



BRO pasture aerator uses 4 wavy coulters and a Shankpot Seeder for one-pass aeration and reseeding.

One-Pass Pasture Aeration, Reseeding

Don Brown gets a lot done in a single pass with what he calls his BRO pasture aerator. Between the 4 wavy coulters, Shankpot Seeder, and rear hitch, he can slice furrows, spread seed and pull a drag to bury seed contact and scatter manure. The results make a difference for his flock of Bluefaced Leicester and Lincoln sheep.

"When I started my sheep flock, I knew I needed quality grass for quality animals," says Brown. "I looked at ways to improve the pastures, but commercial machines were hard to justify or didn't work the way I wanted."

Brown custom-builds his BRO system for \$2,500. That's a lot less than some of the alternatives, like a 4-ft. wide, no-till drill for around \$14,000, or deep-tillage rigs that require high horsepower tractors.

Before building his system, he read about how one farmer used a box scraper to aerate, so he tried it. "I turned the teeth around and made 2 passes across the pasture," recalls Brown. "I looked back, and it looked ugly, but it gave me the idea of mounting worn plow coulters to an old cultivator frame. I liked how they sliced through the surface."

Brown decided to design an aeration/seed combination from the ground up. With the help of a neighbor, who is a good welder, he used 1 by 3-in. tubular steel for the 2 1/2 by 6-ft. frame. He mounted coulters 16 to 18 in. apart and put a receiver hitch on the back to let him hook on a drag.

"A 4-ft. wide drag covers the disk slots to increase seed-to-soil contact," says Brown. "I'll use an 8-footer in the late winter or early spring to spread manure if there is a cluster in one area."

Without down pressure on the 3-pt. hitch, Brown knew he would need to add weight. He used 3-in. angle iron to make a tray for cinder block weights.

"The coulters stay in the ground, even when I'm turning," says Brown. "I went with wave coulters because they open up the ground more than straight coulters."

To scatter seed, Brown avoided motors and went with a vibration driven Yeoman's



A drag can be pulled behind to help cover seed and to scatter manure.

Shankpot seeder. The Australian made seed box costs around \$600 and is designed for use behind a plow. Dial up seed slots of 5/8-in. to 1 1/16-in. allow about any size seed to vibrate out of the seed box onto an 18-in. disk that scatters it behind the coulters. A patented jigger system prevents seed from clogging up the seed drop.

"I spread about 8 lbs. of seed every 3 acres," says Brown. "I mostly use pasture mixes, but I will add some larger seed like wheat or rye to visually check that seed is falling."

For another visual check of seed getting spread, Brown cut a slot in the side of the seed box facing the tractor and covered it in Plexiglas.

"I have 36 acres of pasture split into 10 paddocks, all with water," says Brown. "I try to use my aerator/seed 5 times a year, usually when I move my sheep flock out of a paddock. It works especially nice after a rain."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Don Brown, 31024 Township Rd. 11, Fresno, Ohio 43824 (ph 330 763-0494; don.plc@gmail.com).



Garden tractor spray rig works great for fertilizing Reesor's 2-acre market vegetable operation. Extended frame on tractor makes room for tank and sprayer.

Garden Tractor Spray Rig

Matt Reesor needed a small sprayer for his family's produce farm. Rather than buy an expensive model from a dealer, he built one himself. Reesor emailed us recently, writing "I've been a big fan of FARM SHOW for 20 years and always wanted to make something you could write about. Finally I think I've got something that's FARM SHOW worthy."

Reesor put the sprayer together over the past year. "First I bought a well-used but still running Craftsman YT3000 lawn tractor for 100 bucks at an auction. It was a steal. The tractor had a 21 hp. Briggs & Stratton twin cylinder engine."

To provide 10 in. of ground clearance for spraying, Reesor moved the tractor's original 8-in. rear wheels to the front and installed larger 16-in. high by 12-in. wide wheels on the back. Those are attached to a main frame extension that he made using 2 by 3-in. angle iron. He set the wheels at 36 in. on center to straddle his row crops. Reesor made the floating axle connecting the wheels from

1-in. bar stock and installed pillow-block bearings. The wheels are driven with #40 chain connecting the original mower drive axle to the new one at a 1:1 ratio.

"Extending the frame gave me a longer wheelbase for more stability and added room for the tank and sprayer to mount on a platform that I built between the wheels," Reesor says. The sprayer consists of a 30-gal. tank, a 3.3 gal. pump, and foldout booms that expand to 25 ft. Reesor says the rig works great for fertilizing his 2-acre fresh market vegetable operation.

"The whole setup took about 30 hrs. to build and cost just under \$1,000, which is way less than what I would've paid for something to mount on a 4-wheeler," Reesor says.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Matt Reesor, Fresh Veggies at 60 Aileen, Newmarket, Ontario, Canada (60aileen@gmail.com).



Sand hits a pair of aluminum deflectors on back of spreader and falls to either side, filling wheel ruts in blueberry field.

Auction Find Fills Ruts Fast

Robert Pearson fills wheel ruts in his 10-acre blueberry field with what he calls a "Rut Row". It was made out of an old Bannerman sand spreader he bought at auction for \$150.

"My rows are on 9-ft. centers, and the fields hold a lot of water," says Pearson. "They were really rutted up, and I needed a way to fill them."

With its conveyer belt floor and hydraulic drive motor, the Bannerman was almost ideal. However, the wheel span was too wide, and the hydraulic connectors didn't fit his tractor.

"The axle stuck out an extra 12 in. That was easy to take care of," says Pearson. "I just cut down the solid steel shaft. The hydraulic fittings were tougher as they were German made. Luckily, a local hydraulic shop had some."

Pearson removed a second hydraulic motor mounted to the rear of the spreader.

It powered a bed-wide brush that feathered sand out the back, which he also removed.

The mechanical rear gate is mounted to an all thread rod, making it easy to adjust the opening.

He mounted a hitch receiver to the spreader frame and attached deflectors to a matching hitch mount. The deflectors were fashioned from an old aluminum shelf. As he drives down the row, the sand hits the deflectors and falls to either side, filling the ruts.

"The receiver hitch makes it easy to remove the deflectors," says Pearson. "With them out of the way, I'll be able to use the spreader to layer my driveway with asphalt crumbs. I'll set the gate at 1 1/2 in. and lay 9-ft. strips up and down the lane."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Robert Pearson, 9540 Alturas Babson Park Cut-Off Rd., Bartow, Fla. 33830 (ph 863 241-1148).

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