



“Semi” Pickup Fitted With Sleeper Cab

This home-built pickup pulls like a semi and has a semi tractor’s sleeper cab to boot.

Roger Ater, Moweaqua, Ill., uses the rig to pull his stock car on a 24-ft. trailer. He can bunk down in the cab whenever he needs rest.

The “semi” pickup evolved from a 1978 Ford 100 1/2-ton. Its 240 cu. in. 6-cyl. engine with 3-speed manual transmission was blown. To get the truck running again, Ater replaced the bad engine with a 429 cu. in. V-8 with automatic transmission out of a 1972 Mercury Marquis.

To fit the bigger engine and automatic transmission into the pickup’s engine compartment, Ater shortened its driveshaft and fabricated new motor mounts.

When a friend removed the 36-in. deep sleeper from his 1978 Peterbilt, Ater bought it.

To mount the sleeper, he had to remove the pickup box and cut a 13-in. deep notch out of the bottom of the sleeper to position the bed even with the pickup’s rear window. The sleeper mounts on the pickup same as on the semi, resting on rubber bushings and bolted to the frame.

When another friend wrecked his 1994 Dodge Ram pickup, Ater salvaged the front bumper and grille and installed them on his pickup.

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Some of the best new ideas we hear about are “made it myself” inventions born in farmer’s workshops. If you’ve got a new idea or favorite gadget you’re proud of, we’d like to hear about it. Send along a photo or two, and a description of what it is and how it works. Is it being manufactured commercially? If so, where can interested farmers buy it? Are you looking for manufacturers, dealers or distributors? Send to FARM SHOW, P.O. Box 1029, Lakeville, Minn. 55044 or call toll-free 1-800-834-9665.

Mark Newhall, Editor



“Free-Wheeling” Ear Savers Mount On Deere Corn Header

Glenn Congdon wasn’t satisfied with the original equipment “ear savers” on the “high tin” header on his 1983 Deere 7720 6-row combine so he replaced them with his own “free-wheeling” ear savers that he made from scrap steel.

“They work much better than the original Deere ear savers and cost a total of less than \$200 to build,” says Congdon, of Wever, Iowa.

The ear savers mount at the center of the snouts about 8 in. from the bottom. Each unit consists of three 6-in. high, 4-in. long, 3/16-in. thick steel paddles that rotate on a 1/2-in. dia. steel tube. The tube slips over a 3/8-in. dia. bolt that’s welded to a 3 1/2-in. wide steel plate. The plate bolts to existing holes in the snout. A nut welded to the top of the bolt holds the paddles in place. The paddles rotate whenever stalks or ears hit them, feeding the material into the row units.

“I tested them for the first time last fall on 500 acres and they worked great,” says Congdon. “The original Deere ear saver mounted at the bottom of the snout which



allowed loose ears to fall to the ground instead of into the row units. I think the same idea would work on most any corn head.”

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Pull-Behind Double Hay Crimper

“We’re commercial hay growers and we’re always looking for ways to get hay dried and baled quickly,” say Jim and Roger Koppes. “We first tried chemical preservatives but found they were unreliable and expensive. So we decided to re-evaluate the entire hay making process, starting with our mower-conditioners.

“The closest we could get the rollers on our conditioners was 1/8-in., and they would only crimp the stems every 2 in. We felt there had to be a better way to squeeze water from the stems. That’s when we remembered how people used to use hay ‘crimper’ years ago.

“I bought our first crimper at an auction for \$55. We used it for a year and found we could mow, crush and then bale in 36 to 48 hours instead of the 72 to 96 hours we needed with our conventional mower-conditioners. However, the extra pass we had to make with our one crimper took too long. We found a second crimper and then started looking for a way to pull the two crimpers together behind one tractor.

“Since we already owned a tandem rake hitch, we copied that concept to build a tandem hitch with hydraulic motor and hydraulic steering. The axle for the hitch came from an old hay elevator and the motor that drives the pto on the rear crimper came from



a used fertilizer auger.

“In our second year, we covered 300 acres of hay with this set-up, while losing just one bearing and a set of seals. Not bad for a pair of 30-year old machines. We have done as much as 10 acres an hour on 2nd or 3rd cuttings. Total investment was just \$300.

“We still cut hay with our mower-conditioners, which crimp every 2 in. We follow up with the crimpers, which squeeze moisture out through these areas, at the same time flattening stems. We’ve used this double crimper on alfalfa, timothy, and orchardgrass.”

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