

Double-Duty Combine Fitted With Mower Head

James and Jordan Balmer's family combine does double duty as a mower tractor. When their custom haying business needed a mower upgrade, they put their combine to work rather than buy a bigger tractor. Switching from mowing hay to harvesting crops takes about 8 hours, but it's time well spent, says James Balmer.

"It works better than a tractor because the wheelbase is just right, plus you can see what you're doing better than with a tractor," he says. "We've had other custom harvesters check it out. Some of our customers were impressed, and others wondered what we were doing."

The new disc mower was a front-mount, 30-ft. Pottinger that they chose for size and speed. All they needed was a pto drive and 3-pt. hitch instead of the usual header mounting arms.

"We took a gearbox off a pull-type Deere chopper and mounted it on the right hand side

of the combine," explains James. "We ran a belt from the pulley that ran the rotor on the header to a pulley on the gearbox and a shaft from the gearbox to the mower."

In order to mount the mower, the Balmers had to remove the front portion of the feederhouse or throat section that moves up and down with the header. A top link arm was mounted to this lift point. Two lower link arms were mounted to the combine axle.

Once the mower was in place, the combine required a little fine-tuning, says James. "We tuned the motor up for a few more horsepower. We also put a smaller pulley on the gearbox to reduce the pto speed to the mower."

With few purchased parts other than the mower, the Balmers' modification paid off well. They estimate saving \$120,000 on the new tractor that they otherwise would have purchased. The dual-purpose combine hasn't slowed them down either.



Photo by Krista M. Sheehan, Dairy Star

When their custom haying business needed a mower upgrade, James Balmer put his Gleaner combine to work, mounting a 30-ft. Pottinger disc mower on front.

"The speed is pretty good," says James. "We've mowed at 13 to 15 mph a couple of times."

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Mix 'N Feed Ideal For Smaller Cow Herds

The Mix 'N Feed from D & D Machine is designed to be a lower-cost option for supplementing cow herds. It loads, mixes and delivers up to 42 bu. of whole grain and concentrate pellets in a single trip.

"Why tie up \$30,000 or more in a grinder mixer and a tractor to feed a few hundred head of cattle?" says Dan Rowe, D & D Machine. "You can use the Mix 'N Feed on a truck with a hydra bed or put it on a trailer and tow it behind a tractor. All you need is a two spool valve to run the discharge auger."

Rowe built the first Mix 'N Feed for an area rancher who wanted to supplement the hay he fed his cows. He wanted something portable that he could move quickly from one bunch of cows to another with a hydra bed and then unload when not in use.

After trying several designs, Rowe settled on his current style. A center axial screw provides a complete mix in the time it takes to fill the tank. The hydraulic-powered system requires only 8 gpm at 1,500 psi. The 8-in. discharge auger makes it easy to adjust rations on the go. It's equipped with a gate for variable discharge settings or can be equipped with a separate spool for remote flow control.

Rowe custom-builds units for ranchers, making them larger or adding a grinding unit if desired. While prices vary with the cost of raw materials, he currently has one on hand for \$7,800.

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Mix 'N Feed loads, mixes and delivers up to 42 bu. of whole grain and concentrate pellets in a single trip. It can be mounted on a truck or trailer.



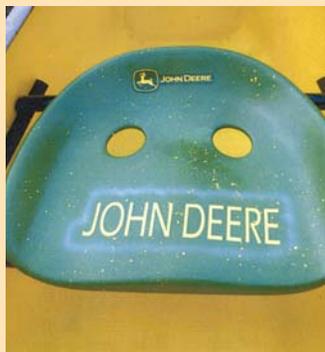
Deere-colored canoe is painted green on the outside and yellow on the inside. A sign on both sides of canoe says "Nothing Rows Like A Deere".

"Nothing Rows Like A Deere"

Sometimes it seems you can find just about any product for sale in Deere green and yellow, but we had never seen a Deere-colored canoe until Jim Maringer of Springville, N.Y., sent us these photos. He dressed up an 18-ft. canoe for a local farmer.

The fiberglass canoe is painted green on the outside and yellow on the inside. A sign on both sides of the canoe says "Nothing Rows Like A Deere". A yellow paddle runs through the sign, with a jumping deer behind it. Inside are a couple of green and yellow fiberglass seats. The canoe's three aluminum slats, which extend across the canoe, are covered with custom-made green pads.

"I took on the project because I have considerable experience in building and repairing boats, as well as being a custom sign painter and automotive customizer," says Maringer. "The farmer I worked for is a big collector of anything Deere. He had a 1972 Woodstream canoe that was in very poor shape. It turned out better than I expected. The farmer keeps the canoe on his lawn so it gets a lot of attention. In fact, I've had many requests to customize canoes for other tractor brands including Farmall and Minneapolis Moline. I can customize to any level and



Canoe has green and yellow fiberglass seats with Deere logos.

will be happy to consult with anyone."

Maringer says his prices start at \$550 and depend on the size of the canoe and amount of detail.

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William Hettler's Cub Cadet garden tractor has no hydraulics, so he built this 3-pt. "dolly" for it. Power is provided by a self-contained, 12-volt hydraulic power pack.

3-Pt. "Dolly Hitch" For Garden Tractor

William Hettler built a hydraulic-operated 3-pt. dolly for his 1982 Cub Cadet garden tractor, which has no hydraulics.

The dolly consists of a 2-wheel axle assembly fitted with a Cat. I 3-pt. hitch that mounts at the rear. Power is provided by a self-contained 12-volt hydraulic power pack, consisting of a starter motor and pump, which mounts on top. The pump is wired to the tractor's battery. A single-action 1 1/2-in. dia. hydraulic cylinder raises and lowers the hitch.

The cylinder is connected to one end of a horizontal arm that pivots at the middle. The other end of the rod supports a pair of threaded rods that are used to adjust the 3-pt.'s lower lift arms.

"I use it with a home-built moldboard plow, disk, and driveway leveler. It lets me raise and lower the implements even though my tractor has no hydraulics," says Hettler. "It really works good to level my driveway with my home-built leveler because it gives me more control and lets me lift for transport."

Hettler already had the power pack and the single action hydraulic cylinder so it didn't cost much to build. "I installed oversize wheel bearings in the 12-in. wheels so I could use a larger axle that supports more weight," he notes.

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