

Veggie Washer Cleans 800 Lbs./Hr.

Cleaning carrots and other root crops is a dirty job, but Keith Wyndlow gets the job done easily. He and his daughter have run as much as 800 lbs. of carrots an hour through his homemade veggie washer.

"It also works great with potatoes, turnips, or any kind of root crop," says Wyndlow. "Produce feeds through the rotating drum and water sprays them where they meet the drum surface as they roll. The design makes efficient use of the water."

Effective water use lets Wyndlow get by with low-pressure well water delivered by garden hose. He sets up the washer next to the garden so wash water and dirt are recycled back into the garden beds rather than run down a drain.

Wyndlow's carrot cleaner is also energy efficient. Belt-driven rollers turn the cleaner with power from a 3/4 hp electric motor. A gearbox with appropriately-sized pulley wheels reduces the motor's 1,800 rpm's down to 10 rpm's.

The washer stands about 10 ft. long and about 5 ft. high. The bulk of the length is

the washing and draining drum. It sits in a cradle of rollers. Two rollers drive it, while two sets of rollers at either end guide it. The cradle stands on 40-in. legs.

The washer is carpet-lined to cushion the tumbling of the drum, which is a steel pipe about the size of a 45-gal. barrel. A steel frame lined with recycled belting extends out from the drum. Drain holes in the belting allow dirt and water to drain off. Simple nylon ties hold the belting in place. Water sprays the carrots the length of the washer drum.

"The protective guards over the moving parts were the toughest part to devise," says Wyndlow. "I wanted to keep the weight down, yet make the machine childproof."

Wyndlow made one unit that he later sold to a neighboring vegetable producer. He and his family use the second one he made. At nearly 80, bad knees prevent him from doing the welding necessary to make more washers.

"I would like to license my design for a nominal amount to someone to make," he



Belt-driven rollers turn the cleaner, with power supplied by a 3/4 hp electric motor.

says. "I would provide all my plans and exact specifications."

Wyndlow says the entire unit weighs about 800 lbs. He estimates it could be made and sold for around \$4,000. He says that is about 80 percent the cost of a similar sized commercial unit he had considered buying.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Keith Wyndlow, 13110 Doole Rd., Ladysmith, B.C., Canada V9G 1G6 (ph 250 245-4091; keith_kiyi@hotmail.com).

This Forage Corn "Tillers" Like Wheat

Plant a seed of MasterGraze, and as it grows it'll look like you planted half a dozen. The unique forage corn from Masters Choice Hybrids is the only known brown mid-rib variety (BMR) that tillers like wheat. It produces 75 percent of the bulk of a conventional corn silage variety, but in only 60 days, which leaves plenty of time for multi-cropping. Like all BMR varieties, it's low in lignin and high in digestibility.

"Our customers use it for haylage, baleage and grazing," says Kristen Cameron, Masters Choice Hybrids. "It can produce up to 7 tons per acre with no special tillage. Even average soils will produce five tons an acre."

MasterGraze can be planted from early spring until late fall, needing only 60 days of heat and soil temperatures above 55°. First introduced in Illinois, it's now grown from Florida to North Dakota and west to California.

While balanced soil fertility is important, the forage corn requires only 1/2 to 2/3 the nutrients of a grain corn crop, including only 1 to 1 1/2 units of nitrogen per growing day before harvest. Population levels can vary from 25,000 to 40,000 seeds per acre.

The forage corn grows slowly for the first month and then rapidly the second. The company advises grazing when the corn nears tassel stage, with the crop providing high quality grazing for 4 to 5 weeks. If planted in early May, MastersGraze is ready



One seed produced this multi-stalk plant. "Tillering" forage corn produces 75 percent as much bulk as a conventional corn silage variety, but does so in only 60 days.

for grazing in July/August. This "August slump" is when milk production and growth of pastured animals normally slows as grass production slows.

If harvested for haylage or baleage, dry matter is at its greatest as the first stalk in the plant mass begins to tassel. Waiting until after tassel stage increases the chance of lodging and reduces quality.

If harvested above the lowest growth point, tillers will regrow once; however, yield will be only 25 to 35 percent of the first crop. Interseeding a second forage crop in the MastersGraze stubble is suggested.

Seed is available as organic or treated and can be purchased from local dealers or direct from Masters Choice.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Masters Choice, 3010 State Rt. 146 E, Anna, Ill. 62906. (ph 866 444-1044; kristen@seedcorn.com; www.seedcorn.com).



"I built it almost entirely out of my junk pile," says Frank Miller about his 3-pt. "mini spader" that breaks up sod for gardening.

"Made It Myself" 3-Pt. Implement

"I made a 'mini spader' that breaks up sod for gardening. I also use it to loosen up hard ground that needs to be graded. I built it almost entirely out of my junk pile," says Frank Miller.

The 3-pt. tool consists of a gang that supports three 10-in. cultivator sweeps spaced about 8 in. apart. The sweeps are welded to vertical lengths of 2-in. dia., heavy wall pipe, which in turn are welded to a horizontal length of 4-in. dia. pipe. The entire structure is reinforced by vertical lengths of angle iron and steel rod.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Frank Miller, RR 2, Box 249, Beecher City, Ill. 62414 (ph 618 487-5429).