

Convert Your Harvestore To A Top Unloader Silo

J&J Silo Company in Pennsylvania converts bottom-unloading Harvestores into top unloaders, saving farmers money and resources instead of tearing down and building new.

John Fisher of J&J says, "There are many areas of the country where service for a bottom unloader isn't available, so having the top unloader really makes sense. The farmer has full use of his silo and can usually do any maintenance needed on a top unloader."

J&J likes to start its conversions with an empty silo, with the bottom unloading unit already removed. Fisher says having the silo empty makes the conversion process go faster and their 3 or 4-man crew can typically get the job done in one day. "We start from the bottom by marking and cutting holes for the doors, then adding the door frames and doors as we go up. The doors are 24 in. wide by 28 in. tall, slightly smaller than the 30-in. wide by 30-in. deep chute. One door is added for every 5-ft. ring of sheet metal on the silo. When we get to the top we install the suspension unit for the unloader, then install the chute on the way back down." The unloader is assembled on the floor inside the silo."

J&J installs Valmetal unloaders, which use a stainless steel cable to raise and lower the unit from a winch with a 50:1 gear ratio. The unloader has a 10-in. tube with 1/4-in. flighting welded to a 4-in. tube. It's powered by a 10 hp. electric motor.

Fisher says installing an unloader in a Harvestore is similar to a stave silo installation, with some adjustments for the pressure wheel and chipper wheels because Harvestore walls are smoother than concrete. With today's technology they can even automate the unloader, tying its operation into a feeding system master panel.



Doors and a chute are added to outside of Harvestore and a top silo unloader installed.

J&J Silo Company has specialized in livestock feed handling and manure management systems since 1994 and started converting silos in 2001. A typical conversion costs about \$12,000 for a 20-ft. by 80-ft. silo. Installing a Valmetal Nordic 215 model unloader adds \$12,000 to \$13,000. J&J is one of the largest-volume Valmetal dealers in the country. They've worked on silos from Vermont to South Carolina and as far west as Wisconsin and Michigan.

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Easy-To-Use Barrel Grabber

"Lifting big barrels is easy with my simple new grabber," says inventor Merwyn Nilson.

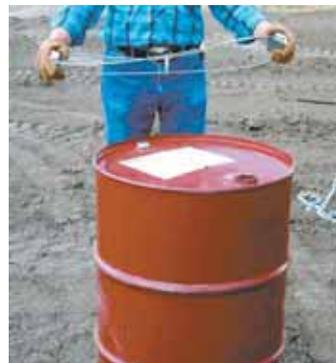
The Bold Eagle Barrel Harness uses aircraft cable and heavy-duty steel brackets that lock onto barrels without hydraulics or springs. The cable runs through holes in the brackets to form a loop that you place over the barrel. The brackets are slightly curved on the side that goes against the barrel, and come with a self-adjusting clamp that holds the cable tight. They automatically lock in place under the barrel rim as the operator raises the unit.

"It works great on both plastic and metal barrels 30 or 55-gal. – as long as the barrel has a lip around the top. It's small enough that you can throw it under your pickup seat or in your toolbox without taking up much space."

Nilson says he came up with the idea a few years ago when he was selling a boom lift mounted on a pickup bed at fairs and shows. "Numerous farmers and contractors told me they really needed some way to pick up barrels. I couldn't find a practical device on the market, so I invented one. It's compact, inexpensive, and engineer-tested to lift up to 840 lbs. Over the years I've always offered a money-back guarantee on my barrel harness, but have never had one returned."

The Bold Eagle Barrel Harness retails for \$79 including S&H. A special harness is available for larger and heavier barrels weighing up to 1,400 lbs. It retails for \$89 including S&H.

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Aircraft cable runs through holes in steel brackets to form a loop that you place over barrel.



Brackets automatically lock in place under barrel rim as operator raises the unit.



Don Buelke's high capacity mouse trap uses a short length of 1 1/2-in. dia. pvc tubing to hold poison cubes.

High Capacity Pvc Tube Mouse Bait Holder

Don Buelke doesn't claim to have come up with a better mouse trap – just a better way to set out bait using a short length of pvc tubing to hold poison cubes.

He starts with an 8 to 10-in. length of 1 1/2-in. dia. pvc tubing and drills 2 sets of corresponding holes across both ends of the tube. To set the bait he shoves the cubes into the tube and then inserts a pair of nails that crisscross the openings, bending the nails a little so they can't fall out. The mice crawl in through the openings between the nails.

"The tube holds a lot more cubes than those little commercial bait kits. It's also highly visible and weatherproof, and easy to tuck out of sight," says Buelke. "It lets me safely place a greater quantity of bait at fewer locations, which reduces the time I have to spend putting out bait. That can be a real advantage if you have a big building to cover, such as a barn or grainery. We've had problems with mice girdling our shrubs during the winter, and it works good to place the bait holders under the snow and beneath the shrubs."

He says the high capacity tube has another advantage. "With the new generation mouse poisons containing anti-coagulants, it can take 3 to 5 days for the mouse to die, so you have



After shoving cubes into tube, Buelke inserts a pair of nails that crisscross the openings.

to keep the bait in front of them continuously. Repeated feedings are necessary so you don't want to let the supply run out."

Buelke says that anyone with dogs who tries this idea should make sure to secure the tubes. "Just drill another hole through the middle of the tube and insert a long spike into the ground," notes Buelke.

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Automatic Mud Flap Lifters

Owners of dump trucks know the problem: you back up to dump a load and the mud flaps get caught between the tires and the load, getting torn off or ripped up. Then you get a traffic citation or hit with insurance increases because the mud flaps don't stop rocks from breaking the windshields of vehicles behind you.

The recently patented Mud Flap Lift System provides a simple solution. An electric motor control automatically raises the mud flaps whenever the truck is put in reverse. When finished dumping, the truck driver drives ahead and pushes an in-cab switch to let the flaps back down.

"I invented the first one about six years ago," says inventor Jerry Proctor, who decided there was a great need for Flaps-Up based on his own tracking experience. After years of testing to perfect it, his Flaps-Up system went into production in 2016. It comes with a power unit with 35 ft. of electric cable, cab control switch, and mud flaps.

"We are now working with truck body manufacturers who will be installing the Flaps-Up unit on new truck bodies before they leave the factory," Proctor says.

He notes he is still working with suppliers and manufacturers on pricing, but the Flaps-Up system with mud flaps will be less than \$1,800.

"Flaps-Up will help you work in a safer environment, and save you money in mud flap and installation costs and DOT fines for improper mud flaps," Proctor says. "It might



An electric motor control automatically raises mud flaps whenever truck is put in reverse. Driver pushes an in-cab switch to let flaps back down.

even get you that 'extra load' at the end of the day because it saved you time during the day."

Flaps-Up products are available direct from the company.

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