He Built His Own F-800 Dually Pickup

Doug Fry has done the tough part of chopping his 1987 F-800 Ford and turning it into a 210 hp dually pickup with a crew cab. All he has left is fixing up the inside, doing a little bodywork and giving it a fresh coat of paint. What he doesn't plan to do is fill the twin 115-gal. fuel tanks salvaged from a Western Star truck.

"Filling it up would cost me about $1,000," notes Fry. "I put the tanks on it not for the capacity, but mostly for the steps. They fit well for getting in and out of the front and back of the crew cab."

It was the crew cab that got Fry thinking about chopping the F800 in the first place. He hadn't seen many with them and thought it would look even better as a pickup.

"I took out about 6 ft. of frame and driveshaft, moved the rear end forward and then cut off some more of the rear frame," says Fry. "I found a 1997 Ford pickup bed that matched the body length of the now shorter truck. To get clearance for the rear duals, I used square tubing to raise the bed up 5 1/2 in."

Fry put 10-hole Budd wheels with 11 22.5 tires on them. The 7.8L Ford diesel and the Allison 4-speed automatic were left unchanged, as were the air brakes.

"You don't see many pickups with air brakes," says Fry.

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Doug Fry converted his 1987 Ford F-800 into this 210 hp dually pickup equipped with a crew cab. It's fitted with twin 115-gal. fuel tanks.

Pull-Type Fertilizer Spreader Converted To Front-Mount

Jerry Bruecker got tired of having to look back all the time while spreading fertilizer with his pull-type spreader. So he removed the wheels, tongue and gearbox from the spreader and mounted it on front of his garden tractor.

"Now I can see in front of me exactly what's going on and how much fertilizer is left in the hopper. I can also maneuver better and back up if necessary," says Bruecker.

He bolted the impeller to a 10-in., rubber-tired wheel. The wheel is friction-driven by a smaller 2.25-in. wheel that's bolted onto a 12-volt radiator fan motor off a car. The motor is operated by the tractor's battery and controlled by a simple on-off switch that he mounted on the tractor's dash.

A homemade bracket made from 5/8-in. thick plywood and strap metal supports the entire unit. To attach the spreader to the tractor, Bruecker added a pair of 3/4-in. dia. pipes that slip over two 5/8-in. dia. steel rods that mount vertically behind the tractor's front bumper.

Jerry Bruecker removed the wheels, tongue and gearbox from a pull-type spreader and mounted it on front of his garden tractor.

"When I'm finished spreading fertilizer I simply unplug the motor and lift the unit off the tractor," says Bruecker.

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Wheeled Chicken Coop Kit

This new chicken coop comes in an easy-to-assemble kit. It's lightweight, assembles without tools, and can be easily moved, says inventor Roy Nilson, Petersham, Mass.

The Happy Chicken Tractor measures 5 by 6 ft. and has a frame made of aluminum sq. tubing. The coop ships in a box and weighs 35 lbs. when assembled. At the end of the season, you can easily take it apart and store it back in the box.

The unit rides on 2 wheels and is covered with poly-coated chicken wire (it can also be ordered "frame only" so you can attach your own choice of netting or wire panels). It'll hold about 10 chickens, but you can double the capacity by attaching 2 units together to provide a 5 by 12-ft. enclosure.

The unit comes with a perch, drinker, shade/rain cover, and wood-framed door (the door and drinker are also sold separately). If you want you can make your own door by cutting a straight slit in one of the end netting panels and securing it with a piece of wire or a dowel woven through the two sides. You can also add a wood or metal roof.

Happy Chicken Tractor measures 5 by 6 ft. and comes in an easy-to-assemble kit.

Nilson says he can supply feeders, nesting boxes and watering elements. "But you can get the same items easily from local sources and save a bit on price, and on shipping and handling," he notes.

Sells for $429.95 plus $30 to $50 S&H.

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Cab Doors Made With "See-Through" Plastic Strips

Robert Borden built a cab for his 1984 Case 224 garden tractor equipped with a front-mounted snowblower. But instead of building doors, he installed overlapping clear plastic strips on both sides of the cab. They're the kind commonly used on walk-in freezers, loading docks, and other drafty places where visibility is necessary. Forklifts drive right through them.

"Installing the strips was an easier job than building doors and saved a lot of time. Also, the clear plastic strips provide me with a much better view because I can see all the way down to the ground on both sides of the tractor," says Borden.

To build the cab he borrowed the fiberglass top off an old Simplicity cab and installed a plexiglass windshield, mounting canvas under it and down both sides of the hood. The canvas is fitted with rivets and snaps onto a pipe frame. He also installed a plexiglass window on back.

He bought the plastic strips used from a refrigeration supply store. The strips came with pre-punched holes at one end and were 8 in. wide and 8 ft. long when Borden bought them. He cut each strip to length and overlapped the strips 4 in. He used 1/4-in. bolts to attach the strips to a metal strap -- purchased ready-made from the manufacturer -- that's bolted to both sides of the cab roof.

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Power Wagon Easy To Build

Building a self-propelled cart was easy and cheap, says Ron Forster. With less than $25 in parts and a couple of old lawn mowers, he has a go-anywhere load hauler.

"I put a 3 by 3-ft. box with 6-in. sides on it, and I've never been able to fill it enough that it couldn't go," says Forster.

Forster gives a lot of credit to the 5-speed transmission. It was on an old Craftsman riding lawn mower with a blown engine. The 3 hp Briggs and Stratton motor he used for a replacement came off an old push mower.

Forster literally picked the Craftsman up on the side of the road and salvaged the frame, engine platform, rear end, wheels and transmission. The only change he made was to reverse the transmission before mounting the Briggs and Stratton in place.

The dump box bed was fabricated out of bed frames with the box angled forward and latched in place. To dump, all he has to do is pull a release cord attached to the latch.

He mounted the new rear end of the Craftsman on a swivel wheel. He steers it with the handlebars from the push mower.

"I used the shift and the tensioner off the old Craftsman," says Forster. "I made a lever to disengage the power and mounted the shift lever on the side. All I had to buy was the drive belt, pulley and rear wheel."

He even has a place for weights. After spinning out on a wet hillside, Forster discovered he could make it with an 80-lb. bag of cement placed in an open space over the transmission. He even built a small surrey to stand on out of a piece of plywood, a couple of pieces of bed frame and two walk behind, lawn mower wheels.

"It's amazing how much power that little 3 hp has," says Forster. "With it and the 5-speed, anytime I put it above third gear, I have to run to keep up. The throttle is on the lawn mower handle, but I don't usually run faster than idle."

Ron Forster's home-built self-propelled cart is powered by a 3 hp engine and 5-speed transmission. The operator stands on a 2-wheeled plywood platform.

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