

# Slip-In Loader Bucket Hitch

By Mark Newhall, Editor

This spring I decided to plant a garden on FARM SHOW's "back forty". I don't have a rototiller so I called a local landscaper to break the sod with a tractor-mounted unit.

Ken Dreher arrived towing a Deere tractor on a flatbed trailer behind a pickup. He had a big tiller on back of the tractor, which was also fitted with a front-end loader. He also had compost in the back of the pickup that he was going to till into the ground.

After a while I looked out my office window and noticed Ken slipping something into the tractor's loader bucket. Next thing I knew he was towing the flatbed around with a ball hitch on the bucket. I went out to investigate.

"I needed a way to quickly add a hitch to my loader bucket," says Dreher.

He had seen other ways of adding a ball hitch to a loader bucket but he didn't want to modify the bucket and he didn't want to

have to bolt or unbolt anything. So, he came up with a slip-in hitch that he can insert in seconds and can remove simply by tipping the bucket toward the ground.

"It holds a trailer as solidly as any bolted-on hitch," says Dreher, who is a retired engineer. He made the slip-in hitch from angle iron and a receiver hitch. The only modification to the bucket is a small bar tach-welded to the top of the inside of the bucket where it's not visible. If he ever sells the tractor he can easily remove the bar.

By the way, with the great growing weather we've had this spring, and good compost that Ken tilled into the ground, my garden's growing great.

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Loader bucket-mounted ball hitch allows Ken Dreher to tow a flatbed trailer around with his tractor.



Slip-in hitch requires no modification to bucket. It can be removed simply by tipping bucket toward the ground.



# Turning Rain Water Into Money

Making a rainwater collection system from free barrels and tanks has saved thousands of gallons of water each year. Amy Tyler Childs says the system saved her a lot of money when she had to drill a new well on her place.

"Putting in a deep well is very expensive, plus my entire house and farm are powered with solar energy," explains Childs. "Solar power is always an issue for deep well pumps. By collecting and using rainwater, I could get by with a shallow well and a solar powered pump."

While the shallow well would provide sufficient water for the house, Childs needed more for her goats, poultry and gardens. Rainwater was the answer. After considering underground tanks, she opted for multiple 55-gal. barrels and two poly tanks. The barrels were free from a local pickle processor.

Most were placed around the house and chicken coop. "They provide low pressure water," says Childs. "Even if you have to pay for them, you can buy a lot of barrels for the price of an extra, or deeper, well."

A 500-gal. tank and a 350-gal. tank collect rainwater from the barn roof. The larger tank is the main source for her goats, and because of its size, provides higher pressure water. The smaller one acts as backup. Some barn

roof water is also collected in smaller barrels.

"I bought the 500-gal. tank at a farm supply store, but I got the 350-gal. tank free," says Childs. "I attended a couple of workshops and learned about fittings and overflows. It took me about a year to get everything working right. Finding and attaching fittings was the biggest challenge."

Most of the water goes for her 8-doe milking goat herd with kids. The rest is used for chickens and the garden. She uses hoses and gravity feed to deliver the water as needed. Currently she doesn't have the water system designed for potable water, though she is confident she could.

Childs says she has had no problems with her tanks, even when the temperature dips below freezing. On cold nights, she places ashes from her wood boiler beneath the fittings, and residual heat keeps them from freezing.

"I could collect even more water, but for my usage, I have enough," says Childs. "With regular rainfall, we have more water than time and energy to use it."

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Amy Childs's rainwater collection system includes 55-gal. tanks (left) and a 500-gal. tank that collects rainwater from her barn's roof.



A 350-gal. tank is also used to collect rainwater from barn roof and serves as a backup.

# Rolling Chute Makes Cow Care A Snap

Rolling a cow over to fix a displaced abomasum, or doing other work that requires restraint – including hoof trimming – is easy with this new rolling chute that'll turn a cow upside down.

Former dairy herdsman, Brandon Treadway says his Roll & TAC 360 makes rolling a cow, or just putting her on her side, easy and safe for both man and cow. While developed specifically to deal with displaced abomasums, the device comes in handy anytime a cow needs to be worked on.

"Dairymen that see it love the idea of it," says Treadway. "With the Roll & TAC 360, you don't need to medicate the cow or anything to work on her. You also don't need four or five men to roll her if she has a displaced abomasum. Just run her in, strap her down, and roll her on her side or all the way over."

The portable padded chute is mounted on two large rims. An interwoven sling holds the cow when she is rotated to the side, while a back bracket supports her as she turns over. Both the sling and the back bracket can be adjusted to fit cows of various sizes.

The front gate locks in place as the cow walks into it. The rear gate locks by simply pushing it against the cow. A simple 110V motor lifts the sling so her feet can be secured with a noose and hook system.

Treadway says the Roll & TAC 360 is equally handy for vaccinations, artificial insemination, or operations of any sort where the animal needs to be restrained.

All the controls are on one side of the 7-ft. long, 8-ft., 10-in. high and 7-ft. wide chute. The frame has two pockets at each end so a skid steer can pick the 1,840 lb. unit up and move it as needed.

Bayland Buildings is marketing the Roll & TAC 360 for \$14,995.

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Rolling chute can turn a cow upside down, making cow care easy.