



Charles Mitchell doesn't need hydraulic power to pick up round bales with his pickup. Instead, he uses a 1,700-lb. Warn winch to raise and lower the spear.



Photo shows the main components of bale spear, which mounts to receiver hitch.

“Made It Myself” Pickup Bale Spear

Charles Mitchell can spear a bale with his pickup truck and run it down the road to a customer. Best of all, it takes him less than 5 min. to mount or dismount the bale carrier from his truck.

“The carrier is especially handy when a loader-mounted spear isn’t handy,” says Mitchell. “It handles 4 by 5 bales without a problem. It can move 4, 5 and 6-ft. bales up to 1,250 lbs.”

Mitchell doesn't need hydraulic power to pick up the bale. A 1,700-lb. Warn winch raises and lowers the spear. Two bolts fix

the winch to the flat side of a reversible hitch ball in the truck's bed. The ball is secured by a spring-loaded pin that is pulled out for reversing and is spring retracted to lock it in.

“The pin is accessible in the left fender wall,” explains Mitchell. “If I need the ball for a trailer, I unbolt the winch and store it in a cabinet in my shop. All I need is a 9/16-in. wrench.”

Mounting or removing the bale spear is even easier. The Cat. 1 implement spear mounts to flanges welded to either end of a 30 1/2-in., 4 by 4-in. heavy wall tube. A

solid steel shank welded to the center but opposite side of the tubing slips into the truck's receiver hitch.

The winch cable runs through a pulley attached to the top of a 4-ft., 3 by 3-in. tube and back to an anchor on the truck bed. The tube is pinned 8 in. from its bottom to top link mounting flanges on back of the bale spear.

Mitchell controls the position of the spear from the cab by releasing or taking up cable on the winch. Once a bale is loaded, the winch will keep it in the raised position or a safety chain can secure it. To keep the spear

from flopping forward when empty, Mitchell attaches a heavy spring to the bottom of the spear and the safety slots on the receiver hitch.

“A friend who is an excellent welder helped me fabricate the quick hitch for the bale spear in 2002,” says Mitchell. “It has moved hundreds of bales, and all I've had to do is replace the cable on the winch.”

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“Made It Myself” Cage Watering System

By Klaire Howerton

Caleb Howerton of Springfield, Mo., needed a more efficient way to water his rabbits than continually refilling water bottles. So he came up with an automatic watering system that provides water for 8 rabbit cages at once.

The watering system uses a 5-gal. bucket as the water reservoir. The bucket sits above the cages on a stand. A 1/2-in. dia. pvc fitting is inserted at the base of the bucket to feed water into lengths of straight 1/2-in. pvc pipe that runs horizontally the length of the cages. Holes drilled in the pvc at each rabbit cage accommodate screw-in hose barbs that are sealed to the pipe with silicon. A length of plastic hose runs from the hose barbs to

a watering nipple that is attached by small springs to the side of each rabbit hutch. To make the watering system winter-proof, pipe insulation can be wrapped around the pvc pipe and bucket.

While Caleb uses his watering system for rabbits, it can also be used to water other small livestock kept in cages or hutches, such as chickens or quail. This system can also be adapted to accommodate larger numbers of animals by running the pipe fittings to a large drum or plastic barrel instead of a bucket.

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Automatic cage watering system provides water for 8 rabbit cages at once. A 5-gal. bucket at back sits above cages on a stand and serves as the water reservoir.

He Raised His Garden Tractor's Steering Wheel

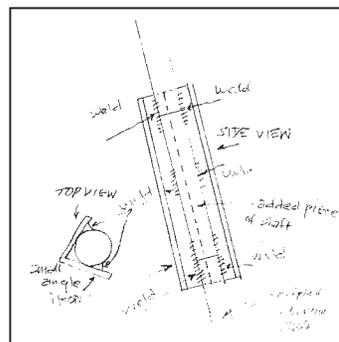
“Here's an idea that works well for us tall people who have to fight to get onto a garden tractor because the steering wheel is too low,” says Harry Kuyper of Kewadin, Mich.

He says the steering wheel on his garden tractors was so low that it ended up rubbing the top of his legs.

He removed the gas tank and used an air-powered cut-off wheel to cut through the center of the steering shaft. Then between the two ends he inserted a short section of shaft about the same diameter as the original, placing a short length of angle iron behind it. Then he secured everything with C-clamps.

He made sure that he got the steering wheel lined up properly. Then starting at the bottom and working up, he welded the new shaft piece in place on both sides of the angle iron.

“The angle iron provides reinforcement,” says Kuyper. “The new piece of shaft can be 2, 3, or 4 in. long or whatever length you need to raise the steering wheel.”



Steering shaft was lengthened by cutting through it and welding in new material with a short length of angle iron behind it.

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Shutoff Device Stops Engines In Seconds

Ted Lacy of Red Fox Enterprises says the remote wireless engine motor shut off that his company produces is designed to save lives. World Ag Expo in California saw that benefit too and recognized the Fox Paws System as one of the 10 best products for 2016.

A tiny transmitter that clips to a shirt pocket or belt of the operator is the key. Pressing the emergency button on the transmitter activates a receiver unit on the equipment being operated, automatically shutting off the engine. “If the operator needs to quickly shut off the engine, he simply presses the transmitter button and bingo, the engine stops,” says Lacy.

Lacy introduced his original device in 2004 (see Vol. 28, No. 6) and currently offers 11 different products that will shut down anything from a kid's ATV to a large commercial rock crusher. His original shut-off device was developed for use on a seed mill on his farm. It had numerous moving parts, including gears, chains and a pto drive. Lacy, who still farms in Idaho, says the idea for the remote device came to him because he had many close calls with running equipment.

“I was always aware the machines were

running and I knew the risks of being around them, but I did it anyhow,” Lacy says. “After I built the first safety shut off I needed it once and had just a few seconds to reach for my transmitter to shut the machine down. It saved an injury or maybe worse.”

The patented Fox Paws Safety System works on tractors, construction machinery, trains, industrial equipment and can even be made water resistant for use on tugs and fishing boats. The company has models designed for use on gas or diesel engine-powered equipment and others that work on electric motors. Receivers that mount on the equipment are priced from about \$750 to \$950 for fuel engine models to about \$1,280 for electric motors. The small transmitter that an operator carries is priced at \$112.95.

A wireless repeater that increases the effective range of the shutdown switch up to 10,000 ft. in a line of sight and operates on 110 volts AC sells for \$619.95.

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