



Hydrostatically-driven Swath Roller mounts on front of self-propelled swather base unit (minus swather header). Swath is rolled up on the ground to form bale.

MOUNTS ON YOUR SELF-PROPELLED SWATHER

No Tractor Needed For New Round Baler

Farmers who've seen it are excited about a first-of-its-kind big round baler that's designed to mount right on the front of your self-propelled swather.

According to the machine's designer and manufacturer, John Shokopolis, of Nisku, Alberta, the new-style baler "not only frees a tractor for other work but costs less than conventional big round balers and does a better job.

"It's a great advantage to bale with the same machine that makes the windrow. Maneuverability is excellent," explains Shokopolis. "Also, you're right on top of the baler so you never have to look back, and you never drive over the hay to damage it."

The all-hydraulic "Swath Roller", as it's called, is completely different from other balers in fundamental design. Rather than using a front hay pickup and then suspending the bale off the ground, the new Swath Roller baler uses a rear pickup and "snowballs" the bale — actually rolling it along the ground, forming it into a tight roll at ground speed rather than any given rpm. Shokopolis says this feature lessens handling, thereby minimizing leaf loss and shattering. It also makes it possible to bale cornstalks and other material as easily as it handles hay. "This is because the baler wraps material around the bale rather than trying to lift it up and over," the manufacturer explains.

The baler is designed to mount with just 4 bolts on Versatile's model 400 or new 4400 hydrostatic swathers. Versatile supplies some 67% of the swather market in Canada so initial production models have been designed to fit them. But the company says they can fit most any brand self-propelled hydraulic swather on the market by designing

new mounting brackets. They are also considering developing a power unit designed specifically for self-propelling the Swath Roller. Shokopolis says, "the complete self-propelled unit would cost only a couple thousand more than the best conventional round balers currently on the market."

It takes about 10 min. to mount the baler on your swather, once the swather table has been removed. Quick couplers tie the swather directly into the self-propelled unit's hydraulics.

Key operating features include: Quick start-up; automatic tying — when the bale reaches full size, tying discs come in contact with the bale and start wrapping the twine; fast unloading — just drive off the swath several feet, raise the baler hydraulically and watch the tied bale roll out; and no-plugging. If a foreign object should happen to jam the machine, just lift off the baler and remove the object.

The 2,800-lb. baler puts out a 5-ft. long bale measuring up to 5 ft. in dia. Compression springs adjust for density control, but the company doesn't recommend forming more than 1,000 lb. bales with the current model.

Cost for the Swath Roller is right at \$7,500. Versatile has worked with Shokopolis on design and is considering selling the unit mounted on their swather power base. The inventor says he could build a complete self-propelled baler for around \$14,500.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, John Shokopolis, Custom Metal, Saskatoon, Ltd., Distributor, 2001 Avenue B. North, Saskatoon, Sask. S7L 1H7 (306 242-1277).



After animal passes through, strips fall back into place to seal opening. Typical installation uses 12 in. wide strips, with two-thirds overlap of the strips.

SELF-OPENING AND CLOSING

Can You Use A "Strip" Door?

Agriculture is constantly borrowing good ideas from industry and here's one that's starting to catch on fast, particularly with dairyman. It's a plastic strip door that cattle, people or equipment can move through, yet provides an effective barrier to cold air, rain, snow, birds, flies and other pests. It's completely self-opening and closing — animals, vehicles or people move right through it. As they do, the strips automatically fall back into place to completely and immediately seal the opening.

Among the first farmers to try the new-style door are Allen and Donald Pollard, of Merlin, Ont., Canada. Dairy cows in their 100-head free stall barn were getting chapped and frozen teats from cold wind blowing through the open doors, yet there was no easy way to open and close the doors when cattle went in and out to the feedbunk.

The solution was to cover the doorway with plastic overlapping strips that push open easily, then fall back into place. The vinyl strips come in a variety of widths and types (the Pollards used reinforced 16 in. wide strips). Individual strips attach with special brackets to the door header and hang down in an overlapped fashion to provide a solid door that is flexible and transparent.

To get cows accustomed to going through the plastic barrier, the Pollards left the center strips off at first. After the cows passed through a few times, the center strips were added to form a solid door. "The cows go in and out through the door without any problems whatsoever," Alan Pollard told FARM SHOW.

Cost of plastic strip doors varies, depending on size of door opening, amount of overlap and type of plastic used. A dealer in Wisconsin recommends 12 in. wide strips with 2/3 overlap of the strips. Including the mountings, this installation would cost right at \$5 per square foot of door area.

One of several companies making plastic strip doors is Frommelt Industries, Inc., of Dubuque, Iowa. A spokesman for the company told FARM SHOW that the plastic used is Koroclear Vinyl, which is fireproof and has an 80% transmission of light, compared to 90% transmission for ordinary glass. The insulating value of a plastic door is comparable to a concrete wall 1 in. thick.

The vinyl strips come in widths from 6 in. to 16 in. Thicknesses range from .040 in. to .160 in. The material stands temperatures from -40° to +150° F.

For more information from the manufacturer, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Frommelt Industries, Inc., P. O. Box 1200, Dubuque, Iowa 52001 (ph 319 556-2020).

In England, a strip door called Yieldor is catching on fast. The plastic strips have practically eliminated cold drafts during winter, as well as keeping out dust, flies and insects during warm weather. Operating by cow power, they save the cost of more elaborate door systems, reports Keith Swannack, Wield Wood Alresford, Hants, Eng. In addition to dairy barns, the strip-type plastic doors are being used in hog barns, and on farm buildings to keep out starlings and other pest birds.