

After restoring a 1946 Massey Harris tractor, Dale Lau converted leftover parts from an identical tractor into this tractor barbecue grill.



Massey Tractor Barbeque Grill

Dale Lau of Reedsville, Wis., enjoys restoring Massey Harris tractors. He also likes to barbecue. One day he got the idea of combining both interests.

"I was restoring a 1946 Massey Harris 81 and had bought another identical tractor for parts. After stripping off what I needed I decided to convert some of the leftover parts into a barbecue grill," says Lau.

He fitted a pair of 10-in. front wheels are off an old push-type reel mower, while the back end of the grill rests on a pair of welded-on angle iron legs so that Lau can pick up the grill and roll it around easily by hand. The tractor's frame forms the grill's body, and its hood fits over the grill for enclosed cooking and storage. The hood is held on by a pair of metal hinges and fitted with a wooden handle. A light chain keeps the hood from opening too far.

Lau welded a big new exhaust pipe and an air intake onto the hood. He bolted the tractor's oil pan on underneath the grate to collect ashes, and he bolted the radiator grill off another Massey tractor on front of the tractor. He painted the entire unit with high temperature paint and then added decals.

"I finished building it before Labor Day, just in time to try it out at a show held by the Wisconsin Massey Harris club. It worked great," says Lau. "I found the grate at a local swap meet. I sandblasted it and coat it with vegetable oil so food won't stick to it.

"My friend Junior helped me build it, and to show my appreciation I added decals with his name on front of the grill."

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Ethel, a 4-year-old ewe, produced 5 lambs for Kathy Chinderle this year, a one in a million occurrence.



Quintuplet Lambs Beat The Odds

Sheep producers say a good ewe will almost always have twin lambs in any given year. But the odds of having quintuplets are about 1 in a million. Kathy Chinderle of Ash Grove, Missouri beat those odds earlier this year when a 4-year-old ewe on her farm gave birth to 5 lambs and all of them survived. Three of them are females and 2 are males. The smallest weighed only 8 oz., but all of them were healthy at birth.

Chinderle says making sure all 5 of the lambs received colostrum from their mother within an hour of their birth was key to their survival.

Chinderle's proud mama ewe, whom she named Ethel, has produced triplets the past 2 years. "I don't want to re-name her, but I've thought maybe we should call her Fertile

Myrtle rather than Ethel."

When Chinderle realized she had 5 healthy lambs from Ethel in 2016, her first call was to the local feed store to find a high quality milk replacer. That's because she knew one ewe couldn't possibly feed 5 lambs. The store manager suggested Ultra Fresh[®] Optimum lamb milk replacer, which is a formulation that closely compares to ewe milk. Tests done at Cornell University comparing lambs on ewe milk and Ultra Fresh have shown that the milk replacer product provides equal nutrition and a slightly higher growth rate. Chinderle says the lambs did great on the formula.

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45-Ft. Corn Stalk Set To Challenge World Record

Jason Karl is on a mission to breed taller corn, with his latest being a 45-ft. tall stalk with ears 23 ft. above ground. If certified by Guinness World Records, it will break his 2011 (Vol. 35, No. 6) world record of 35 ft., 3 in. The private plant breeder and researcher is optimistic he can grow them even higher.

"I set up a 55-ft. tall plastic greenhouse that's only several feet wide," says Karl. "It's designed specifically for this project."

The greenhouse protects the plants from cool nighttime temperatures, but also provides a support structure. It also elongates stalk segments and reduces wind damage. Karl notes that without it, water-saturated stalks would snap. Other 30 to 40-ft. plants simply bend over in an arc to the ground. He has found those can require very little support.

"I've held a 32-ft. plant up in the air with just my hands," says Karl. "A support structure is the practical limit to the height of a corn plant."

His tallest plant so far is the result of 7 generations of breeding a tropical strain called Chiapas 234 after crossing it with a naturally occurring mutation that adds internodes. Normally Chiapas 234 has 18 internodes below the ear and 6 above. The more internodes and elongation between them, the more leaves and the taller the plant.

"I select for the tallest strain, not the tallest plant," says Karl. "Then I cross my tallest strain to the mutant to get the 45-ft. plant. There were 80 internodes on the 40-ft. plus plants."

Karl has other mutations he's working with as well as non-hybrid lines that have surprising height on their own. One 42-ft. tall plant has ears at the 40-ft. height and is still growing.

While it is hard to estimate "yield" from a tall plant, Karl notes that ear shoots appear along much of the length of the stalk. Seed matures at several nodes with multiple ears of full or small cobs appearing at some shanks. Cobs can be along shank nodes or all within the same husks. He expects ears from perhaps 14 nodes to be viable.

What he can measure more easily is leaves. Conventional breeders use the same identified mutation to add a few extra leaves above the ear in silage corn.

"Mine doesn't have 3 or 4 extra leaves; it has 50," says Karl.

Even with the added leaves and height, Karl's corn needs no extra fertilizer. He did use lights to shorten the night length. This doubled the original internode quantity.

When asked if he plans to continue with the project, he responded that the current work would be a good stopping place. However, he



Last summer Jason Karl grew a 45-ft. tall corn stalk inside this 55-ft. tall plastic greenhouse. It supported the plant and also protected it from cool nighttime temperatures.

adds, "I'm definitely continuing. The next steps are clear."

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