

Reader Letters



Editor's Note: As many readers pointed out, we had an error in the "Readers Nominate Best & Worst Buys" section of the last issue. Vincent Haines said he was disappointed with his "2010 Case IH 1660 combine". Case IH 1660 combines were actually manufactured in the early 1990's. What the article should have said is that Mr. Haines bought the used combine in 2010.

I conducted a science fair experiment that I think will be of interest to other FARM SHOW readers. I was curious to find the best method where chickens would gain the most weight on the least amount of feed. I took two groups of chickens and fed one group for 12 hrs. during the day, and one group for 24 hrs. a day. Over the 8-week period, the 24-hr.-a-day birds gained an average of 3/4 lb. more. (Cole Desmond, 15 Ward St., Ipswich, Mass. 01938 ph 978 356-5104; thefarmhand@comcast.net)

Last summer I used an electric fence wire at 8 to 10 in. off the ground to keep deer out of my sweet corn. I used a continuous charger and couldn't believe how well it worked. An old deer trail ran through the area but it stopped them cold. (Allen Slippey, Altoona, Penn.)

Just a quick comment about the "Chicken Tractor Controversy" you mentioned in the last issue. I've been using the term "Chicken Ark" which is what they're more commonly called in Europe. I just can't get past the idea that a "tractor" is supposed to be green or red and have an engine. (Stephen Clay McGehee, scm@adjutant.com)



I built this family-hauling bench to carry my wife and kids in local parades and around the farm. It was easy to build, using a 3-pt. mounted carryall I bought at Tractor Supply Co. I simply build the bench on top of the carry all. Everyone loves it! (Ritchie Holt, 753 Vander Oldham Rd., Bear Creek, N.C. 27207)

Used kitty litter works great to get rid of moles and gophers. Just pour it in and around mounds and tunnels and they'll leave the area. I've done this for a while with great results. (Paul Seward, Wray, Colo.)



When I found this 1970 Bolens 1250 tractor out behind an old barn, it had no motor, the tires were flat, the paint was

bad, and there was no seat. I decided to put a V-8 Chevy engine in it. I had to add 19 in. to the frame so the V-8 would fit. It's cooled by a motorcycle radiator and has all new tires, a new hood, and a paint job. It took 2 years to build. I call it a model 1350 because only 1 was ever made and it's powered by a 350 Chevy engine. (Richard J. Halter, Sr., 3838 Oak Ridge Dr., Louisville, Ohio 44641 ph 330 904-4531)

Lots of small farms use half barrels to hold feed for animals. I was always having to go inside the fence to drag or flip over the barrel feeders. A simple



solution was to drill a 3/8-in. hole in one corner of the half barrel, tie a knot in a 6-ft. piece of rope and pull the rope through the hole, tying the other end to a fencepost. When it's feeding time the half barrels are just about always upright and, if not, you can pull them over to the fence without going into the pen with the animals. Even the kids are safe at feeding time. (Steve Turner, Walhalla, S.C.)



My twin girls are just 10 months old and, as you can see, they devour FARM SHOW when it comes out. They're big fans! (Gerald Haworth)

I've found a low-tech way to keep the bottoms of the wood doors on my greenhouse and barn from freezing shut when they get wet from condensation.



I put a large plastic kitchen trash bag over the threshold. The top of the bag might freeze to the bottom of the door and the bottom of the bag might freeze to the threshold, but the top and bottom won't freeze to each other. Saves my hands from having to pound on the door. (Lois Hunt, Windy Hills Lavender Farm LLC, Heber, Ariz. 85928 www.windyhillslavender.com)

My dad, Ben, came up with this idea last summer to secure barn boards at the bottom of our barn. He made a stack of cement blocks 2 high and then put a line of red clay blocks over the top. The barn is about 40 ft. long and from a distance it makes the 100-year-old barn look newer, with a secure foundation. It was a good use of old cement blocks (the red clay



blocks were more than 100 years old) and the barn boards at the bottom of the barn no longer flop around. Problem solved. (Ray Mallette, Chatham, Ont.)

This was not an uncommon sight in my part of Illinois late last fall – an ocean of volunteer corn coming up after the extra-early harvest of the fall crop. You might



think this particular farmer did a bad job of harvesting but it's not unusual for a combine to lose 2 to 3 bushels of corn per acre. Since there are about 72,000 kernels of corn in a bushel, you could have a volunteer corn plant population of 150,000 to 200,000 plants. (C.F. Marley, Nokomis, Ill.)

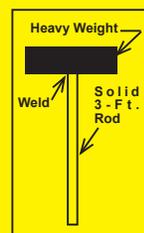
I made this rock fork to pick up loose stones in my garden. It's shaped like a shovel but has tines like a pitchfork.



Actually, it's a scaled-down version of the full-size rock fork that I use on my tractor. It's made from 1/4-in. dia. rod. I used a hoe handle with a small bolt to hold the fork in place.

The handle mount is set at a 45 degree angle so I can just push the fork across the top of the ground to scoop up small stones. It saves a lot of bending over. (Chad Travis, 574 Greers Ferry Rd., Drasco, Ark. 72530 ph 870 668-3400)

Here's an easy way to drive pvc pipe into the ground to use as fenceposts. Simply weld a heavy weight to one end of a solid 3-ft. long metal rod. (Vernon A. Bratton, 462 Peaceful Ln., San Antonio, Texas 78264)



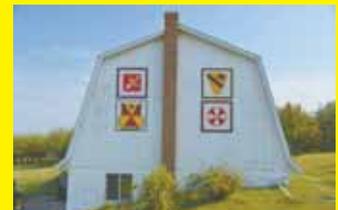
I used old horse hames to make this unique rocking chair. It might make the perfect gift for your dad, grandpa or great grandpa, especially if they still have some hames from their farming days to use in making the chair.



The rocker is made from oak and has a leather back. It takes 8 hames to make the chair and two pairs to make the legs. The arms can display brass knobs if you happen to have hames with them. At the top of the chair's back there's a steel cutout of a horse pulling a buggy with a man sitting in it. The cutout is made from 1/8-in. thick steel cut on a CNC laser machine.

I use a total of eight horseshoes on the chair. It's built sturdy and has been tested by some 250-lb. friends. (Larry J. Thompson, 2113 E. 13th St., The Dalles, Ore. 97058 ph 573 543-2500; lmtom32@yahoo.com)

Here's a photo showing some non-traditional barn quilts that I recently made, representing the Army units I served in while overseas. The quilts



on the left side of the barn represent the time I spent at Fuchu Air Station in Japan – at the top is the 40th Brigade, and below it the 97th AAA Battalion. On the right side of the barn, the top quilt represents the 1st Cavalry, which is where I went to NCO school in Japan. Below it is the 8th Army, a reminder of the time I spent in Inchon, Korea, 1956-57. I'd like to hear from anyone who is familiar with these particular Army units and served during that time. (Pete Henkels, ph 563 583-5454; pghenkels@yahoo.com)



I cut up an old water heater to make a 5-ft. snow blade for my 1981 Deere F-911 front mount riding mower. It attaches to an old 2-in. receiver hitch that mounts on the mower's original deck mounting arms. The blade swivels on a big gear off an old combine, which I split in half and welded to the blade. One half of the gear is on top, and the other half below it. I drilled 3 holes into each gear, allowing me to adjust the blade's angle by simply changing the position of a pin. A 2-in. pipe is welded onto the gear and fits into the receiver hitch on the mower. All it cost me was a couple hours of welding time. (John Blackwell, Brantford, Ont. ph 519 755-9446)