

“Made It Myself” Garden Tractor Loader



Dennis Gintowt built this front-end loader for his 1972 Deere 112 garden tractor. With weights on back of tractor he can pick up as much as 500 lbs. Hydraulic pump is belt-driven off the engine and positioned so it doesn't hit tractor's front wheel.



“When I first started building it, I figured I was making myself a toy, but the loader has turned out to be handy for many jobs,” says Dennis Gintowt about the loader he built for his 1972 Deere 112 garden tractor. “The bucket holds a little more than you can get in a wheelbarrow so it's like a motorized wheelbarrow.”

With weights on back of the tractor, he can pick up as much as 500 lbs. with the loader. It's handy for loading firewood in the pickup, spreading fertilizer, handling bark mulch, and scraping the driveway in winter.

Gintowt started with plans for a Cub loader tractor he had purchased and modified them to fit his Deere. He used 2 by 2, 1/8-in. tubing for the arms and 4 by 4, 1/4-in. steel for the towers, one of which holds the hydraulic fluid. He built the bucket out of flat stock and estimates the whole thing weighs about 450 lbs.

He drilled holes on the tractor to bolt the loader on, but otherwise didn't have to change anything on the tractor. With nearly 40 years of welding experience he had all the tools and skills necessary to build the loader, but it was his first time working with hydraulics. He lost some fluid in the process, but with trial and error and the help of a friend, he figured it out.

It took Gintowt about a year to complete the loader, with a lot of time spent planning.

“You don't want to hurry the project,” he advises, noting he took his time planning important details such as placing the hydraulic pump so the wheels didn't hit it, for example.

After eight years of use, there is only one thing that would make it better.

“I wish it was a 4-WD tractor for digging in the dirt,” he says. It easily handles loose dirt, but doesn't have the traction for digging packed dirt.

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ET Air Ride's ZTR Puffer is a universal Air Ride suspension kit that can be used on most makes and models of zero-turn mowers.

Convert Your Zero-Turn Mower Into An Air Ride

The ZTR Puffer emerged from an idea...

An Ohioan desired to make his ride a bit more comfortable. Putting together a makeshift frame, adding an airbag and a compressor to it, he installed his idea on his 455 Deere tractor.

Impressed enough with the way it worked, he invested in a patent for the unit and started his search for someone to collaborate with.

Auglaize Erie Machine came into the picture in 2001 and the ET Air Ride company was born. ET Air Ride expanded on the idea and designed it specifically for commercial zero-turn mowers calling the unit the EZ Terrain.

By 2013 the unit had continued to be developed and designed to fit a wide range of zero-turn makes and models. ET Air Ride started to market the idea locally and renamed the product the ZTR Puffer.

Since that time ZTR Puffer has started a developing dealer program and has sold units as far as Australia and Canada.

So if you are tired of getting beat up riding your mower opt for a ZTR Puffer from ET Air Ride and turn your rough riding mower into an Air Ride with a ZTR Puffer Air Ride suspension kit.

Don't take our word for it; check out what this customer had to say:

“I purchased the puffer after seeing an article in the FARM SHOW publication. I called and asked if they had a product that would fit my John Deere ZX90 zero steer turf mower. They did and sent it out. It couldn't be easier to put the unit on with no interference with the seat shut off safety switch. Directions were great, very well thought out. I have been using it now for over a year, mowing a hilly campground facility...open fields and my home lawn and it works great in all areas. The added height felt different the first 2 or 3 times, but I do not notice it now, and the performance is actually better because I can stay in the seat longer and not get the tar beat out of me. The money I save from the chiropractor has paid for the unit 3 times over. It's quality built with heavy metal fabrication and I have not had a single issue with it to this point. I recommend it to everyone who is looking for quality, value, and comfort. Thanks, Puffer!” *JP from NJ*

The ZTR Puffer starting price is \$399.00.

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