

Backhoe Made 8N A Better Tractor

Adding a backhoe to his Ford 8N makes lots of jobs easy and Bob Halaska says the backhoe also makes steering easier.

"I love using the loader on the 8N, but with the extra weight, it was hard to steer," says Halaska. "I looked at adding power steering, but it was hard to part with more than \$2,000 for an upgrade like that."

When Halaska's son-in-law needed some backhoe work done, he decided to invest the money in a backhoe instead of power steering. He found a Model 1199 made by Long Manufacturing. Designed for Cat. II 3-pt. hitches, it has a digging depth of 10 1/2 ft. and a reach of 9 ft., 4 in. Equipped with a 36-in. bucket or one of 5 trenching buckets, it has a digging force of 5,000 lbs.

Although it was designed for Long tractors starting with a 32 hp 350, the 8N handles it fine. Halaska's 8N has a hydraulic pump mounted to the front of the engine with a reservoir and a joystick mounted to the left side loader support post.

"It took some trial and error to figure out how to mount it, but once I did, the counter balance it offered to the loader was a tremendous side benefit," says Halaska. "It took enough weight off the front end that I can easily steer the 8N."

Rather than mount the backhoe to the 8N's 3-pt. arms, Halaska used a fixed mount. He slipped 5-in. C-channels over the 4-in. loader frame C-channels and bolted the backhoe to the bigger channel irons. Although the

C-channels are bolted to each other, they carry no load. Instead, loads are spread out the length of the C-channels.

Halaska has made other modifications to the 8N, including designing and fabricating a set of forklifts for the loader. He welded steel plates to the sides of the bucket and mounted flanges to hold a heavy-duty steel pipe in place.

"I fabricated forks out of C-channel," explains Halaska.

He welded them at right angles to short lengths of boxed beam. They in turn are welded to pipes slightly larger than the cross pipe and slide on it.

"I like to have both the forks and the bucket with me when I'm out in the woods or away from the buildings," says Halaska. "When I don't need the forks, I just tip them back to a stand mounted to the top of the bucket and tie them down."

Halaska mounted an electric winch to the cross bar on the loader. "I use it to inch loads along," he says. "I can hook it on a 55-gal. barrel and tip it to slowly empty the contents into another barrel. I also use it for dragging and lifting heavy saw logs for splitting. Basically, there are unlimited uses for it for precision lifting."

Halaska also mounted a forklift roll cage to the 8N. LED lights, as well as an overhead light, are mounted fore and aft to the crossbars. The 8N also has lighted tach, oil pressure gauge and Hobbs hour meter.



Bob Halaska says adding a backhoe to his Ford 8N makes lots of jobs easy. It also took enough weight off the tractor's front end so that it steers easier.



Halaska also fabricated a set of forklifts for the tractor's loader. "When I don't need the forks, I just tip them back to a stand on top of the bucket and tie them down," he says.

The 8N came equipped with 2 gearbox ranges for a total of 12 forward and 3 reverse gears. It also had the hydraulic pump and reservoir attached when he bought it 26 years ago.

"We both have a little rust on us – we share

a December, 1947 birthday – but it's a real workhorse" says Halaska.

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Rubber Bale Feeder Cover

Buck Wild Innovations of Readyville, Tenn., recently introduced a new lightweight, low-cost cover that bolts onto any round bale feeder.

The 9-ft. dia. cover is made from 3/16-in. thick, extremely durable, UV-stabilized extruded rubber that attaches to 6 galvanized metal support bars which bolt onto the hay ring's top rung. The cover droops down between the support bars.

"Most covered feeders are large, bulky, and heavy units that are expensive and difficult to move around. Our cover weighs just 65 lbs. and goes on the ring you already have," says Adams. "The rubber material is soft enough that a tall animal won't get hurt if it quickly raises its head. As a result, the cover can be mounted down low where it can do a better

job of protecting hay from wind-blown rain. Also, the cover is light enough that you can still lift and roll the ring by hand, move it with a loader-mounted spear, or easily move it with our bale and ring mover."

The cover sells for \$299 plus S&H.

The company also offers specially designed, heavy duty camouflage material that lets you quickly convert a covered hay ring into a covered hunting blind, by wrapping the material around the ring's sides.

"It works great to go turkey or deer hunting," says Adams.

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Rubber cover is attached to 6 galvanized metal support bars that bolt onto hay ring's top rung.

Small Farms Can Build A Biogester To Generate Power

A Swiss company says vegetable growers, crop farmers and livestock producers can build their own "biogester" to make it easy to use waste products for fuel. Methane produced in a home-built device can be used as a cooking gas or to power a generator that produces electricity. Livestock manure, cactus from dryland farms, rotten fruits and vegetables, old cooking oil, and waste food from restaurants can all be used in a biogester.

Markus Ottinger of Ottinger Power has designed, built and helped customers build digesters that produce from 10kw up to 1000kw of power. Smaller biogesters about 200 gal. in size will produce enough methane to cook meals and power a small furnace. A 700-gal. biogester could fuel a furnace or provide gas for an engine-powered electrical generator. Ottinger says small digesters can be made from barrels, old fuel tanks, septic tanks or custom-made to whatever size a person wants. For example, a custom-built

tank 5 by 7 ft. by 5 ft. deep would hold about 700 gal. where slurry occupies about 600 gal. of the capacity. The 700-gal. tank allows about 15 gal. a day input. A flexible rubber bladder seals the surface and allows the methane to expand the top where it's released through a flexible line.

The type of gas produced depends on what's put into the digester tank. Ottinger says grass clippings, vegetable residue, decaying food waste and livestock manure produce quality usable methane. Ottinger's company will work with individuals to determine how and where to construct a biogester on their property and also provide plans and directions on how to build the system.

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A Swiss company works with individuals who want to build biogesters on their property. Methane expands the top of flexible rubber bladder and is released through a flexible line. Biogesters can be used to operate engine-powered generators.