

Antique Ford Makes Eye-Catching Wind Vane

"When I was younger I had the same model and I always liked the looks of it," says Ray Fry about the 1955 Ford Meteor he mounted on a pole outside his front window. Now he, and every passerby on Hwy. 245, east of Stephenfield, Manitoba, can take a look at the car to see which way the wind is blowing.

"I put a fin on the back to make the front face into the wind," he says, explaining that the bottom of the car is welded to a big truck wheel on a spindle with a sealed bearing so that it can spin. The spindle goes into a post secured in concrete in the ground.

After finding the old Ford, Fry completely gutted it. He fixed up the body and painted it to look like the 1956 Meteor car that he used

to own. He used a loader bucket with forks to place it up on the 15-ft. pole.

That was 10 years ago, and the car has been spinning ever since without any maintenance. Others enjoy it, too. Recently a care facility brought people out to look at it, and it's become a landmark for many. People often stop to take photos.

For Fry, it's an ideal way to display the Meteor.

"There's nothing I have to do," Fry says. "It can be there forever."

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Photo by Jeannette Greaves

Bottom of car welds to a big truck wheel on a spindle so it can spin. A fin on back makes the front end face into the wind.

First Axial Flow Combine Still In The Field After 40 Years

When Illinois farming brothers Matt and Mike Frey bought a used IH 1460 Axial Flow combine in 1982 with just over 4,000 hrs. on it they had no idea it was a "celebrity" machine. Turns out it was the very first Axial Flow ever built by IH. Sixteen years later, in 1998, Case IH featured the machine in a story and video to commemorate the 100,000th Axial Flow built. Farm Show (Vol. 27, No. 2) featured the Frey's machine in 2003 when it was 25 years old. Now, more than 15 years later, that first-ever Axial Flow is still active in the field.

"We run the machine every year harvesting a hundred or so acres of beans or wheat with the 17 1/2-ft. head, and it still does a great job," says Matt. "Over the years it has always been our second machine, so it's semi-retired and now has about 4,250 hrs. on the meter. Initially we put bigger tires

on it, but those have been replaced with the original size. We've done some work with the hydrostatic drive and keep everything in good working condition. The machine has never had one hour of downtime. The engine and drive train are still original," Matt says.

In 2019 the Frey's took their celebrity machine to the Historic Farm Days in Penfield, Ill. and to the Half Century of Progress in Rantoul, Ill. "It always draws a lot of attention and people can't believe how good it looks and what it sounds like when its running," says Matt. "We intend to keep it in good working condition as long as we're farming."

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The used IH 1460 Axial Flow combine Matt and Mike Frey bought in 1982 turned out to be the very first Axial Flow ever built. They still use the machine, and the engine and drivetrain are original.

Want A Family Milk Cow?

If you're looking for the perfect family milk cow but don't want to end up with gallons of unused milk, check out Dexters, says Laura Christofk, president of the Purebred Dexter Cattle Association of North America.

"Dexters are a naturally small breed of cattle, but they are not small on benefits. They provide quality milk in manageable quantities. Dexters may not feed the world, but they will easily feed your family."

Dexters originated in Ireland as a small, thrifty "house" cow, and are still considered to be the hardest of all the British cattle breeds. Although Dexter cattle were introduced in the U.S. in the early 1900's they are still considered a rare heritage breed, according to the Livestock Conservancy. But the number of North American breeders continues to grow.

Producers appreciate the breed's small size and mild temperament that makes them easy to handle. They require only about half the feed of standard size breeds, and will thrive on poor forage. Cows typically range from 38 to 42 in. tall and weigh about 750 lbs. Bulls are 38 to 44 in. tall and weigh about 1,000 lbs.

Dexters deliver family-sized quantities of milk. You can separate the mother and calf at night, milk in the morning, and let the calf take the rest during the day.

"It's a beautiful milk, with a light, fresh quality to it and even better, much of the 4 percent butterfat stays homogenized in the milk, making it perfect for cheese-making. The 1 to 2-gal. of milk from one milking is a good daily quantity for most families."

In addition, Dexter beef is known for its flavor, marbling, and tenderness. Christofk

notes that Dexter beef recently won the grass-fed beef division at the 2019 American Royal Steak Competition in Kansas City, beating out Angus, Beefalo and even Wagyu.

Dexter cattle come in black, dun and red colors as well as horned or polled. Weaned steers and heifers typically sell for \$500 to \$1,200. Christofk recommends buying from a registered breeder.

You can find a list of breeders at the association's website.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Purebred Dexter Cattle Association of North America, 500 Westover Dr., Suite 13489, Sanford, N.C. 27330 (ph 844 732-2669; www.dexterstoday.com; PDCANOW@gmail.com).



A "mini" breed that originated in Ireland, Dexters are great for families who want fresh milk but don't need more than a gallon per day.

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