



Silage Roller's narrow wheels are custom made for each customer's operation.



Wheel rims sink up to 6 in. and bring loose material up, forcing air out of silage.

Silage Roller "Massages" Air Out Of Bunker Silo

"The narrow wheels on our impact roller massage air out of silage," says John Spanjer, designer and manufacturer of the Spanjer Impact Silage Roller. "The wheels give it a maximum amount of down pressure per square inch."

The wheels are spaced apart 12 in. on center with 2 or 3-in. rims. "In addition to packing, the wheels have a bit of a raking action,"

Spanjer adds. "The rims sink up to 6 in. and bring loose material back up, which levels the pile. That results in less air under the tarp and a more stable driving surface."

The Silage Roller packs down hard, with variable weight according to your tractor and type of crop. Rollers are custom-made for each customer's operation and can have anywhere from 7 to 16 wheels. Driving at 3 to 5

mph, and moving over 3 to 4 in. at a time, packers can keep up with big self-propelled harvesting equipment.

"The bigger the operation the more farmers appreciate the impact roller," Spanjer says. "We were on an operation in New York where they had 600 hp equipment cutting the silage and five dump trucks, and the packer was keeping up with that."

The Spanjer Impact Silage Roller starts at \$6,000.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Spanjer Impact Silage Roller, 50-715 Doon Village Road, Kitchener, Ontario, Canada N2P 2A2 (ph 519 897-1891; www.spanjermachines.com).

Mower Saves Back Picking Asparagus

After one season of picking an acre of new asparagus by hand, Chuck Dean says he realized he was "too old for that, so I got to brainstorming." Using an old mower and some miscellaneous parts, the Reed City, Mich., man can now pick up to 60 lbs. of asparagus in 30 to 45 minutes - all without an aching back.

A rear engine 5 hp Toro riding mower is the heart of Dean's picker. He cut the mower frame in half, keeping the rear half with the engine, transmission, differential and rear axle. He saved the front wheels and tires and discarded the mower deck and other parts.

Dean extended the mower frame with 1 by

2-in. tubing to make a 4-ft. wide wheelbase to straddle his 4-ft. wide asparagus rows. He made a coupler to add to the axles, added round stock and mounted another bearing outside the frame to get the right width. The front is about 1 ft. off the ground to easily go over asparagus; Dean sits in the seat and reaches ahead to pick asparagus when it's about 7 in. tall. He puts the asparagus in trays on expanded metal racks on both sides, and after every row and a half, he empties the trays into a storage box on the back that holds up to 45 lbs. - an average day's picking.

The 8-ft. length accommodates the engine, seat and allows plenty of room to comfort-

ably operate the foot pedal steering system.

"I put on a connecting rod so the pedals oppose each other when steering," Dean says. "The transmission had a 5 1/2-in. pulley to start. I ended up with a 10-in. pulley to slow the speed. It can now travel slower than a walk."

"It has worked pretty close to what I wanted, although I've made some improvements here and there," Dean says. "My brother and I ended up with about 40 hours each with all the steel cutting, welding, drilling and lathe work that was done." He estimates he only spent about \$20 for steel thanks to friends who donated parts.



Pickerstraddles 4-ft. wide asparagus rows. Driver picks asparagus and puts it in expanded metal trays on both sides of rig.

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Home-Built Aluminum Windmill Tower

Instead of spending thousands of dollars to buy a windmill tower, Curtis Flynn spent just \$800 to build a tower to support his wind turbine. His experience as an engineer helped, but he actually just based his design on older windmills he's seen in Michigan.

Flynn bought 25-ft. lengths of "angle aluminum" for the main tower structure. Though aluminum costs more than steel, Flynn says he doesn't have to paint it and it's lighter to lift into place using cables and levers.

The tower has a 6 by 6-ft. base with the legs bolted in steel channels sunk in concrete footings.

"My biggest challenge was to make sure it was strong enough to support the 150-lb. head and the torque of the wind," Flynn says. He braced the lattice tower with 3/4 by 1/8-in. strap aluminum for X-bracing and used 5/16-in. stainless steel bolts. In addition to the turbine head, the tower supports a 5-in. dia. steel pipe, which provides enough clearance for the 12-ft. dia. turbine blades.

Flynn says he has been pleased with his Skystream 3.7 turbine, which produces 1,500 to 3,000 watts. He advises that anyone thinking about putting up a turbine contact the local zoning board first about regulations. He kept his tower under 40 ft., because there's more state permit paperwork and cost to put up taller structures.

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Curtis Flynn didn't want to spend the money to buy a windmill tower, so he spent just \$800 to build his own.



Ken Booth used the topper off a small Dodge pickup as a roof for a small shed.

Pickup Topper Makes Low-Cost Shed Roof

Kenneth Booth, Jr., Wingdale, N.Y., made a low-cost shed for his garden tractor using the topper off an old pickup as the roof. It sits atop a structure made from 2 by 4's and plywood.

The shed measures 7 ft. long, 5 ft. 2 in. wide, and 6 ft. high and has a pair of swing-out doors at one end. Booth keeps his Gravely 7 1/2 hp walk-behind tractor inside the shed.

"I built it a few years ago when I got rid of

my small Dodge Ram pickup but kept the topper," says Booth. "The topper off a big full-size pickup might work even better because you could make a bigger shed."

The topper is screwed down onto the walls at four places. It swings down over the two doors to hold them in place.

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