

“Best Buy” Backhoe Attachment

“My 2002 Amulet HoeClamp is one of my best buys ever,” says John Lund, Rhineland, Wis., who uses the unit on his Ford 4500 loader/backhoe (ph 800 526-8538; www.amulet.com).

The HoeClamp is a pin-on, full motion thumb that fits most standard and extendable dipper backhoe loaders, with no additional hydraulics needed. Utilizing unique linkage, it’s operated by the backhoe’s bucket curl. Most models feature digging, grasping and also a stored position.

“It’s a mechanical clamp that mounts on a backhoe, replacing some of the linkage and pins,” says Lund. “The HoeClamp moves as the bucket moves. It can be pinned in 2 different locations, depending on the type of work you’re doing. I usually use it in a position where I can still dig. It’s extremely useful in building rock walls, and is easier to use than a hydraulic thumb.”

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Amulet Manufacturing Company, 6442 Boekel Rd., Rathdrum, Idaho 83858 (ph 800 526-8538; www.amulet.com).



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Reader Inquiry No. 112

They Burn Grass To Heat Workshop

Adlai Schetter and his dad heat their workshop with grass, burning small square bales of various biomass crops. The high school FFA member encouraged his dad to put tropical maize and miscanthus to work as fuel.

“The biggest problem is getting the grass to the stove,” says Schetter. “Growing up on a row crop farm, I have new respect for anyone with livestock who feeds small square bales daily.”

The Schetters built a 60 by 90-ft. workshop and installed the PEX in-floor heat with the help of a family friend. Under his guidance, Adlai designed and installed the manifold, hooking it up to a Log Boss wood-fired boiler.

“One of our neighbors has a baler, and he bales the grasses, and I move them,” says Schetter. “We burned about 1,000 bales a month last year.”

Gary Letterly, extension educator at the University of Illinois, has advised the Schetters. “If you burn premium wood pellets, it will run about 1 percent or less ash,” he explains. “Grasses will run 3 1/2 to 5 percent ash. When propane was \$4, burning grass looked good. Now it’s not as good, but it is renewable.”

Miscanthus and tropical maize are baled after they have dried down. In the case of



Adlai Schetter and his dad burn small square bales of various biomass crops, including Miscanthus grass and tropical maize, to heat their workshop.

the miscanthus, harvest is delayed until the leaves have fallen off and rains have leached out problem components.

“When you burn miscanthus, it is like burning little twigs,” says Letterly. “It burns fairly hot and clean.”

Schetter points out that because of the higher ash content, grasses need to be burned at a higher temperature than wood and with more air. “We turn the thermostat on the boiler up to 325 degrees and add air to burn the grass,” he says.

Schetter likes the dual-purpose nature of the tropical maize. High in sugar content, the bales can be fed to cattle if not needed for heat. The crop can also be grazed.

Schetter credits Letterly and a grant from



Adlai is shown here feeding the fire in their Log Boss wood-fired boiler. The Miscanthus grass burns hot and clean.



The Schetters designed and installed this manifold and hooked it up to a Log Boss wood-fired boiler.

The Dudley Schmidt Initiative as helping them develop the bioenergy portion of the project.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Adlai Schetter, 16235 State Hwy. 111, Brighton, Ill. 62012 (adlaijschetter@gmail.com).