

Reader Letters

In regard to your article in FARM SHOW Vol. 5, No. 3, 1981, we wish to correct the statement by Vance Hahn concerning the article on the seed tube extender for a John Deere Max-Emerge corn planter.

He states that the seed tube on the planter curves forward at the bottom, causing a bounce on the seed in dry conditions. We are enclosing drawings from John Deere Co. of the seed tube which show that it curves to the rear, causing a no bounce condition.

Paul R. Croissant
Larry C. Hood
Law Equipment Co.
Greeley, Colo.

Regarding the article you published in FARM SHOW (Vol. 5, No. 3, 1981), about our planter extension tube. We apparently have a small misunderstanding. It should have read:

"Deere's seed tube is curved rearward at the bottom. We have found that in dry soils the furrow will close before the seed is dropped. By using our extension, you are dropping the seed straight down before the furrow begins to fill with dirt. The result of this will be more uniform depth for all seeds."

We hope this will clear up the problem.

Vance Hahn
C & V Sales & Service
Cherokee, Iowa

I would suggest that farmers interested in their own on-farm still start small and make their mistakes little ones, and then work up. But first of all, research it very deep. I spent 3 years, off and on, researching before I attempted anything. I collected a mountain of material — books, magazines and various publications — and let me tell you there is more misinformation out there than there is good. The biggest joke was a book I sent for, "How to Make a Juneyard Still".

Three of the best publications I've found are the following: "Making Alcohol Fuel" by Lance Crombie from Rutan Publishing, P.O. Box 3585, Minneapolis, Mn.; "Goosens ETOH Fuel Books" from Harvester Press, Hendersonville, N.C.; and "The Mother Earth News", 105 Stoney Mountain Road, Hendersonville, N.C.

If farmers don't want to take the time to educate themselves, they should buy a push button, turnkey system

which would be very expensive and, based on advertisements I have seen, there aren't many to choose from.

R. J. Rhea
Indiana

I'm heading up a research project for our company to determine the economics and labor to produce alcohol on the farm.

Our still was purchased from Tri-Star, of Vandalia, Ill., after we evaluated a number of still manufacturers. The manufacturer modified our unit to our specifications prior to delivery. We have since modified it still more to incorporate energy and labor-saving ideas. Rated capacity of our system is 35 gal. of 180-proof alcohol daily.

We have experienced a number of malfunctions and have had to modify and maintain the still on several occasions. It performs pretty much as designed but requires too much time and maintenance when operating continuously, as we are doing with our research. We are burning the alcohol in two diesel tractors equipped with M & W Gear (Gibson City, Ill.) Aquahol injectors, a pickup truck modified to dual carburetion, and a gas farm tractor.

While we have been successful in achieving alcohol production at the farm level, and in burning the alcohol produced, our conclusion is that, with current technology, the production and use of farm-produced alcohol is not as simple or cheap as still manufacturers would have people believe.

We don't claim to have evaluated all the farm stills that have come on the market since we began our research project, but we remain skeptical of claims published about farm-produced alcohol until we see documented proof. We believe alcohol fuel will be part of the answer to our nation's energy problem, but additional research and commitments by government and industry to exploit fully the alcohol fuels alternative are needed.

Tom Scott, coordinator
Alternate Energy Sources,
FS Supplies Division
Bloomington, Ill.

Dear Senator:

My friend Roberts over in Pima County received a \$1,000.00 check from the government this year for not raising hogs. So I am going into the not-raising-hogs business next year. What I want to know is, in your opinion, what is the best kind of farm not to raise

hogs on and the best kind of hogs not to raise? I would prefer not to raise razor-backs, but, if that is not a good breed not to raise, I will just as gladly not raise any Berkshires or Durocs.

The hardest work in this business is going to be in keeping an inventory of how many hogs I haven't raised. My friend Roberts is very joyful about the future of this business. He has been raising hogs for more than 20 years and the best he ever made was \$400 until this year, when he got \$1,000.00 for not raising hogs. If I can get \$1,000.00 for not raising 50 hogs, then I will get \$2,000.00 for not raising 100 hogs.

I plan to operate on a small scale at first, holding myself down to about 4,000 hogs, which means I will get \$80,000.00 from the government. Now, another thing: These hogs I will not raise will not eat 100,000 bushels of corn. I understand that you also pay farmers for not raising corn. So will you pay me anything for not raising 100,000 bushels of corn not to feed the hogs I am not raising? I want to get started as soon as possible, as this seems to be a good time of the year for not raising hogs — Yours truly,

Roman Weninger
Akron, Ohio.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Scarcely a month goes by that we don't receive a copy of the above letter from a reader who saw it in his or her local paper. So that everyone will know that we know about the letter, and that FARM SHOW readers know about it, we hereby publish the most recent version of the letter which we received from Roman Weninger, who added this postscript: "The program proposed in the letter is far more honorable than any of those which political hacks have forced upon us farmers."

Don't Miss A Single Issue

Many new subscribers have asked if they can obtain back issues of FARM SHOW. The answer is yes. Here's what's available:

1977 — Two of the 6 charter-year issues (Vol. 1, No. 3, and Vol. 1, No. 4) are still available.

1978 — All 6 issues still available.

1979 — All 6 issues still available except one (Vol. 3, No. 5).

1980 — All 6 issues still available except one (Vol. 4, No. 6).

1981 — All previously published issues still available (Vol. 5, No. 1; Vol. 5, No. 2; Vol. 5, No. 3).

Send your check for \$2.00 per copy to: Back issues, FARM SHOW Magazine, Box 704, Lakeville, Minn. 55044. Make your check payable to "FARM SHOW".

PUSHES MANURE TO OUTSIDE PIT

Manure Pump Made From Old Hay Baler

Illinois dairy farmer, Eldor Henrichs, of Onarga, decided the \$6,000 asking price for a commercial plunger-type manure pump to push manure scraped from his free-stall barn and feeding area through an underground pipe and into a pit 50 ft. away was too steep. So, he built his own from an old hay baler for a total cost of only \$850.

"It works great," says Henrichs, who started with an old Minneapolis-Moline wire tie baler which he purchased at an auction sale. He stripped out the plunger and crank, then reduced the plunger stroke from about 30 in. to 18 in. to reduce size of the manure input opening needed, and to cut power requirements.

"Reducing the stroke is pretty touchy to get things lined up properly. It's best to have a full crank, supported on both sides of the piston rod rather than a single arm crank as found on some smaller balers," Henrichs told FARM SHOW.

Powered by a 5 hp. electric motor, the plunger operates at 21 strokes per minute. Manure is pushed from the barn through a 12 in. dia. underground PVC plastic pipe to a 60 ft. by 80 ft. pit which has a sloping 50 ft. long concrete ramp at one end. The ramp permits backing a vacuum spreader or slurry pump into the pit to remove accumulated solids after the liquid is pumped out.

Henrichs says the only problem he's had with his home-built pump in the first year of operation was the shearing of 4 bolts on the plunger. Some minor modifications corrected this one-time problem and there's been no more trouble ever since. The \$850 he spent for the home-built pump includes all out-of-pocket expenses for materials except the 5 hp electric motor and the 12 in. dia. PVC pipe between the pump and outside manure pit.

Do Your Friends A Favor!

Put them in touch with FARM SHOW. Just send us the names of neighbors, friends or relatives you think would like to see this new magazine regularly. We'll send them a free copy. We'll also tell them, with your permission, that it was you who suggested we send them the free copy. Be sure to include zip codes.

Yes, it's okay to tell each name below that: _____ asked us to send you this free copy of FARM SHOW magazine.

Send each of them an issue but don't use my name.

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