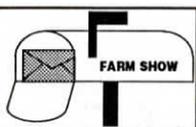


Reader Letters

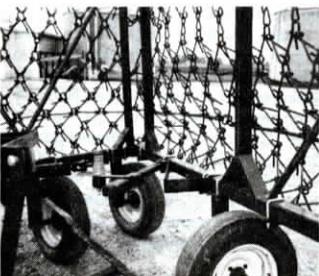


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pressure when working in the field and also power to run lights and hand tools. There's lots of storage in there for parts and tools and all the comforts of home when you need a rest. (Ben Buehler, 2592 290th St., Sac City, Iowa 50583)

Many farmers have thought about "going organic" but, for one reason or another, they never make a move on it. I'm president of Blackstone Organic Consultants and a certified organic farmer myself. Being certified allows you to sell crops at a premium to certain specialty markets. Organic food is big business and getting bigger every year. With the right program you can get \$12/bu. for beans and \$8/bu. for corn. The reason most farmers don't go after these markets is probably a lack of information. That's why we started our business. The first problem you face is getting your farm certified organic. A poor rotation or using an unapproved product can cause delays or even prevent certification. We provide guidance based on our own experience. Once you're certified, you have to find the most lucrative markets and a buyer with a good track record of paying a fair price in a reasonable amount of time.

Our organic conversion program does all of this and more for you far less than the cost of most conventional crop consultants. To minimize risk, we try to help our clients get contracts for all their crops before planting. We'll send anyone who writes a free information package. (Paul Vidrine, Blackstone Organic Consultants, P.O. Box 415, Markle, Ind. 46770)



I have a patent on a folding device for a 40-ft. front-folding Fuerst harrow. It folds up the wings for transport and can be tied into the hydraulic folding system on a disc or field cultivator so it folds up whenever you fold up the leading implement. I've used this folding system for two years and it works great. It has a unique system of stops, push-off arms and support stands that prevent excess strain on the hydraulic system or on the implement frame. Specially-designed floating links allow plenty of flex for going over terraces or ridges. I'm considering making a do-it-yourself kit but would like to find a manufacturer to take over production. It makes Fuerst chain harrows much easier to use. The design could also be used to fold other implements. (John Shidler, Rt. 3, Box 390, Lawrenceville, Ill. 62439 ph 618 943-3824)

If you work with big square bales, you'll appreciate this new ATV trailer that makes it easy to transport and feed out bales. When loading, the trailer bed sits level. But for transport, or when feeding out, the front of the trailer bed manually tilts downward by pulling a pin up front. Puts the weight on the drawbar so it transports better and also keeps the bale from collapsing backwards after strings are cut on the bale so you can feed it out piece by piece to cattle. The trailer



is easier to use than most bale transport trailers since it rides so low to the ground and the ATV is easy to get on and off. The trailer is 8 1/2 ft. long, 4 1/2 ft. wide and has low siderails that help hold bales in place. Can also be used to haul small square bales. We're looking for a North American distributor. Sells in Britain for about \$1,000. (M.K. Engineering, Unit 1, Hawkers Farm, Dores Lane, Braishfield, Romsey, Hampshire SO51 0QJ England ph 0794 68695; fax 0794 68537)

More than one onlooker has done a double take when seeing this one-of-a-kind loader that I built. It looks funny but is a great piece



of equipment. Hardly a day goes by when we don't use it.

Basic ingredients were a narrow front 1950's era Allis Chalmers WD 45 tractor and an IHC 2000 loader. To attach the loader to the rear, I first attached a heavy-duty pipe bracket under the frame at the front of the tractor. The pipe, which sticks out from both sides of the tractor frame, hangs from heavy U-bolts. The arms of the loader then hang from the pipe bracket, also attached with U-bolts. The loader frame also rests on the rear tractor axle.

I added hydraulics to the tractor by extending the frame an extra 6 in. in front of the radiator to make room for a Vickers hydraulic pump which is powered directly from the crankshaft through a double universal joint. Steering and controls were turned around. I sawed off the steering wheel shaft and mounted it behind the seat. I left enough of the shaft on the steering wheel to mount a sprocket. I mounted a second sprocket on the other end of the main shaft, which I extended, and then I ran a chain from one to the other. The brake, clutch and throttle controls were reworked with extended brackets so they could be operated while the operator faces backward.

Although the tractor originally had 4 speeds forward and 1 speed reverse, I flipped the differential over so it has 4 speeds reverse and one speed forward.

I put IH "suitcase" weights in front of the radiator and built the bucket from scratch. To scrape manure, I attach a section of an old tractor tire in place of the bucket. (George Fogle, Mason, Mich. ph 517 349-5185)

To counter the high costs of heating in Canada, I switched to stoker coal 5 years ago by building my own heating system. Coal sells for a fraction of the cost of propane or natural gas. One ton of coal in this area costs \$17 and equals the heat value of 180 gal. of propane. I found an old coal stoker furnace for \$300 and converted it to heat hot water. Coal feeds in automatically by auger and the entire system is ther-

mostatically controlled. The furnace is housed in a little stoker "hut" attached to the outside of the garage so we have no dust, smoke, fire danger, or noise inside the house. It burns very clean - chimney temperature is as low as 150° F and we get an absolutely smokeless burn. My wife likes it because it provides such even heat.

The whole system operates without pressure. A 50-50 mix of anti-freeze and water circulates continually through car radiators positioned in heating ducts. A fan blows air through the radiators and into the ducts. We also use the system to heat bath and kitchen water. Our propane furnace is still in place and can be used at any time as a backup. We've burned coal for five years with no problems. Total cost of building the system was about \$1,000 plus it took a lot of time experimenting to find the right materials, sizes, etc. I would consider putting plans together for sale if there was enough interest. (John Lindner, Box 20, Rt. 2, Duffield, Alberta T0E 0N0 Canada ph 403 892-3354)



We mounted a "safety bracket" on our 1951 Deere "B". The bracket's fitted with an AMV sign, a rear view mirror, a flashing amber light, a red taillight, floodlight, and fire extinguisher. The problem with many older tractors, especially those without fenders, is that there's no place to install the SMV sign or extra lights, short of hanging them from the back of the seat. Even if you attach the sign to the seat, it seems like traffic still slides up on you too fast. So I wanted to equip the tractor with flashing lights that would be more visible.

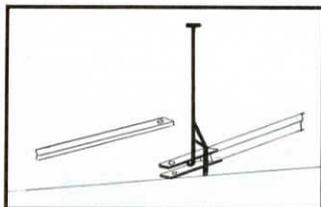
To make the bracket, I used a 45-in. long piece of 3/4 by 2-in. steel tubing that bolts to the cultivator mount studs on the axle. I cut off a 7-in. long piece and mounted it at a right angle on top to attach the sign and flashing light to. The rear view mirror is positioned above the sign and the red taillight is on the opposite side of the flashing amber light. A 6-in. flood light mounts lower down on the bracket for night time field work. I wired the lights into wiring that goes to the light at the back of the tractor, using a plug connection so I can easily remove the safety bracket when necessary. A 2-way toggle switch lets me use either the road lights or the field light. The mirror comes in handy when I'm towing a wide or high load. Lets me see behind without turning around. (Tom Hommel, Rt. 3, Box 25, Webster, S. Dak. 57274-9303)

We replaced the junked-out diesel engine in our old Massey Harris 55 tractor with a 125 hp V-8 gas engine from a 1966 Ford car. Now it makes a great loader tractor.

It's as easy to drive as a car. The tractor's original 4-speed transmission is hooked up to the car's automatic transmission so I can switch easily from forward to reverse by shifting the car transmission. I use it mainly to load round bales onto semi trucks. I keep the manual transmission in fourth gear and use the automatic transmission to shift gears. I converted the mechanical steering to power steering by mounting an orbit motor and hydraulic cylinder on the tie rod. I also mounted a foot throttle and power disk brakes on it. I plan to repower three more Massey Harris tractors which I bought for \$50 to \$150 each. However, the conversion does

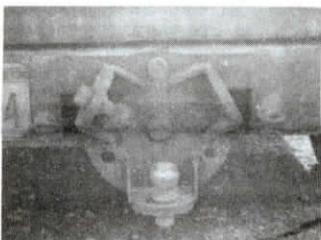
take a considerable amount of work. I lengthened the tractor frame 4 in. so the engine would fit. I also cut 4 in. off the input shaft on the original tractor transmission and re-threaded it so I could bolt a heavy-duty sprocket onto it so that the drive shaft could run in reverse without wearing out. (Bob Mollohan, Rt. 2, Box 68, Otis, Colo. 80743 ph 303 246-3317)

I made a drawbar pin to hook up wagons without getting off the tractor. It's a great time saver when we're harvesting. The pin has a long T-bar handle that's also fitted with a lifting hook. To hook up a wagon, I back the tractor up to the wagon tongue, then use the lift hook to raise the tongue up to the tractor drawbar, then simply slip the pin down



through the tongue and drawbar. The handle stays in place, connected to the pin, making it easy to unhook from the tractor seat. (Tom C. Laird, Rt. 1, Theford, Ontario N0M 2N0 Canada)

Instead of always changing hitches when I need a new size ball, I now just rotate my rotary hitch to the size I need. The hitch consists of a 5/8-in. thick circular steel plate with a 2-in. hole at center. I welded three pieces of 3/4-in. plate steel to the center



plate, each with a 1-in. hole at center and 1/4-in. gussets on each side. A 10-in. piece of 2-in. shaft is welded to the center of the 5/8-in. circular plate. This 2-in. shaft runs back under the bumper and turns inside a short piece of 3-in. dia. tubing with 1/2-in. thick sidewalls. It has a grease fitting on the bottom side. A collar on the back side of the 2-in. shaft holds it in place. A 5/8-in. bolt holds the collar in place.

To rotate hitches, I pull a 1-in. pin that goes through the circular plate to a hole in the bumper, and then put the pin back in when the hitch is turned. (Michael Dyer, Rt. 1, Box 254, Pomona, Kan. 66076 ph 913 566-8883)

