



Hodge made the double-wide "reconditioner" by removing the cutterbars from two mower conditioners and hitching them together.

Double "Reconditioner" Speeds Hay Drying

By Janis Schole

"A couple of years ago, we read in FARM SHOW about a fellow in Texas who had designed a double hitch for pulling square balers. We contacted him and he helped us build our own double hitch," says Jerry Hodge, Westlock, Alberta. "But, instead of balers, we decided to take two discbines and turn them into an extra wide hay 'reconditioner'."

Hodge removed the cutter bars from two New Holland 411 discbines, leaving the conditioning rollers in place. He uses the double wide conditioner to recondition wet windrows to dry hay faster.

Hodge uses the rig to re-crimp timothy hay the day after it is cut with an ordinary discbine..

"When it is first conditioned as it's cut, the hay is wet and limp, but when it begins to dry down, it starts to become brittle," Hodge explains. "If you crimp it again, it fluffs up and stands so that the wind blows through it. The reconditioning process also leaves more places on the stem for moisture to get out."

Hodge grows timothy for export and, to be saleable, the moisture content of bales must be 12 per cent or less.

Hodge worked with Texan Larry Robinson of the "Making Hay Hitch Co." to build his hydraulic double hitch, which hooks onto the

tractor's 3-pt. hitch. Standing behind the rig, the left side of the hitch is stationery (pulls straight behind) and the reconditioner straddles the swath with the tractor. The right side has a hydraulic arm that allows the unit to adjust in and out as needed to pick up the swath.

There are four hydraulic controls in the tractor to operate the rig. One lever operates the arm that moves the right unit in and out, two levers can put the reconditioners in and out of transport mode, and the up and down control for both units is hooked into the loader joystick.

There's a pto-driven hydraulic pump on the hitch that drives two 50 hp orbit motors, which power the 411s.

Hodge also put a set of wheels on the hitch to support its weight and the tongue weight of the reconditioners.

The rig can cover about 15 acres per hour, according to Hodge.

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A pto-driven hydraulic pump drives two 50 hp. orbit motors which power the conditioner rollers on both units.

You Can Plant Soybeans In Your Garden

University of Illinois soybean breeder Richard Bernard recently released six garden soybean varieties that he says are larger than regular field beans as well as more tasty and nutritious for humans.

Bernard, who is best known for his years of work in developing new field soybean varieties, says the new "Gardensoy" varieties were developed especially for home gardens.

While all soybeans are edible, Bernard notes that his new varieties have a much milder taste. They range in size from 50 percent normal beans to nearly twice as large. Yields average 60 to 80 percent of average commercial varieties.

"These beans can be harvested and used like any dry bean, but probably the best way

to use them is to pick the immature pods while green, after the seeds have reached full size, but before any yellowing begins," he says. "The pods should be boiled for about four minutes, after which the seeds are ready to eat and can be easily squeezed out of the inedible shell. They can be eaten as finger food or be added to soups, salads, fried rice or other dishes."

After this short cooking time, the immature soybeans can also be frozen in or out of the pod for later use.

Bernard says the immature beans don't contain oligosaccharides, a hard-to-digest group of carbohydrates.

If they're handled like dry beans (pinto, navy, kidney, etc.) vegetable soybeans should



Alberta dairyman Andrew Barclay joined three 46-ft. long semi-truck refrigerator trailers together with breezeways so calves could be shuffled from one to another.

Semi-Truck Trailers Make Good Calf Barns

Used semi-truck refrigerator trailers make ideal calf barns, according to Alberta dairyman Andrew Barclay. Actually, they're great for raising all kinds of livestock or for use as a shop or office or simply storage space, he says.

"It's an economical way to get what you need without having to spend so much money to build it," Barclay says. "They come as complete units - well insulated - even the floor is insulated. It's a draft-free, sealed building that can be made into a comfortable environment."

The Leduc area farmer has three 46-ft. long trailers that he paid about \$4,000 apiece for from Safeway food stores. He removed and sold the tandem axles and trailer jacks, bringing his net cost down to \$3,200 per trailer.

As part of the conversion, Barclay installed air vents and small windows in the sides. He also spent \$1,500 on each trailer to install lighting and heating.

He joined the three trailers together with breezeways so that calves could be shuffled from one to another. He cleans the makeshift barns with his skid-steer loader, entering through the overhead door on the trailer's end.

Barclay installed walk-in doors on the side and keeps the overhead doors closed in the winter. In the summer, he opens the big doors for better ventilation.

"To buy one of those insulated doors on the market, it would cost you \$800," he points out.

Barclay says the sealed trailers are ideal for keeping out drafts and moisture. He covers the floor with rubber cow mats and shavings. Barclay uses dog collars to chain



Up to 12 baby calves per trailer are chained to wall. Floor is covered with rubber cow mats and cow shavings.

12 baby calves per trailer to the wall.

He washes out and fumigates the trailers on a regular basis to break the cycle of disease, and says the plasticized interior is easy to clean with a high-pressure washer.

Barclay calls his semi-trailer calf barn his "calf-eteria" and gets a lot of interest from others wanting a quick and economical way to add buildings to their farm.

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"Vegetable" soybeans can be eaten by humans without any special processing.