Swing Hitch Designed To Double Up Balers

The dual baler swing hitch from Marcrest speeds up small square baling. The Swing Max hitch is mounted to the tractor with a Cat. II, 3-pt. hitch and pto. Heavy-duty integrated legs fold out of the way for easy storage and for quick, safe hook ups. There are LED lights for night work.

"The Swing Max is a step toward higher capacity in small square baling," says Carol Horst, Marcrest Manufacturing. "There are other dual baler hitches on the market, but none with the combination of features found on the Swing Max."

Power transfers from the tractor to the baler through a heavy-duty, pass-through gearbox. A 1,000 rpm input shaft and a 540 rpm output shaft powers the first baler. A hydraulic motor powers the pto for the second baler.

The Swing Max keeps the first baler on path with the tractor, while hydraulic control from the cab directs the second baler. The swing arm's wheeled dolly provides control on tight headlands. It swings the second baler inline for easy single file transit between fields. The dolly ensures operator control of the second baler during turns.

Swing Max dual baler hitch keeps the first baler on path with the tractor, while hydraulic control from the cab directs the second baler.

Six models provide from 20 to 42 ft. of working width and up to 46 ft. of travel left to right between balers.

The Swing Max works with any baler with no modifications needed. Prices range from $27,000 to $42,000 (U.S.).

Check out a video of the Swing Max at FARMSHOW.com.

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Solar-Powered Tile Sump Pumps

When you need to power pumps to drain tile in remote fields, you might consider going solar, says Jamie Near, owner of Energy Service Solutions, LLC. He designs systems that can be less expensive and easier to install than hooking into an electric power grid.

"We use regular 240-volt AC dewatering pumps, so there are no special pumps or direct current systems that cost double," Near says. "You use the same thing as a farmer uses with grid power. My system is designed as 'solar direct' meaning it only pumps water during the day when there is enough solar power to start the pump. There are no batteries."

Near's system includes equipment that converts DC to AC and a variable frequency drive to maximize the power generated on cloudy days from a 320 to 360-watt solar panel to run single or 3-phase AC pump motors. Systems typically lift water at 100 to 300 gpm, though Near says he recently designed a system to pump at 400 gpm for 40 acres.

"We came up with this out of necessity, because before there was no option when fields were remote," he says, noting most of his work is with generator systems. Solar makes economic sense when grid power is 1/4 to 1/2 mile away or farther. Windmill pumps are also more expensive.

Costs for solar pump systems start at about $4,800 for an installed 100 gpm system with 6 to 9 solar panels. With no utility bills, there is a fairly quick payback, Near says.

"The other thing we've done is used the solar system in a well pump for irrigation application," he adds. "These water pumping systems can also be used for water wells and produce over 50 gpm at high pumping heads. They can also be used for pond aerating and decorative fountains."

Near installs the solar systems in his region near Lake Michigan, and is available as a consultant to people in other parts of the country.

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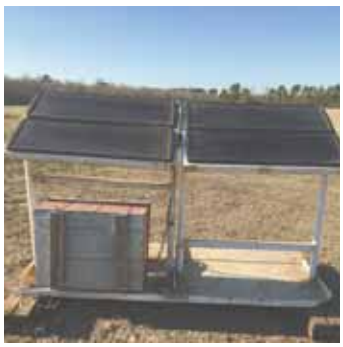
Jamie Near designs solar systems that power pumps to drain tile in remote fields. "Solar makes sense when grid power is 1/4 to 1/2 mile away or farther," he says.



Portable solar-powered setup provides pond water to Cox's cattle. Four 40-watt solar panels are wired to a pair of 12-volt batteries located inside box on platform.

Home-Built Solar Water Pumping Kit

Donnie Cox of Haworth, Okla., recently sent FARM SHOW photos of a portable solar-powered setup he uses to provide pond water to his cattle.

"Several years back we had a pond dug on our property," says Cox. "I wanted to keep cattle out of it so I ran an electric fence around the perimeter. Then I installed a 100-gal. tank outside the fence and hooked up a float valve in it to a DC pump.

"To power both the electric fence and the pump I bought four, 40-watt solar panels and set them on a home-built metal frame that's bolted to a wooden platform. The panels are wired to a pair of 12-volt batteries located inside a wooden box on the platform. The panels keep the batteries charged, and the batteries keep the pump going."

Cox says his solar panel setup has come in handy for doing other jobs, too. "Last summer I moved the system up to our yard where my great granddaughter keeps show goats inside a pen. I also installed a DC-AC inverter so that she can use a big fan to keep the goats cool during hot summer weather. I've even used the panels to power Christmas lights that decorate a tree in our pasture."

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