4 ft. high and could raise it another foot by repositioning the cylinders."

The uprights are cut from 3/16-in., 2 by 2-in. steel tubing, while the loader arms are fabricated from thin wall 2 by 3-in. steel tubing with reinforcing plate over pressure points. The bucket is plate steel, but the frame pieces that run forward to the front of the tractor are only 3/4-in. by 1 1/2-in.

"I tried to use the lightest stuff I could to keep the weight down," says Vanderpool. "As it is, the tractor and loader weigh 500 lbs."

To dress up his "loader" tractor, Vanderpool added duals on back. For the proper dual affect, he rolled a piece of steel and stuck it between each pair to space them out.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Laray Vanderpool, 1250 Southern Rd., Montgomery, Mich. 49255 (ph 517 296-4540).