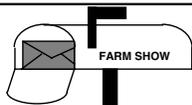


# Reader Letters



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scrap metal.

I can make ice cream in 35 to 40 minutes with these freezers. They're really a novelty at picnics, especially for people who've never seen one of those old "one lung" Deere engines at work. (Dale Fisher, 4227 Mae Valley Road, Moses Lake, Wash 98837; ph 509 765-3990).

My mother works off the farm and also has a large garden from which she cooks and cans vegetables all summer and fall. Our house doesn't have a basement, so finding enough storage room for her canned goods as well as potatoes, pumpkins, etc., has always been a problem. We solved the prob-



lem by using an ice cream truck body which we bought for \$40 from a friend who was using it to store automobile parts. We buried it in the side of a hill and lined the interior with shelves made from 1/2-in. plywood. We didn't even bother to remove the rear axle and wheels but instead simply jacked up the truck frame and leveled all four corners. A friend used a backhoe to dig out the hole.

We've never had a can freeze or burst in winter. We use a heat bulb in cold weather to keep produce from freezing. The inside temperature almost never drops below 50 degrees above zero, even when the outside temperature is zero or below.

We made a one-piece cattle rack our GM 3/4-ton pickup out of chain link fence. Chain link fence is solid and strong yet lightweight.



To form the wire I bolted lightweight 1 by 4 poplar boards onto it. The boards simply hold the wire flat and in no way reinforce it. I used U-bolts and clamps to secure the rack to galvanized pipe standards. Four lengths of pipe conduit extend across the top of the rack, allowing a tarp to be placed across it. The pipes can be lifted out of a bracket that's bolted onto the sides of the rack if an open top is desired. A 12-in. wide board with a hole cut into it is bolted on behind the rear window on the cab for protection.

The rack is so light that I can use a wrecking bar to pry it up and off the pickup by myself. I can also put it back on by myself. The rack could be made to come apart in sections, if desired. I've used this rack on three different pickups - a Ford, an International, and now the GM - without having to make any modifications. (Bert Rosenbalm, 240 Jim Town Rd., Luttrell, Tenn. 37779 ph 615 992-8669)

I used old railroad track spikes to make a 38-in. wide spike tooth harrow that I pull behind my Deere 112 garden tractor. I use it



right after I finish plowing. It does a much better job leveling the ground than a rototiller and leaves my garden nice and smooth for planting.

I used a sledge hammer to drive the spikes through slightly undersized holes spaced 4 in. apart on a pair of 3-in. angle



irons. I bolted the angle irons back to back on a steel plate. A 2-in. dia., 3-ft. long steel pipe tows the harrow. A pair of wheels borrowed from an old 1-row garden cultivator are U-bolted to both angle irons. To switch from transport to use, I simply flip the unit over so the wheels stick up in the air.

It's built solid and is just the right weight for my tractor to pull. My only cost was for welding rod. I generally keep the spikes on the back row halfway between the ones on the front row. The spikes penetrate about 6 in. into the ground. By using bigger spikes I think the same idea would work on a field-size unit.

I also adapted an old power lift hitch off another Deere tractor to my tractor, allowing me to raise or lower trailing implements.



The hitch bolts onto the back of the tractor and has a steel shaft connected to the pivot point under the tractor. A hydraulic cylinder attached to the shaft that's powered by the tractor's hydraulic pump is used to raise or lower the hitch. I intended to build a 1-row moldboard plow for the hitch but I never did.

A length of square steel tubing bolts onto the back of the hitch and can be telescoped out 16 in. on each side, allowing me to pull a pair of push-type lawn mowers behind and to the side of his riding mower. A snap coupler bolts onto each end of the tubing and hooks onto an I-bolt on front of the mowers. The length of the telescoping tubing can be adjusted in 1-in. increments by inserting a pin. The riding mower is 47 in. wide and each trailing mower is 22 in. on each mower so I can cut 91 in. wide. When I built it I had to mow a 2-acre lot. However, it's cumbersome to use and I don't have to mow as much now so I don't use it often any more.

Tearing down an old barn? You can use the roller track to build a mini-barn. I salvaged a section of roller track from my brother's old barn and used it when building my 12-ft.



We've just finished testing a new mobile solar-powered livestock watering pump that we expect to have on the market by April. We think it's unique because it runs on either battery or solar power, so we're finding new applications for it as a mobile power source all the time.

Still, our main thrust is as a mobile livestock waterer since dry weather continues to be a big concern for ranchers in our part of the country. We find the system very handy to pull up to an old derelict windmill, pull the pipe and slide the electric pump down into the water. You can also use the system to check a well's recharge rate.

Our system consists of a solar array mounted on a 5 by 8-ft. trailer equipped with two 6.50 by 15-in. tires. The four-panel array, capable of generating 17.5 volts and putting out 105 watts, charges six deep cycle batteries. A controller regulates battery charging and a heavy-duty circuit breaker

between batteries and equipment provides circuit breaker protection. Heart of the system is a 12 volt submersible pump. We can bring up water from wells over 80 ft. deep and pump at 2 gpm's. Our solar array mounts on a pivot on the trailer so you can aim panels directly at the sun. It also folds flat for traveling across pastures or down the road without damaging anything. A basket in back holds 100 ft. of 3/4-in. dia. pvc pipe for water-pumping.

We have an optional inverter which converts 12 volts D.C. to 110 volts A.C. so you can power drills, saws, and other equipment with the unit.

We'll be selling the system for \$4,500. (Dave Sampson, Oak Grove Fabrication, Rt. 1, Box 69, Alta Vista, Kan. 66834; ph 800 499-5311 or 913 499-5311. Bill Dorsett, Sunwrights Photo Voltaics, 1715 Leavenworth, Manhattan, Kan. 66502; ph 913 539-1956.)



wide, 20-ft. long mini-barn. I used one section of the track and lag screwed it to a 2 by 4 board. A 4-ft. door rolls along the track. (Burney S. Jackson, 725 E. 116th St., Carmel, Ind. 46032 ph 317 846-3166)

I'm real proud of this mule-powered "Cracker Jack" baler which I demonstrated at the recent Sunbelt Ag Expo in Moultrie, Ga. The



baler was made in about 1936. I bought it five years ago from a man in Live Oak, Florida. This type of baler was widely used in the 1920's and 1930's before the invention of pto-powered balers.

Loose hay is dumped in a pile near the baler. The operator uses a pitchfork to put hay into the bale chamber. The mule pulls a wooden board equipped with a pair of spring-loaded cams connected to a plunger. Every time the mule makes a complete revolution the plunger goes back and forth into the bale chamber twice. To tie the bale the operator runs wires through a 2-in. thick wooden block equipped with grooves. A lead board in front of the mule kept her on the correct course.

Many people have asked me how many bales this baler could make per day, but I

don't know the answer. It would depend on how hard you worked the mule and on the kind of hay. The baler mounts on four wheels and is a lot of work to set up. I have to remove the front wheels, then dig a hole and bury the rear wheels. (Walt Reaves, Reaves Ranch, 662 S.E. 155th St., Summerfield, Fla. 34491 ph 904 245-2392)



I made this boot scraper by welding together a pair of 16-in. field cultivator shovels, a moldboard plow shear, and a 3-ft. length of 3/16-in. thick flat twisted iron. The shovels serve as a base and the iron serves as a handle, while the sharp side of the shear faces up and is angled outward. I welded all the pieces together and painted them flat black. I cut slots into the base of both shovels and welded the shear in, then cut a slot into the bottom end of the handle and welded it in. The top of the handle is at a 45 degree angle making it easy to hold onto. The rest of the handle is twisted like ornamental iron. I put the bar in a vise and put a length of close-fitting pipe over it to keep it in line, then used a pipe wrench to twist the iron. (Gerald Oloske, 10415 120th Ave., Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T5G 0S5 (ph 403 479-4868)