Home-built grain feeder consists of 2-ft. wide conveyor belts supported by tire rims cut in half and welded to a pipe frame.

Conveyor Belts Make Durable Feeder

Worn out conveyor belts and old truck tire rims make indestructible grain feeders for beef cattle, says Sterling Jones. He came up with the design with the help of a local welder and a free load of discarded conveyor belts from a local gravel operation.

The homemade feeder is a big improvement over the poly feeders he's purchased over the years.

"The trouble I've had is that cattle step into the feeders and rip holes in the liners," Jones explains. "I've had cases where cattle have gotten a foot wedged between an end plate and the plastic liner and hobble around dragging the whole feeder. My best bull actually nearly cut his dew claws off trying to free his foot."

His welder cut tire rims in half and welded them to a pipe frame with 2 1/2-in. wide, 1/4-in. thick flat steel on the bottom to support the 2-ft. wide conveyor belts. Pieces of 24-in. long flat steel under the legs keep them from sinking into the mud.

The belt is heavy, he notes, and he overlapped a couple of pieces to line the 24-ft. long feeder. Even if cattle step on it, they can't destroy it, and he can pull it back in place.

"It was relatively cheap for me and works great," Jones says.

Discarded conveyor belts are likely available from various operations, and he suggests they can be put to many uses. A friend who has horses spreads her hay out on a belt and lined the floor of the barn with them. Jones' daughter uses them for flooring in the aisle of her goat milk parlor.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, J. Sterling Jones, P.O. Box 581, Goochland, Va. 23063 (ph 804 457-4054; jsterlingjones@gmail.com).

Richard Gostomski built this 5-ft. wide, belly-mounted grader for his Husqvarna zero turn riding mower. Grader blade mounts in place of the mower deck.

Riding Mower "Belly Grader"

"This rig works like a charm for grading my driveway," says Richard Gostomski, describing the 5-ft. wide, belly-mounted grader he built for his 2011 Husqvarna zero-turn riding mower. He spent only about $60 to build it.

The grader blade mounts in place of the mower deck and is mechanically raised and lowered using the mower's original deck lift mechanism. Blade angle is adjusted by changing the position of a pin.

Gostomski used 2 by 4-in., 1/4-in. thick angle iron to make the grader blade and welded a semi circular steel plate on top of it. A bolt runs up through the center part of the plate to form a pivot point. The entire structure is bolted to a rectangular metal frame that hooks up to the original mower deck lift arms. Gostomski cut holes into the outer edge of the plate to accommodate different blade positions. "I use it mainly to level our driveway. It does an excellent job," says Gostomski. "I can angle the blade left, right or straight across.

"It's a small riding mower but I don't need much power for grading. If I want I can add weights onto the mower frame to provide ballast and prevent slippage."

Gostomski built a pull-type roller that he pulls behind the riding mower when grading his driveway or mowing the lawn. The roller is built out of a 4-ft. long, 1 1/2-ft. dia. pressure water tank. A metal rack on top contains a series of cement weights. The tank is connected to a U-shaped metal frame and revolves around a pair of bolts welded into both ends of the tank.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Richard Gostomski, W8495 Lil Lane Road, Thorp, Wis. 54771 (ph 715 669-7055).

Aluminum Wheel Spacer For Deere Gators

"They let you travel down 30-in. rows without running over the crop," says Jeff Vosberg, Vosberg Enterprises, about the company's new aluminum wheel spacers for Deere Gators.

The 6-in. dia. solid aluminum spacers come with hardware to bolt to the wheel hub and are available in 2 or 4-in. widths. The wheel's original bolts are used to bolt the wheel rim to the spacer.

"The spacers move the wheel hub face out enough so you don't have to be as particular about where you drive," says Vosberg. "Without the spacers you can center up the Gator on 30-in. rows, but that leaves only a few inches on each side of the wheels. As a result, you spend more time watching where you're going than paying attention to what you're doing.

"Our spacers really help when spraying fence rows or picking up rocks. They mount with the same number of bolts and the same spacing, so the wheel's looks aren't affected at all."

The 2-in. spacer retails for $400 plus S&H; the 4-in. spacer for $760 plus S&H.

"The 4-in. spacers can be used on some older Gator models, but not on the newer models because the wheel would rub against the vehicle's front fender," notes Vosberg.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Vosberg Enterprises, Inc., P.O. Box 176, Farnhamville, Iowa 50538 (ph 800 362-8753 or 515 544-3635; jeff@buskellc.com; www.vei1.net).

The 6-in. dia. solid aluminum wheel spacers come with hardware to bolt to the Gator's wheel hub.

Wheel's original bolts are used to bolt wheel rim to spacer.

Photo courtesy Western Producer

Saskatchewan farmers Gavin and Colin Greenwald examine the triple shank opener on their air drill. It places seed and fertilizer in precise locations simultaneously.

Triple Opener Places Seed And Fertilizer Simultaneously

"There are several triple shoot openers on the market, but many of them have seed and fertilizer placement shortcomings, so I designed one that places seed and fertilizer in precise locations simultaneously," says Alberta developer Vic Wickstrom. "A farmer has to get seed and fertilizer in the exact location every time, and that's what our new VW30PR shank opener does."

The VW30PR is a modified version of the company's VW11FC, which has been on the market for several years. The new design lengthens the back of the older version to have a paired row of seed placement with fertilizer placed below and between the seed.

"We've dug into the seed trench behind this new shank and the wheat kernels are lined up like little bottle caps all in a row," Wickstrom says. There aren't any bunches of seeds or any empty gaps. Singulating the wheat seed is just as important as it is for corn, because each plant is on its own with plenty of room to grow."

The VW30PR is designed so that a small ramp in the middle of the boot floor splits the seeds equally, one group to the left and one group to the right. Wickstrom says the ramp sends the seeds out to the walls of the chamber and they remain tight against the walls until they exit into the ground. "The seeds don't get blasted down the tube with a shot of air, they move steadily and precisely. The two rows are about 2 1/2 in. apart, with fertilizer placed between and 3/8 in. below."

Starter fertilizer can be placed adjacent to each of the seed rows using tubes that are mounted on the outside of the shank. Wickstrom is also looking into running high-pressure anhydrous down the rear fertilizer tube.

Saskatchewan farmers Gavin and Colin Greenwald say the new VW30PR placed seed and fertilizer exactly where they wanted it in 2012. "We were able to seed early, putting liquid phosphorus directly in the seed row. The paired row helps take away weed competition making weed growth difficult." The Greenwald's seeded about 4,000 acres using the VW30 Paired Row Triple Shoot Opener on their C shank Flexicoil 5000 air drill.

Wickstrom says the new opener is made of industry-standard 28 percent chrome steel. Hard-surfaced plates are carbide, including a carbide plate at each rear corner so the body of the opener wears evenly. The product fits all paralink, C-shank and Edge-On drills on the market because VW Manufacturing makes different boots for each model.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Loren Hawks, U.S. Distributor, 2434 Whitlash Rd., Chester, Mont. 59522 (ph 406 460-3810; www.vwmfg.com). In Canada, Vic Wickstrom, VW Manufacturing (ph 403 528-3350).