

Made It Myself

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"Whole Corn" Round Bales

"Cattle go crazy for it," says Marvin Grenz, a Napoleon, N. Dak. cattleman who boosted his herd's rate of gain by more than 10% by baling his entire corn crop - cobs, stalks and all - and feeding it "straight" to cattle in round bale feeders.

Grenz got the idea for "whole corn" round bales last year when, due to wet conditions, his irrigated corn still hadn't dried down by early December. Rather than try to harvest the high-moisture crop - it was at 37 to 40% moisture - and pay drying costs, he decided to roll the entire 125 acres of corn into big bales and feed it direct to his steers and 230-head calf crop. It worked so well he says he'll do it again any time he has a wet fall and might do it even under ideal harvest conditions.

Grenz cut the standing crop with a conventional 16-ft. swather. "It was easy to cut. The corn was in 24-in. rows so we took 8 rows at once."

Once cut, he baled the stalks with his 605F Vermeer belt baler without any modification. "At first we made the bales too big and broke some belts. When we scaled them back to

about 5 ft. dia. it worked just fine. You have to travel real slow. We baled in the second lowest gear," notes Grenz.

Once formed the bales weighed about 1,700 lbs. He fed them to calves in round bale feeders along with free-choice rolled barley, and he says they ate about a 50-50 ration of each with some calves even preferring the rolled corn.

"All the cattle loved it. Some of the bales got hot and moldy but they still went crazy for it. It would have been a good-yielding corn crop so there was lots of grain in it. The great thing about it is that there's no bloating and they're never off feed," says Grenz, who says overall rate of gain was up more than 10% from his previous rates. "They gained better and I didn't spend any money on drying. If I left the corn in the field I might have lost the entire crop because some of my neighbors never did get their crop harvested."

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Add-On Corn Chopper Engine

Bob Stewart's 880 2-row New Holland corn chopper requires at least 130 hp. To use his 90-hp. Deere 4010 tractor to power it, he had to find a way to provide additional power. His solution was to mount an engine directly on the chopper chassis itself to provide a boost to the powering tractor pto.

The dual-drive combination of the 90-hp tractor and the add-on International 6-cyl. 80 hp. engine provides plenty of power to operate at full capacity.

"Both the tractor pto and engine run at 1,000 rpm's. Almost all parts were salvaged from equipment I had around the place," says Stewart, of Zillah, Wash.

Figuring out how to channel power from the add-on engine to the powering pto shaft was the most

difficult part of the conversion. A pulley off the rear-end of the engine belt-drives a drive-shaft that direct-drives a pulley on the pto shaft, mounted directly behind a "slip dog" freewheeling cog joint which is key to the success of the conversion. The "slip dog" joint lets Stewart shut the pto off but leave the chopper engine running. When he turns the pto on, the cogs automatically en-gage.

The add-on engine is remote-controlled from the tractor so at end rows Stewart shuts down the pto and throttles down the engine. Once in the field, he runs the en-gine at full throttle.

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"Grow" Yourself A Bigger Farm Shop

If you need more head room in your farm shop, why not raise the roof - like Illinois farmers Dave and Denny Stewart, of Nokomis, did.

Their older 32 by 50-ft. shop, with cement floor, was in good shape but its limited head room (only 9 ft., 4 in. to the eaves) wasn't enough to accommodate their combine.

Using 16 grain bin jacks, the Stewarts raised the building one row of blocks at a time until it was

40-in. higher (12 ft., 8-in. to the eaves). They had a contractor lay the blocks and had three men cranking each jack two cranks at a time. The jacks, rated for a 30,000 bu. bin, were spaced on posts every 8-ft.

It took the crew four days to "grow" the old farm shop into a taller one. Doors on the right roll on a track; doors on the left raise and fold.

Hydraulic-Dump Grain Wagon

If you have trouble unloading wet grain from side unload wagons, you'll want to take a look at this idea from Radnor, Ohio farmer George Thomas.

Thomas says his older model Husky 225 bu. wagon doesn't have a steep enough dump angle to empty itself of wet grain. He solved the problem by mounting a pair of 3 1/2-in. by 8-in. one-way hydraulic cylinders on one side of the wagon and reworking the other side to allow it to hinge.

"A lift of about 10° is enough to completely empty the wagon," notes Thomas. He attached the lower end of the cylinders to the wagon bolsters and the upper ends to a heavy piece of 4-in. angle iron he welded along the entire length of the underside of the wagon for support. He then unbolted that side of the box from the wagon chassis so it would lift.

On the dump side of the wagon, he removed one bolt where the box attaches to the cross member to



allow it to hinge enough to dump. He says on other, differently designed wagons it would simply be a matter of building heavy hinges and welding them in place. Once modified, he says it's not necessary to pin down the unbolted side of the wagon. The weight of the box keeps it in place.

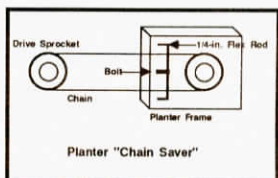
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Planter "Chain Saver"

"We made this chain saver so we wouldn't lose so many chains off our Deere 494 planter and our older model Buffalo planter," says Ivan Runyan, Coin, Iowa.

The chains Runyan has trouble with drive the insecticide and herbicide boxes on the planter he uses for no-till planting. Sometimes the chains get loose and simply come off, while other times stalks get between the chain and sprocket and pop them off. That results in down time spent looking for and installing chain.

Runyan made his chain saver from flexible 1/4-in. dia. flexible rod. He forms it into a "U" shape and mounts it over the chain by wrapping the ends around bolts on



the planter frame or welding them into place. At the center of the U-shaped rod he mounts a short bolt that fastens to the planter frame at the center of the chain. If the chain comes off, it catches on the bolt.

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