

Farmers Tiled Local Football Field

"It can rain today, and they can play football tomorrow," says John Arens, thanks to a shallow drainage system installed by volunteers on the Fowler, Mich., high school football field.

The field's heavy clay soil had become waterlogged to the point where it felt like you were "walking on a waterbed," he says.

Recognizing that "it's just grass farming," Arens contacted experts at Michigan State University's Turfgrass Information Center. MSU's Dr. Trey Rogers heads the NFL's Superbowl turf team and also works on turf for Major League Baseball fields.

Instead of paying \$65,000 to have the work done by a landscaping company, Fowler School supporters - farmers, rural business owners, and others - volunteered this summer and completed the work for about \$5,000, with about half the cost going toward grass seed.

With a trencher rented for one day, Arens' dad, Al Arens, dug about 5,500 ft. of trenches - 12 in. deep, 6 in. wide and every 12 ft. Arens mapped out the trenches at angles from the center to take advantage of the field's crown and natural slope for drainage.

After placing 3-in. knife-slit tile in the trenches and tying it into the perimeter tile, a gravity wagon was driven next to the trenches to add about 9 in. of Birds Eye pea gravel. That was topped with a couple of inches of topsoil.

After prepping the area, Arens seeded the whole field with a 50/50 rye/Bluegrass mix before July 4. He fertilized, aerated, and irrigated through the summer, and the tile lines were barely visible when football



Volunteers saved nearly \$60,000 by doing tiling work themselves on their local high school football field.

players started practice in August. As of October, there were no drenching rains to fully test it, but the grass looked great, and the field surface was in excellent shape for playing football.

Arens credits the voluntary teamwork of rural folks for the success of the project.

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Photo courtesy of Lee Thomas Kjos of Kjos Outdoors

SportDOG fence system uses an in-ground wire that can cover large properties for multiple dogs.

Dog Fence Covers Up To 100 Acres

The SportDOG® fence system recently caught our attention because its in-ground system claims it can cover up to 100 acres. That's helpful to people with sporting dogs and pastured poultry or other livestock protected by dogs.

Josh Miller, a professional dog trainer, field specialist, and consultant for the Tennessee-based company, installed the system in his yard, cutting a shallow slit with a manual lawn edger to bury the line. For larger perimeters, powered lawn edgers can be rented. Or the line can be zip-tied to a perimeter fence on a ground wire, as one pastured poultry producer did with her 30 acres.

Flags around the perimeter give dogs a visual clue when training. The dog wears a waterproof collar that goes with the system.

"To be successful, you have to be consistent for 10 to 14 days. SportDOG comes with an actual training program that walks you through the method," Miller says, noting the

time spent training is well worth it to ensure the safety of the dog trained not to go outside the perimeter.

There are seven levels of static stimulation, and some dogs need to have a little hair shaved initially. Tone and vibration can also be set to warn the dog as it approaches the boundary. When trained well, that can be all that it takes to keep the dog safely confined.

The basic \$320 system comes with 1,000 ft. of wire for about 1.3 acres. Wire for larger acreages and additional collars for multiple dogs can also be purchased.

SportDOG also sells a \$470 Contain + Train™ System with a remote for additional training within and outside the perimeter.

The collars have rechargeable batteries that last up to 2 mos. and a low battery indicator.

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Log Carrier Unloads Directly Onto Sawmill

Using an old Oliver disc and other old equipment parts, Gary Harmon built a handy log carrier. In addition to picking up and transporting a log, it can place the log on a sawmill Harmon made after seeing one built by Bill Reeks of Cromwell, Ky., in FARM SHOW (Vol. 23, No. 3).

"It can haul a log 30 in. dia. and 20 ft. long," Harmon says, noting he cuts mostly walnut, but has also used it for oak, hackberry, elm and other wood.

He stripped everything off the disc frame and added a pulley to the 6-ft. tongue, for a come-a-long on the back of the carrier. That lifts the back of the log, while his tractor's 3-point hitch (with a 6-in. pipe adapter to lift the center point) raises the front of the log.

"I back the trailer over the log, put the chain around the front and a chain around the back," Harmon says.

With wheels 8 ft. apart, he has plenty of room to back the carrier with the log over his band sawmill or near his wood splitter.

Using parts that came from equipment left on the farm, it didn't cost the amateur welder anything but his time. The log carrier works well and saves labor and time.

"Maybe this will give someone else an idea



Using parts that came from equipment left on the farm, it didn't cost the amateur welder anything but his time. The log carrier works well and saves labor and time.

how to build this like I built my sawmill from a FARM SHOW story," Harmon says.

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Trailer in tilt position, showing screw jack.

Double Hitch Turns Flatbed Into Tilt Trailer

Boyd Brue turned his flatbed trailer into a tilt trailer with a second ball hitch. He can hook it up to a receiver hitch with a 2-in. ball, tilt it, load it, lock it and go.

"I had the flatbed and figured out an easy way to make it into a tilt bed," says Brue.

Brue attached a 4 by 4-in. square, 1/4-in. box beam to the frame so it pivots vertically underneath the original hitch. The box beam extends slightly beyond the original hitch to the front. At the front end of the box beam, he attached a ball hitch coupler. On the top side of the box beam, he attached a hitch ball to match the original ball hitch coupler.

When he is ready to load or unload the trailer, he unlatches the upper ball hitch coupler. A tall screw jack attached to the side of the original hitch is lowered onto the ground, and Brue uses it to jack up the front and tilt the trailer into position.

"When fully loaded, I lower the jack until the upper ball hitch coupler and the trailer ball on the box beam meet," says Brue.

Realizing the ball hitches have a little play, Brue made one other addition to the lower hitch. He installed a 3/4-in. threaded bolt through the beam and through the existing hole in the upper hitch.

"When the two hitches come together, the bolt extends through the upper hitch and I

lock it down with a nut and washer," says Brue. "This creates a firm, rigid connection between the two hitches.

Brue took advantage of the spare tire mount on the upper hitch to add an electric winch when needed. He mounted the winch to a 2 by 8-in. board long enough to extend across the tire and the front side of the trailer. He nailed a second 2 by 8-in. board at the end of the first, anchoring a 10-in. bolt between them.

He used wire rope clips to create loops at the ends of a short length of 1/4-in. steel cable. The loops attach to either end of the bolt, between pairs of large washers that hold the loops in place.

The middle of the cable anchors to a wood disk close to the front of the hitch. The disk is slightly beveled where it meets the hitch, creating a niche or groove to hold the cable.

"When I need to pull something onto the trailer, I can set the winch assembly in place, hook up the anchoring cable and go to work," says Brue. "As the winch cable tightens, it tightens the anchoring cable to the hitch also. When I'm done, it's easy to remove the anchoring cable and winch assembly."

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