

Weed Blaster Uses Steam To Kill

This summer Dayton Funk of west central Saskatchewan is trying something he thinks will interest other organic growers like him.

He's going to experiment with a weed-blasting machine that steams unwanted plants to death. No chemicals or other additives are needed.

The heat from steam produced by the unit bursts the plant cells, killing them instantly.

Funk bought the "Weed Blaster" last fall, but hasn't had a chance to use it yet. He purchased the unit from "Pumps and Pressure" in Edmonton, Alberta which had been leasing it to the City of Calgary. Funk knows this type of system works well because he also has an acquaintance in Ontario who uses one to get rid of weeds around playground equipment and to kill grass on soccer field boundary lines where no chemicals are allowed.

"At this point, I'm only passing on second hand news – other people have used it to kill weeds and had good results, but I plan to test it in a farm application for spot-spraying thistle, dandelion and quack grass patches

around my shelterbelts and buildings. It'll be interesting to see how well it works on those plants."

The unit consists of a 300-gal. tank mounted on a four-wheel trailer. It has a diesel-powered boiler and a gas generator that powers a pump, plus 30 meters of hose on a reel. There's a wand for spot-spraying and a meter-wide boom on wheels for bigger jobs.

Funk says the base unit cost him \$6,000 (Canadian), the trailer was \$3,000, and he paid another \$1,000 for the gas generation water tank, bringing his total expense to \$10,000.

If all goes well with his testing, Funk plans to rent out the machine to other organic producers in his area. He feels it may even be suited to some large-scale farming applications.

"The unit could be used by anyone requiring weed control where chemical applications might be hazardous to the environment," Funk says. "It will kill weeds near trees and other plants."



Weed-blasting machine steams unwanted plants to death. No chemicals are added.

He has already had some inquiries from people in the oilfield business who are familiar with the steamer units, since they are also used to clean heavy equipment. These people are now also considering their possible use as a non-chemical weed control for well sites.

If all else fails, Funk says he can still use his weed blaster to clean engines and disinfect barns.

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Front-Mount Battery Box Works Well

Jim & Sandy Barrow of Tallahassee, Fla., have been pleased with a simple modification they made to their Kubota SGT 1800 18 hp lawn and garden tractor.

They moved the battery from under the hood to the front of the tractor by building a frame extension to hold and protect it. The idea allowed them to replace the original battery with a car battery that's about two thirds bigger for extra starting power.

"We just like knowing that the tractor is going to start, even if we haven't used it for a while," Sandy says. "If you go out there and turn the key and nothing happens, that's the most exasperating thing in the world. Now

we never have to worry about slow starts. It purrs right up."

There are other benefits to the front-mount battery box, too. The Barrows believe it's safer because the battery is further from the engine and driver, and it's more conveniently located for servicing.

Basically, they bolted a U-shaped bracket to the frame of the tractor that holds the larger battery lengthwise. A couple of tie-downs hold it in place.

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An old 275-gal. fuel oil tank works great as a wood-hauling bucket for Frank Fowler.

Wood Bucket Made From Fuel Tank

An old 275-gal. fuel oil tank works great as a wood-hauling bucket for Frank Fowler, Jr., Benson, Vt.

"I use it to haul chunks of wood over to my wood splitter," says Fowler. "I can dump the wood either onto a pile or into my truck."

He cut a large hole into one side of the tank, leaving a lip at the bottom. The tank rests on a pair of steel forks. The brackets that originally connected to the legs are used to secure

the tank to the loader.

"The lip on front holds chunks of wood in. It's not strong enough to do any digging," says Fowler, who notes that he thoroughly rinsed the tank with water before he started cutting into the tank.

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Brackets that originally attached to legs of tank, are used to secure tank to loader arms.

Hitch Pin Tender

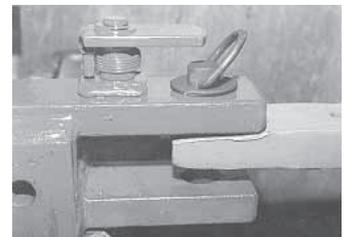
Hitch pins pop out all the time, says Cornie Folkerts of Inwood, Iowa, who stopped the problem with a patented device he calls a "Hitch Pin Tender."

"It locks the hitch pin in place securely no matter how rough the terrain," Folkerts explains.

The design is very simple. A spring-loaded lever swings over the top of the hitch pin. You have to lift and turn it to pull out the pin.

The Hitch Pin Tender simply welds to the top of the drawbar. Sells for \$9.50 plus shipping.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Cornie Folkerts, c/o Inwood Machine Inc., 1846 240th St., Inwood, Iowa 51240 (ph 712 753-



Spring-loaded tender swings over top of hitch pin. You have to lift and turn it to pull out the pin.

4777; email: cfolkert@netins.net; website: www.folkertskidaround.com).



To convert the wagon, the Weinerts built a bulkhead at one end and made wooden feed panels with uprights on 14-in. centers along both sides.

Hay Wagon Converted Into Low-Cost Portable Feeder

"We used scrap wood and metal roofing to convert a used four-wheeled farm wagon into a low-cost, portable feeder. By regularly moving the wagon to another part of the pasture, we can prevent the mud holes that cows make when they feed at the same spot all the time," say Karl and Debi Weinert, Big Sandy, Tenn.

The converted wagon holds 38 to 42 small square bales.

To convert the wagon, they built a bulkhead at one end and made wooden feed pan-

els on 14-in. centers along both sides. Several boards run down the center of the wagon with old metal roofing screwed on top of it to make slanting sides. Hay automatically slides down toward the sides.

"The design reduces feed waste," says Debi. "To fill the wagon, we pull it into our barn and just toss the bales into the wagon."

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