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New Way To Add Weight To Small Tractors, UTV's

Mike Grubb, Georgetown, Ind., sells kits that let you mount inexpensive "pancake" weights on garden tractors, small utility tractors and UTV's.

"The weights give you more traction and better stability on hillsides. They also let

you move in reverse with less spinning and damage to your yard," says Grubb.

A wide variety of adapter kits are available, allowing you to mount weights on a tractor's drive wheels or on the front, back or sides of the tractor. The adapter he designed to mount weights on wheels includes a pair of cross member brackets made from 1/4-in. thick steel, and a threaded steel rod that fits through existing 1-in. holes at the center of each weight. You bolt the cross members to 4 existing holes in the wheel, and then add the weights onto the rod in increments.

"We supply only the adapters – you supply the weights," says Grubb. "You can find pancake weights cheap or even free at yard sales, or buy them cheap at Walmart and other discount stores."

Adding pancake weights to your rear wheels has several benefits over conventional weights, says Grubb. "Standard wheel weights are heavy, typically weighing 50 lbs. apiece, which makes them harder to handle.

They're also bulky and expensive to ship. In fact, shipping can easily double the final cost."

Any garden vehicle or implement equipped with standard 12-in. wheels can benefit from added weight, says Grubb. "That includes commercial mowers, zero turn riding mowers, front-mounted mowers and even utility vehicles such as Mules and Gators."

To install the system on tractor wheels, you set the cross members in place at right angles to each other, line them up with 4 existing holes in the wheels and bolt them on. Insert the threaded end of the steel rod into the center hole and attach from the back side of the wheel using a lock washer and nut. Then slide the weights over the rod until an inch or more of the rod is exposed. To secure the weights, fasten a locking ring to the end of the rod and tighten.

He has also built an adapter for mounting pancake weights on the lower lift arms

of a tractor's 3-pt. hitch; a single adapter that attaches to the tractor's drawbar; dual adapters to mount pancake weights on a tractor's rear frame plate or on front; and a frame side rail mount for counterbalancing the weight of side delivery implements such as a sicklebar mower or one-armed front-end loader.

He says he's still adding new kinds of adapters as people request them.

"I've heard of people who use my adapters to install pancake weights on ground-driven equipment for extra traction, and on tillage equipment for extra weight. One farmer even added pancake weights to one side of his gravity flow wagons as a counterbalance."

Prices range from \$39 to \$89, depending on the application. Custom fit solutions are typically around \$100.

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Farm Pond "Riviera" Makes Summertime Fun

Looking at the ocean blue water and the white beach, it's hard to believe that Jerry Leussink's bit of paradise is located smack dab in the middle of his Alberta farm.

The "beach" is actually a heavy-duty polypropylene white liner, commonly used to line ponds. It was carefully stretched up the sides of the pond and secured with large boulders and rocks around the perimeter of the 4-ft. beach.

"The liner helps prevent the growth of weeds, and I can scrub it to keep it clean and comfortable for swimming," Leussink says.

The "ocean" is a 110 by 90-ft. pond Leussink dug with a backhoe. It slopes gradually to about 14 ft. deep at the deepest end. Leussink regularly cleans the pool and adds chlorine and chemicals used in swimming pools as well as True Blue pond dye that gives the water its color and helps prevent sunlight from penetrating and growing algae.

"The biggest problem is algae," Leussink says. "Anything that blows in there creates food for the algae. That's why I keep it clean."

He uses a solar aerator and spends 15 to 20 hrs. a month clearing and sucking up dirt, pine needles and sediment with a vacuum he made with 60 ft. of hose, pvc pipe and a 2-in. pump. Water removed with the sediment is emptied out onto the surrounding grass.

After a couple of years use, Leussink pumped the pond dry last spring to give it a thorough cleaning. It took more than a month to refill it with his well pump – an estimated 350,000 gallons.

Leussink and his family spend a lot of time in their private pool during the summer. With deck chairs, inflatable toys, a sand box, camping sites, horseshoe pit and other games,



During the summer Jerry Leussink and his family spend a lot of time in their private swimming pool - a 110 by 90-ft. pond that he dug with a backhoe.

they have a relaxing 2-acre recreation area. It's the favored location for family reunions, and Leussink and his wife, Marina, swim and relax there often.

He estimates it cost about \$18,000 to set up. If he were to build it again, he would make some changes.

"I would build it smaller and less deep because it would be easier to maintain. It doesn't have to be quite as big as it is," Leussink says. He also had some runoff with rains last spring, which might have been avoided if the pond was on slightly higher ground.

One thing he'd like different is something he can't change – the weather.

"We probably only get about three months where the pond is comfortable enough to swim in – from June through August," he notes.

He plans to build a small building with



Pond's "beach" is a heavy duty polypropylene white liner that's secured with large boulders and rocks.

a wood-heated hot tub and changing room suitable for winter ice skating parties.

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