

Made It Myself

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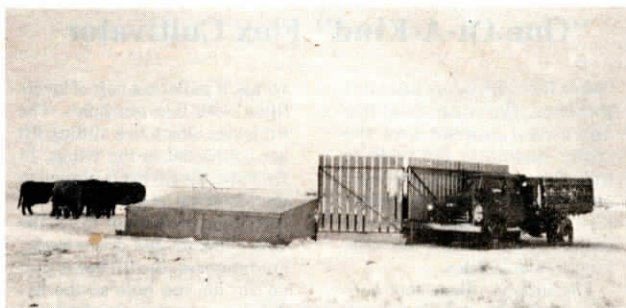
Portable Windbreak

"Works great for spring calving out in the open," says Harvey Boland, Mankota, Sask., about the portable windbreak he built on the chassis of a 1951 Chevrolet 2-ton truck.

The windbreak consists of 7-ft. long, 1 by 6-in. boards mounted vertically — spaced 1½ in. apart — on a box beam frame. Its three pieces include a 19-ft. wide center frame and two 8-ft. wide wings. The two wings fold in against the truck when in

transport. To cover the gap at the bottom of the windbreak, and yet still be able to easily move the truck for transport, Boland attached 1 by 12-in. boards on hinges that can be folded down once the wings are in position.

"We often have winds up to 70 mph in the spring so we park the truck out in the open and pull our 5 wooden calf sheds up around it. If the wind shifts directions, we can easily start the



truck and reposition it," explains Boland, noting that the 35-ft. long windbreak folds up in just minutes for transport. He notes that jack stands attached to the truck's front and rear bumpers keep the truck from rocking on its springs in a

strong wind. Boland also uses the truck as a shelter when taking care of big repair jobs in the field during strong winds.

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Pickup Hog Carrier Features Lift-Up Top

He didn't like crawling on his hands and knees inside his pickup topper to coax out stubborn hogs so Lyle Shipley, Esbon, Kan., asked Jim Maguin, a local vo-ag teacher, to build a hog carrier with a lift-up top.

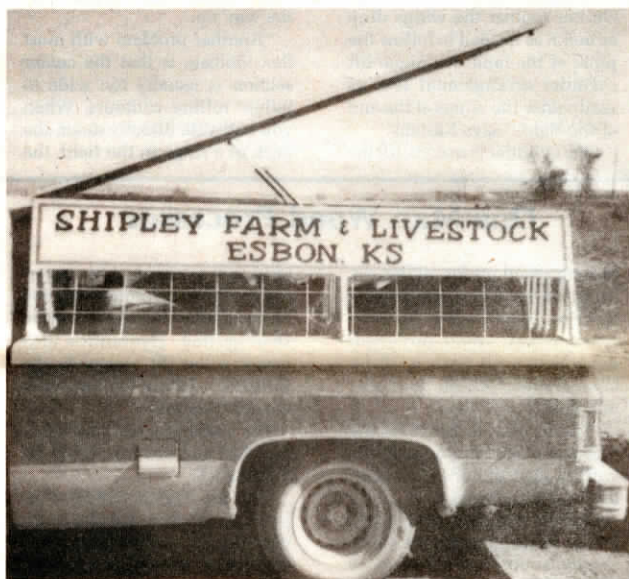
"I wanted a good looking, convenient and lightweight carrier," says Shipley, who raises purebred hogs. "With the lift-up top, I can stand in the truck bed to get hogs out. The cover also keeps hogs from jumping out and holds warm air in during the winter."

The 8-ft. long metal top features two shocks like the ones used on hatchback car doors. Shocks open and hold the cover open. Carrier fastens to truck

with four bolts and weighs 300 lbs. It has two swing out rear panel gates made of steel tubing and 2 ft. tall sides made out of hog panels and slanted in to match pickup cab angle. Wooden panels fit over the side panels to keep cold air off hogs in the winter.

Shipley notes that he can haul seven 300-lb. hogs at once and, if needed, can insert a center dividing panel. The carrier top and back panels can be removed for hauling other cargo. Shipley says the carrier cost about \$300 for materials to build.

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"Slit Tillage" System Saves Soil and Water

By modifying his chisel plow, Herbert Myer, Lancaster, Penn., developed "slit tillage" — a new twist in tillage that, he says, helps him save soil, water and money on his corn ground.

In modifying his Brillion chisel plow, Myer removed half the chisels and on the remaining five (spaced 30-in. apart) he replaced the chisel shovels with 2-in. wide, 10-in. long teeth. He also added heavy-duty coulters in front of each of the rows to cut through trash.

Myer, who's been using his slit-tillage system for the past 10 years on all of his land and for 20 years on some fields, pulls the rig through his corn fields in the fall, running the shanks between existing corn rows. The shanks cut a 12 to 15-in. deep "slit" in the soil, throwing

loose dirt in ridges to the sides of each slit.

He points out that, unlike conventionally tilled ground, there's only a small amount of loose top soil so there's minimal erosion. "I've had some fields in corn for 20 years in a row without any erosion problems and I get better corn every year," says Myer. "Unlike no-till, the slits provide soil openings for rainfall to infiltrate. Even with a heavy rain there's hardly any runoff. I wouldn't be afraid to get a 10-in. downpour of rain right after I put the slits in."

"Another key benefit over the years has been the improved texture of my soil. The narrow chisel teeth bring very little soil up to the surface so subsoil isn't mixed with topsoil," Myer points out. His corn yields have

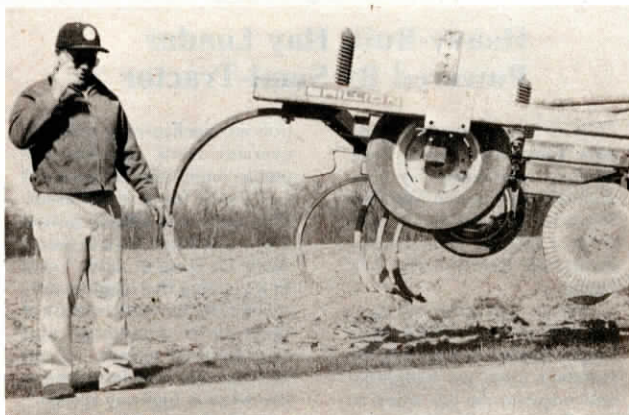


Photo courtesy The New Farm

averaged 160-185 bu. over the past five years. He notes that anyone trying "slit" tillage will see a difference just after one year and a "remarkable" difference after three years.

In the spring, after slit tilling in the fall, Myer goes over the field once with a disk, then fol-

lows through with his no-till corn planter. He tries to plant on the slightly raised ridges between the slits but notes that it isn't essential.

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