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Belly-Mounted Mower Converted To Front-Mount

"It operates with little or no vibration and cuts the grass before the wheels can mash it down," says Robert Mork, Sevierville, Tenn., who along with his son Rob converted a 1977 Ariens S-16 garden tractor equipped with a belly-mounted mower to a front-mount model.

The tractor was originally equipped with a gearbox-driven 42-in. deck, which Mork widened to 48 in. and also converted to belt-drive. The deck is offset so Mork can more safely mow steep banks.

"I bought the tractor equipped with a

blown 16 hp single cylinder Kohler," says Mork. "Ariens tractors are heavy and well-built, but they are expensive. My model sold for \$3,500 in 1977, back when \$3,500 was a lot of money."

The first thing Mork did was modify and reinforce the tractor's frame and install a Briggs twin horizontal 18 hp engine. He ran the tractor that way for a couple years. However, the gearbox kept giving him problems and the driveshaft vibrated a lot due to a bad bearing inside the gearbox. So he tore everything apart, stretched the deck to 48 in.,

and machined new parts to convert the deck to belt-drive.

He mounted the deck out front on an X-shaped metal bracket that bolts onto the tractor frame. The tractor's front-mounted pto is used to belt-drive the mower deck. The pto turned in the wrong direction so he used an idler pulley to reverse the belt. The deck can be rotated upward 90 degrees for easy maintenance.

The tractor's original steering system had a lot of slop, making it hard to steer, and it also tended to bind. To solve the prob-

lem Mork tore out the steering system and adapted the rack and pinion steering system out of an EZ-GO golf cart. "Now the tractor steers like a Cadillac," he says.

To improve the Briggs and Stratton's fuel efficiency, he ground a groove into the heads (FARM SHOW's Vol. 32, No. 1). It resulted in a slight improvement in power and fuel savings.

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Flies are attracted by black fabric. When they hit a sheet of clear plexiglass mounted below the fabric, they drop into soapy buckets of water and drown.

"No Chemical" Fly Trap Costs Nothing To Run

A pair of 5-gal. buckets, along with some plexiglass and landscape fabric, can be used to make a simple horse fly trap that will greatly reduce your horse fly population, says Derald Stephens, Copan, Okla.

"It's cheap to set up and costs nothing to operate," says Stephens, who has two of the traps set up around his horse paddock. "I came up with the idea because I wasn't happy with commercial fly traps on the market."

The buckets are filled with dish soap water and set on the ground between a pair of T-posts. A 24-in. wide, 18-in. high section of clear plexiglass is attached to the posts over the buckets, with some landscape fabric above the plexiglass to simulate an animal carcass. The dark fabric above the plexiglass attracts the horse flies and as they fly toward what they think is a meal, they hit the plexiglass and fall into the buckets and drown.

"I've used this idea for two years and it really works," says Stephens. "I keep the traps

outside the paddock so the horses won't get into them. Some of the horse flies intentionally land on the water to get a drink, but because of the soapy mix they can't fly off and eventually drown. I use a net to scoop the dead flies out when they get too thick.

"I bought the plexiglass at Lowes for about \$15. Black plastic would probably work as well as landscape fabric."

To attach the plexiglass, Stephens drilled holes through the plexiglass and the T-posts, then wired it in place. "I had to modify a bit to use on the plexiglass because a regular drill bit would break it," he says. "I just ground down a regular drill bit so the cutting edges aren't so aggressive, which results in more of a scraping action. I used metal paper clips to attach the landscape fabric to the posts."

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Cradles on each trailer attach to a single beam that dumps all the bales at once.

Bale Train Transports 10 Big Bales At A Time

Brian Haubrich built a three-car train of bale carriers that carries 10 bales total. He can attach or detach trailing cars as needed.

Haubrich built his trailers, a 4-bale and two 3-bale units, largely from worn-out equipment on the farm. Some of it was what sparked him to build them in the first place.

"I throw something in the junk pile, and then every time I walk past, I wonder what I can use it for," says Haubrich. "I had taken the header off a 26-ft. pull-type swather and made a draper head from it. I realized the back beam was long enough for 4 bales."

One of the 3-bale trailers was based on the hitch of the swather and the second is built on the wing beam from a large harrow. Various pieces of steel tubing, flat steel and

other parts filled in the rest of the trailers. Bale cradles were fashioned out of 3 by 2-in. tubing. Cylinders came from the harrow and an air seeder. One exception to the use of recycled parts was the wheels.

"I bought the heaviest spindles I could find. They are rated at 6,000 lbs. each," says Haubrich. "The spindles are mounted in heavy pipe that is welded into 1/4-in., 3 by 2 tubing. They are as solid and strong as any could be."

To tip all the bales from a trailer at one time, the cradles are attached to a beam that is lifted hydraulically.

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Brian Haubrich built this three-car train of bale carriers largely from worn-out equipment he already owned.