

State-Of-The-Art Snow Blade For Skid Loaders

"Our new skid loader-mounted snow blade has a lot of capacity and can be adjusted hydraulically on-the-go into either a box pusher, straight blade, or V-plow. Also, it has a low profile which makes it easy to see what you're doing," says Julie Nistler, SnoVantage L.L.C., McGregor, Minn.

The patented SnoVantage blade measures 32 in. high and is available in 16, 18, and 20-ft. widths. A universal attaching system allows mounting on all brands of skid loaders. The wings can be hydraulically moved 90 degrees forward or backward, or lined up with the center section. The rig has no plow shoes. Instead, a 3-in. wide, 1/2-in. high replaceable metal strip bolts onto the bottom of each blade section.

"The end of each wing is curved upward at the bottom. When the wings are folded forward it works like a ski, allowing the center section to slide over surfaces instead of digging into them. As a result, you can

glide over sidewalks and curbs without damaging them," says Nistler.

"With no plow shoes, the blade weighs much less than conventional models. Our 16-ft. model weighs only about 1,200 lbs. whereas a conventional 12-ft. blade weighs about 1,400 lbs. The reduced weight, combined with the ski action, lets you move a bigger load of snow without spinning out."

With both blades folded into a straight line, you can backdrag snow away from buildings or fences, says Nistler. "With the low profile, you can get within inches of curbs, building fronts, sidewalks and utility poles. You can clear a parking lot five times faster than with a conventional plow. Yet when the wings are folded in it's small enough to go through spaces only a few inches wider than your skid loader."

She says another advantage of the fold-back design is that you can load the skid loader onto a trailer without having to place



Blades can be adjusted on-the-go to a box pusher, straight blade, or V-plow. With both blades in a straight line, you can backdrag snow away from buildings and fences. Folded blade is small enough to go through spaces only a few feet wider than the skid loader. It will even fit onto a trailer.

it sideways.

The blade shouldn't be used on dirt because if dirt should ever get packed into the hinges they could break, notes Nistler.

The 16-ft. model sells for \$5,699; the 18-ft. for \$6,199; and the 20-ft. for \$6,699.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Tim and Julie Nistler, SnoVantage L.L.C., 48034 207th Place, McGregor, Minn. 55760 (ph 888 526-5288 or 218 426-5288; email: tim@snoavantage.com; website: www.snoavantage.com).

Modifications Solve Bale Basket Problems

The EZ-Trail Bale Basket on David Skornia's farm works much better, thanks to some modifications he and his employee, Bob Gibson, made to the unit.

The Boyne City, Mich., man purchased the bale basket new, and although he liked the unit overall, he found several ways to improve upon it.

Skornia found that the unit's gate didn't always stay latched when it was supposed to, and he didn't like having to stop to get off to unlatch it when it was full. The rig was also top-heavy and unstable on hills with just two wheels under it. In addition, the design of the basket had a sharp angle, so the bottom bales would sometimes bridge and become distorted from the weight of the bales on top.

"To solve all these problems, we removed the back of the basket and added a walking tandem axle so that four wheels would replace the two. We also added two feet of length to the basket size to increase capacity

by 20 bales," Skornia says. "There's a little wider dimension between the wheels for better stability, and we installed a flat 2-ft. bottom on it which is hydraulically controlled from the tractor cab."

When the basket is full, he activates the hydraulic cylinder which tilts the floor down. This releases two latches on the rear gate, and the load is free to slide out. All of this can be done in one motion without stopping to empty the basket. "Once it's empty, you use the stack of hay that you just dumped to back up into, and it pushes the gate into the closed position," he explains.

Skornia uses the hydraulic lever to raise the floor back into the level position, and he's ready to go again.

He also extended the chute that delivers the bales into the basket and added a 180° loop of smooth pipe that's an extension, onto the existing bale chute.

"This alleviated a problem that we had with

David Skornia added a walking tandem axle so four wheels replaced two. He also added 2 ft. to the basket to increase its capacity by 20 bales.



the original machine. Bales would sometimes catch as they fell into the basket. By putting on this round extension, there were no sharp corners that would catch the twine," he says.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, David Skornia, 06028 Zenith Heights Rd., Boyne City, Mich. 49712 (ph 231 582-9944; fax 231 582-2046).

"You Should Love Bats!"

Ron Scheller, Mt. Olive, Ill., runs a motorcycle repair shop during the day but he moonlights as a "nuisance animal trapper" for local residents and police. Recently he's found himself dealing frequently with bats.

Scheller follows all the legal regulations regarding the capture of animals, releasing many of them in designated areas. "Mostly I capture raccoons, possums, groundhogs, and squirrels that make their way into undesired places," says Scheller. But bats can get into places no other animal can, and releasing them somewhere else isn't going to solve the problem.

His solution is to provide a nesting place for bats without letting them into the structure. "Once you find out how the bats are entering a building, you can put up barriers that will let them get out of the building, but prevent them from getting back in," he says.

"With West Nile and other viruses out there, having bats around can be a real asset because they eat mosquitoes. So I came up with a simple bat house anyone can make. This allows you to have the bats around without them invading your home," he notes.

Basically, his bat house consists of a narrow enclosure that mounts on the side of the house or chimney.

Scheller would be willing to provide plans



Ron Scheller's bat house consists of a narrow enclosure that mounts on the side of the house or chimney. It lets bats nest without getting into the building.

for his bat houses for free, but he would appreciate a tip for mailing costs.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Ron Scheller, 308 3rd South St., Mt. Olive, Ill. 62069 (ph 217 999-3123).

"Lay Down" Fence Clips

Wayne Baker was tired of fixing fence on his 160-acre ranch near Freedom, Wyo. Every winter, the wire on hillside fences would get broken by deep snow drifts sliding downhill.

So he came up with "lay down" fence clips that allow wire to be easily laid down during the winter and raised again in the spring at the same tightness.

Baker sells four types of clips to fit nearly any post, steel or wood. They're nailed in place on wood posts and crimped or welded onto steel posts.

To hold the wire in place on the clip, Baker uses a double-headed nail that sticks up above the clip so you don't have to take off your gloves to lower the fence. Insulators can also be added on electric fence.

The clips come in a pack of 100 that cost between \$22 and \$30 plus S&H. The crimping tool for steel T-posts sells for \$31.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Tincup Enterprises, L.L.C., P.O. Box 10, 5160 S.H. 34, Freedom, Wyo. 83120 (ph 208 873-2632; email: tincup@silverstar.com; website: www.tincupenterprises.com).



Insulator attaches to wood post clip.



Example of a welded-on steel post clip.



Crimper attaches clips onto T-posts.