

Three Simple Ways To Make Grain Drilling Easier

By C.F. Marley

Emil and Dave Lagerhausen, Shumway, Ill., have come up with three simple ideas that make grain-drilling easier with their Deere 750 no-till drill.

1. They adapted a 6-row corn planter monitor to the drill, setting it up on 6 rows of the drill. To make it work, they used pieces of pvc plastic plumbing pipe. They bought seed tube sensors from their Deere dealer, then drilled holes in the pipe and inserted the sensors, using nylon ties to hold them in place. Next, they wrapped the entire length of each pipe with electrician's tape to make it completely dark inside. Otherwise some light would leak through the white plastic. Emil says you only need to set up the special seed tubes for Deere drills 1993 and older. Newer models have black seed tubes that'll work with the sensors.

The Lagerhausens ran the wires from the sensors through lengths of pvc pipe to protect them.

2. To make filling the drill's hopper easier, they simply attached a pants leg from a pair of jeans to the auger spout. It makes it easy to spread seed out evenly across the width of the drill.

3. By accident, the two men discovered that the shadow cast by a single headlight on top of the suitcase weights on front of their tractor was exactly the same width as the grain drill. When drilling at night, they use the shadow to guide the tractor along the marker furrow. The shadow extends only about 5 ft. in front of the tractor, so it doesn't affect the light needed for working. The idea works best with the other tractor lights turned off.

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Twine Feed Indicator Helps Keep Bales Tied

Thanks to a simple modification, Curtis Connor can tell at a glance if his Vermeer round baler is tying bales properly.

He got the idea after making several rolls of hay that never got tied. "Before I set up this twine indicator, I had to stop the tractor, turn around, and look closely at the baler to see if twine was feeding through the baler. Now I can just look in a rear view mirror and see the wheels turning. It makes me more productive."

Connor used two wheels from a discarded push lawn mower. He removed the rubber tires and painted the wheels two different colors. He then attached the wheels to the front of the baler and looped the baling twine around both of them so that as the twine feeds through, the wheels turn.

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Storage Tanks Make Shallow Well Usable

Filling spray tanks was a problem for Marshall and Kendall Litchfield, Macomb, Ill., until they came up with a way to get more water faster out of their slow-producing shallow-dug well.

The Litchfields liked the quality of the water in their well for crop spraying, but it took too long to fill tanks. Their solution was to install two 2,000-gal. above-ground tanks which are filled by a conventional pressure pump in the well. It takes a couple days to fill the tanks.

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Bathtub Cattle Waterer

"I used an old cast iron bathtub to make an economical cattle waterer," says Roger Kuntz, Grainfield, Kan.

One benefit of using a bathtub as a waterer is the weight. It stays where you put it and animals can't damage it, notes Kuntz.

"You can fit it with any kind of float valve and set it at any height by drilling through

the sides of the tub. I made a steel frame base to keep the tub from falling over. You can weld on these old tubs but they're pretty brittle, so it's tricky. The drain is handy for cleaning it out."

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"Four-Way" Wood Splitter

"It'll split 24-in. dia. logs into four pieces at a time without any bending or lifting by the operator," says Ernie Andresen, Sandy, Ore., about the two-wheeled hydraulic log splitter that he built almost entirely from scrap material.

The splitter can be powered by tractor hydraulics or by a self-contained hydraulic pump powered by a 12 hp (minimum) engine. It's equipped with a big wedge made from 1-in. thick steel that has a cross bar welded across the middle of it. A pair of hydraulic lift arms raise logs onto the V-shaped table and a cylinder pushes the log into the wedge. If the split pieces are too big they can be reloaded onto the lift arms for resplitting.

"It slices logs as easy as slicing cheese," says Andresen. "I built it because I have 80 acres of timber where I cut firewood for sale and I wanted to eliminate as much heavy lifting as possible. Commercial splitters are expensive and most of them require you to lift logs onto the splitting table. Also, most can't split big logs."

"I built it entirely from scrap except for the cylinder that pushes wood through the splitter. I salvaged two pieces of channel iron from an old road grader and bolted them together to make the frame. The front tires came off an old tractor."

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