Mower Grab Bar Looks Factory-Built

Norman Fox loved his new John Deere Z740R mower. But at 83, balance issues made him nervous about getting on and off the machine. He fixed the problem by going through his scrap pile to find parts to build a grab bar that looked like it came from the factory.

"I don't like to drill holes in brand new machines," Fox says, so he found existing holes on the deck to work from.

He bent a 3/4-in. steel pipe to create the grab bar and welded a 1/2 by 1 1/2 by 5-in. plate with a drilled hole and a gusset on each side to set over the holes. Fox secured the grab bar legs with 3/8-in. bolts.

"It's very solid," he says, noting he was fortunate to bend the pipe at the right angle the first time. It's close enough that he can hold on to the bar to get on the mower and to help him sit down, stand up, and get off. A neighbor gave him leftover truck bed liner paint to make the bar easier to grip.

Fox made a grab bar for his mower using 3/4-in. steel pipe.

As a bonus, Fox bought a toolbox online and drilled holes in it to attach to a piece of metal welded to the grab bar legs.

"I use it to hold my billfold, cell phone, goggles, garage door opener, and other things," he says, pointing out he added a John Deere decal after painting everything the appropriate green.

"I've had people ask if it bothers my vision and it doesn't. It's like a muffler on a tractor. You don't even see it," Fox says.

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Installation involves the removal of the factory-installed gauge wheels and beams from the frame. Once the TerrainFlex walking beam has been installed and the gauge wheels added, the air drill is ready to go.

Walking Beam Upgrade For Air Drills

Keep your air drill on the ground in uneven terrain with a TerrainFlex walking beam from Applequist Manufacturing. The simple upgrade keeps air drill frames from lifting off the ground when working on contours and uneven terrain. The concept and the design were borne out of the frustration of Kansas farmers Mike Ohnsat and Brady Cline.

"Our air drills couldn't maintain consistent down pressure when following the contour of a field, especially if there were terraces," says Cline. "Poor wheel contact with the ground means less consistent seed placement from the openers and poor stands."

It also means more downtime due to machine breakdowns. Rigid frames on winged air drills can create stress points causing welds and bolts to break.

The two friends came up with a solution. They added walking beams to their 1890 Deere air drills. "We made our first set in 2015 and put half a set on one wing each of two machines and ran it that fall," says Cline. "After successfully running them, we finished another set and had the drills ready for spring drilling."

When Cline became plant manager at nearby Applequist Manufacturing, he suggested adding the walking beam kit to their product offering. By then, it had already gone through 40,000 acres of field testing.

The add-on kits are available for Deere 1850, 1860, and 1890 air drills and are simple to install. Typically a two-person job, it takes around 3 hrs. and involves the use of a skid steer or loader. Installation involves the removal of the factory-installed gauge wheels and beams from the frame. Once the TerrainFlex walking beam has been installed and the gauge wheels added, the air drill is ready to go. Component parts are all off-the-shelf.

Cline reports the kits have been sold throughout Kansas, as well as into Nebraska and Oklahoma. MSRP for a kit is $9,600. An optional weight bracket is available for another $1,600.

"We're currently selling through ag equipment dealers and always looking for more dealers to work with," says Cline.

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Combination shear/grab/ mix and transport bucket from Davies Technology.

British Farmer's TMR Mixer Bucket

Stephen Davies says farmers with smaller livestock operations don't need large mixing equipment to feed their stock, so he built equipment of his own design to meet his needs. Davies' new device, called the Dtec200, is a combination shear/grab and TMR feeding bucket that mounts on a tractor loader. It grabs slices of silage or round bales and mixes those materials with minerals or other supplements with a rotating paddle.

Davies is a trained engineer with 35 cattle and 65 sheep on his farm, so his new mixer bucket is exactly what he needs to produce small batches of mixed feed. It operates with tractor hydraulics.

The Dtec200 bucket is made with laser-cut steel that Davies fabricated and welded in his shop. A hydraulic motor runs the rotor and paddles that pull materials into the mixing drum. When the bucket is closed, the rotor engages to move material across and through stationary knives on the inside of the bucket. Feed materials are cut and mixed in the process. Davies modified his prototype by adding a small door where minerals or cereal grains can be added during the mixing process.

After the materials are completely mixed, the clamshell is opened and the auger reverses, unloading the feed. Davies has built three sizes of the Dtec to accommodate different size livestock operations.

Davies' invention earned him the distinguished Young Engineer Award at the UK's 40th anniversary LAMMA agriculture show in 2022 and provided several inquiries from interested buyers. Two companies offered to buy and produce his device. However, Davies has chosen to manufacture and market the product himself through his new company, Davies Technology. Two prototypes are being tested by local farmers and Davies says orders are being taken for products to be delivered in fall 2023.

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"Instead of tying up a tractor, farmers would set this up as a more cost-effective option," says Jonathan Hurst, HooverTec Sales Manager.

Mobile Power Unit Takes The Place Of A Tractor

The DynaQ custom-engineered mobile power unit eliminates the need to tie up a tractor when powering pumps, augers, dryers and other static equipment.

Powered by Fiat Powertrain Technology (FPT) diesel engines like those used in Case IH and New Holland, the mobile units are perfect for running PTO-powered equipment. For these types of machines, gear and clutch reduction systems are available to accommodate PTO requirements.

A side-mounted control panel manages all machine functions.

Trailers, frames, wheels and axles are heavy-duty and can be designed for ball hitch or generic pin towing needs.

Jonathan Hurst, HooverTec Sales Manager, says, "You have fuel efficiency and savings. It's power in a smaller package."

The DynaQs are custom designed to suit any operation's specific tasks. Most sales are for forage blowers or manure pumps emptying lagoons on dairy and hog farms.

Available options include a full unit enclosure, remote control, and engine power ranging from 50 to 500 hp.

The mobile DynaQs are produced and manufactured at HooverTec's Pennsylvania shop and are shipped anywhere in North America.

A broad price range exists depending on engine size and selected options, but units begin at $30,000 plus S&H.

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