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"Made It Myself" Heavy-Duty Brush Grapple Fork

After he couldn't find what he wanted on the market, Tim Johnson, Howe, Ind., built a grapple fork for his New Holland 4060 tractor.

"I use it to clean up trees and brush around the edges of fields and to haul logs to our splitter. I'm amazed at how well it works," says Johnson, an engineer who also has a welding and machining background.

The quick-tach grapple fork measures 71 1/2 in. wide and is equipped with 40-in. long,

4-in. high tines at the bottom spaced 8 in. apart. The tines are made from 1/2-in. thick mild steel and are held together by a length of schedule 80 pipe. The 5-in. high upper tines are made from 5/8-in. thick steel.

A pair of 10-in. stroke hydraulic cylinders are used to raise and lower the shanks, which pivot up or down on a pair of 3/4-in. steel pins. A quick-tach plate is welded on back of the frame.

"It's big enough to pick up large quantities

of brush and wood, yet is lightweight enough for my 60 hp tractor," says Johnson. "The shanks open up about 4 ft. high, which is big enough to pick up large quantities of brush and wood. It'll handle logs up to 32 in. in dia.

"I needed a grapple fork with long bottom tines that I can slide under large piles of tree limbs and pick them up. However, the bottom tines on most factory-built grapple forks are only about 24 in. long and have about 22 in. of usable space. They work good for picking

up logs, but when you clamp down on a pile of brush you don't get very much. In comparison, the 40-in. long bottom tines on my grapple fork have 34 in. of usable space.

"I spent about \$900 to build it, which compares to \$2,500 to \$3,500 for comparable commercial grapple forks."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Tim Johnson, 4925N 900E, Howe, Ind. 46746 (ph 260 350-1057; flagvan2000@yahoo.com).



Brett Hundertmark reversed the wires on an 850 rpm electric motor and mounted it on this elevator to run the chain backward. "The bales come down nice and slow, making them easy to stack on the hay rack," he says.

"Reversed" Elevator Makes Stacking Bales An Easy Job

Brett Hundertmark, who is an electrician, needed a better way to unload small square bales from his hay barn. So he put his electrician skills to work.

"I was using a pto-operated corn elevator to lift bales up into the barn's loft. Later on when I wanted to load bales out onto a hay rack, I parked the rack under the barn under another door and threw bales down onto it. However, many of the bales broke up which made a big mess," says Hundertmark.

"I decided to make the elevator run backward and use it to bring bales down

slowly. So I reversed the wires on a 1,725 rpm electric motor and then mounted it on the elevator to belt-drive the chain. However, the chain ran too fast.

"So I found another motor that runs at only 850 rpm's and reversed the wires on it. This motor runs the elevator chain only about half as fast so the bales come down nice and slow, making them easy to stack. It almost makes loading bales onto the hay rack a fun job."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Brett Hundertmark, 2119 120th St., Bode, Iowa 50519 (ph 515 379-2702).

3-Pt. Mounted "Log Lifter"

"About 10 years ago my late friend Jack Bryant made me a simple 3-pt. mounted 'log lifter' for my New Holland 33D tractor. It really works great," says Dave LaDuc, Saranac, N.Y.

"He made the log lifter from scrap metal he had laying around. I've used it to move more log-length firewood than I ever could have without it. I've also used it to move tons of other heavy stuff, and I added a receiver hitch so I can move trailers on our horse farm.

"To use it I wrap the end of the log with chain and then drape the chain over the top of the lifter so that it catches in one of several notches at the top of the unit. I raise the 3-pt. lift arms to pull the log toward the tractor. Then I lower the lifter, retighten the chain, and lift the log again. I repeat these steps until the log is close enough to be lifted off the ground.

"To build the unit Jack welded vertical lengths of round pipe to a horizontal angle iron, and then cut notches into the top piece for securing the chain. He welded round stock onto the bottom that attaches to the lift arms.



Chain at end of log catches in one of several notches at top of 3-pt. mounted lifter.

A pair of welded on metal brackets attach the unit to the top link."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Dave LaDuc, 297 Canning Rd., Saranac, N.Y. 12981 (LaDucD@yahoo.com).



John Eilers fitted the hand-operated winch on his implement trailer with a big drive wheel, making it easier to crank.

Crank Wheel Drives Trailer Winch

By C.F. Marley, Contributing Editor

John Eilers, Pana, Ill., got tired of cranking the winch on his implement trailer using the small hand crank so he decided to fit it with a big drive wheel.

He went to his iron pile and found some 1/2-in. rebar. He first made a small wheel connected to a drive axle, and then made a

bigger wheel around the smaller one that's fitted with a steering knob off a steering wheel. The weighted wheel makes turning the ratchet winch easy.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, John Eilers, 2095 E. 350 N. Road, Pana, Ill. 62557 (ph 217 562-4021).