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Quick-Tach Mounting Plate Makes Mower Service Easy

"I bought a skid loader quick-tach universal mounting plate and bolted it onto the deck of my 3-pt. mounted, 6-ft. finishing mower. It lets me disconnect the mower from the 3-pt. hitch and raise the deck up off the ground so I can service the blades safely while standing up," says Darry Markle, Claresholm, Alberta.

Markle paid \$160 (Canadian) for the quick-tach mounting plate and bolted it to the back side of the mower deck. "I had to drill a couple of holes in the plate and bolt on metal brackets to make it work," he says. "The mounting plate can be left on the mower without interfering with its normal operation.

And it can be quickly detached if I ever want to sell the mower.

"It's a lot safer than laying on the ground under the mower while it's connected to the tractor's 3-pt. hitch. And there's no need to block the mower to make sure it doesn't fall on me. I think the same idea would work

with a loader tractor equipped with a skid loader-style quick-tach mounting plate."

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Leonard Mallas repaired a scrapped-out leaf blower vac and used it to build a high capacity collection system for his Gravely 60-in. zero-turn riding mower.

Leaf Blower-Vac Built From Salvaged Parts

"I wanted to add a leaf blower-vac to my Gravely 60-in. zero-turn riding mower, but I didn't want to pay the \$2,500 price tag for a factory unit. So I built my own high capacity collection system for less than \$200," says Leonard Mallas, Fond du Lac, Wis.

"I use it on our 3-acre lawn and on hiking and ATV trails that we maintain so it gets used a lot," says Mallas. "It takes only about 2 min. to detach the blower-vac from the mower."

He started with a scrapped-out blower-vac which he repaired. The blower-vac is belt-driven off the mower deck and blows clippings or leaves into a small trailer that he built out of 1-in. tubing and plywood.

The trailer mounts solid to the back of the mower with 2 pins. "A single caster wheel on back allows the trailer to follow in any direction including reverse, something that a conventional trailer can't do," says Mallas.

The box's rear door is hinged at the top and automatically opens to remove leaves and clippings. "I took the hinges from the trunk of a Toyota car and added 2 sets of gas shock lift cylinders off a mini van to them, so once I unlatch the door it'll open by itself," says Mallas. "The box's floor slants down toward the back, and the entire interior is painted with graphite paint so as the door is raised



Clippings are blown into a small trailer that he built out of 1-in. tubing and plywood.

the load will slide out easily."

The trailer can be removed in only about 30 sec. by dropping a pair of parking wheels on front and pulling 2 pins and a hose. Mallas added a plastic roof vent on top of the box, facing it backward to direct exhaust air and dust away from the driver. Two spring brackets store a short-handled rake on top of the box that's used to help empty the load.

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New Way To Place Nitrogen On Both Sides Of Corn Rows

Ohio no-till farmer Alvin King says the Nutri-Placer that he and his sons developed for applying nitrogen fertilizer with their corn planter produced a 9.8 bushels-per-acre yield advantage over fertilizer placed with conventional single-disk openers in 2016. "We produced those results in 15 replications on a 16-acre field using stabilized high-energy nitrogen," King says.

King and his sons built the Nutri-Placer after learning that dribbling nitrogen on both sides of a corn row feeds the roots evenly compared to placing all of it on one side. "I told the boys that sure makes sense, so lets build something that puts fertilizer within 2 in. on both sides of the seed," King says.

Their Nutri-Placer uses stainless steel tubes attached to both sides of a bracket mounted to the closing wheel on their Deere planter. Liquid nitrogen feeds into the tubes through a Y adapter and dribbles onto the ground through 11-in. steel-braided hydraulic hoses attached to the tube ends. "The hydraulic hoses are stiff, so they remain straight as the planter moves through the field, placing the liquid in a nice even band on both sides of the seed. We mounted a piece of Martin drag chain on 2 brackets to lightly incorporate the liquid into the soil," King says.

Asked if the tubes plug with soil or the chain gets filled with crop residue and balls up with dirt during planting, King says they haven't experienced any problems on their farm. "We're no-till, and the people I've sold them to are also no-tilling, and it's worked fine. If others experience a problem, we'll have to look for a solution."

King says that his Nutri-Placer is much lighter than a typical disk opener mounted on a row unit, so there's no compaction in the root zone to hamper plant growth. "We removed the disk openers and installed Nutri-Placers on all the row units. The roots on plants we dug up were more balanced than when we were putting fertilizer on one side of the row," King says. He also uses pop-up fertilizer in furrow.

King says the Nutri-Placer kit, which he sells for \$105, is easy to bolt onto the



No-till farmer Alvin King and his sons built this Nutri-Placer kit that puts fertilizer within 2 in. on both sides of the row for more uniform plant uptake. They recommend using it with drag chains.



closing wheel bracket of a Deere or Kinze planter. It includes a Y adapter that fits the fertilizer supply line, laser cut tubes formed with a CNC bender, a weldment that bolts to each side of the closing wheel, and two 11-in. pieces of hydraulic hose. The kit doesn't include drag chain.

"We're running more yield trials on our farm this year and other farmers who used the Nutri-Placer will also provide results," adds King, who says the device is inexpensive and easy-to-maintain compared to disk-style openers.

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