

Steel Wheels Fitted With Tread

“Our new rubber-covered, rubber tread rear steel wheels provide the grip of an air-filled, lugged rear tire while also maintaining a smoother ride,” says JS Welding, Kirkwood, Penn., explaining that air-filled tires are not allowed in many Plain communities, such as the Amish.

The company recently sent FARM SHOW photos of a John Deere compact tractor equipped with yellow steel wheels on back which are completely covered by rubber tread.

“We’ve specialized in manufacturing steel wheels for tractors, loaders, and other heavy machinery since 2005. This new way of using rubber lugs on steel wheels offers a big improvement in both traction and comfort,” says Melvin Stoltzfus. “They don’t ride quite as nice as conventional air-filled tires, but there isn’t a lot of difference.”

The rear wheels consist of 2 steel rings with a series of channel irons welded onto them. Two layers of rubber belting are bolted to the channel irons. The inside layer is flat and 3/4 in. thick, while the outside layer looks much like a conventional rear tractor tire except that the sidewalls are cut off and you can see bolt heads between the lugs.

“We’ve tested the design extensively and it works even better than we expected,” says Stoltzfus. “As the inside layer of rubber belting contacts the ground it bulges up a little, but the channel irons are thick enough to keep the rubber from contacting the rings and causing a bumpy ride. The lugs on the outside layer are centered between the channel irons so they flex as they contact the



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ground. Also, the bulge at the middle of the tire contacts the ground between the rings, which adds to the flexibility. It results in great traction and a comfortable ride.”

A set of 16.9 by 24 tires, as shown in the photo, sells for \$3,000 plus S&H. A set of 18.4 by 38 tires sells for \$4,050 plus S&H.

The company is looking for dealers.

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Last year Monte Bottens planted 160 acres of corn in 60-in. wide rows to see if it helped cover crops without reducing corn yields. He plans to try the idea again this year.

60-In. Rows May Help Cover Crops

“We’re not afraid to do things differently on our farm, so planting corn in 60-in. wide rows rather than 30 in. wasn’t that far-fetched,” says Illinois farmer Monte Bottens. He and his father Bob planted about 160 acres of 60-in. row corn in 2018 to see if the wider spacing helped establish better cover crops without reducing corn yield.

“Basically we took the same nutrients and seeds that would go into two 30-in. rows and put them into one 60-in. row,” Bottens says. “The wider spacing allows more sunlight to reach all sides of the corn plants and allows more sun to reach the cover crops, too.”

Another reason for their experiment was to see if the cover crop would grow quickly enough to allow sheep to graze on the cover crop immediately after they harvested the corn. “If we could get the same yield as 30-in. rows and gain ground on the cover crop it would be a win-win situation. We’d have revenue from the corn, improved soil health from the cover crops, and grazing feed for

livestock.”

Yields posted on the test fields were very good in 2018, Bottens says, and they intend to evaluate the concept again in 2019, adding the variation of different hybrids, various populations, and east/west rows vs. north/south rows. Says Bottens, “I think there’s a good possibility that twin 60-in. rows, with seeds planted in rows about 4 in. apart may produce better yields, along with an improved cover crop.” In 2018 their cover crop didn’t grow as well as planned because of when it was planted, along with weather issues.

Bob Recker is a retired equipment engineer and currently a farm consultant working with more than 20 growers who’ve tried the 60-in. row system. Recker says there isn’t a significant increase or decrease in yield with the system, but the cover crops should definitely be better.

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Hydraulic-operated unit rolls up empty silage bags into a tight coil secured with baler twine.

Bag Roller Makes 400-Lb. Round Bales Of Plastic

The Bag Lady Bag Roller from Grainfield Supply rolls 250-ft. ag bags into a tight 3 by 3-ft. roll secured with baler twine. Whether headed for the landfill or recycling, the Bag Roller bales are easy to handle and eliminate chopping up bags to fit in dumpsters. It makes it easy to comply with recycling or landfill regulations.

“A local county commissioner heard that Revolution Plastics, an Arkansas company, was recycling grain bags and other ag bags,” recalls Larry Cox, Grainfield Supply. “He and a neighbor had an idea for a bag roller and came to us for components. We worked with them to come up with the Bag Roller. We started making and selling them and have even shipped several semi loads to Canada.”

The Bag Roller is built to last with heavy-duty steel tubing for the inner frame and a telescoping outer frame activated by hydraulic cylinders. The spool consists of 1/4-in. plate disks mounted to the inner frame. Square steel tube stingers form the center of the spool. A hydraulic motor with a roller chain drive rotates the spool to wind up the bag.

The stingers are mounted to the telescoping outer frame. As the cylinders extend or retract the outer frame, the stingers slide in to pinch the end of the bag to secure it for rolling or slide out to release the rolled bag on the ground.

“We like to start the bale by folding the

corners of the end of the bag in like you do for a paper airplane,” says Cox. “Once the stingers have pinched the folded end, we loosely roll up the first few revolutions. The bag will continue to fold in as it is rolled onto the spool.”

Cox notes that the Bag Roller was originally designed with a quick-tach plate for use with a skid steer. Grainfield Supply also markets a 3-pt. hitch unit.

“You can roll bags off the ground or directly off the grain bag unloader,” says Cox. “If rolling bags that are longer than 250 ft., just cut the bag off when the bale starts rubbing on the frame. Release the bale and restart the process.”

Cox estimates most bag bales weigh around 400 lbs. The Bag Roller itself weighs about 800 lbs. He points out that the design is very low maintenance, only requiring a little lubrication. The Bag Roller is priced at \$4,200.

Grainfield is a one-of-a-kind ag supply house that carries everything from hydraulic cylinders to chore boots and aircraft cable to corral panels. They also fabricate a number of products in addition to the Bag Roller.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Grainfield Supply, Inc., 4649 Hwy. 40, P. O. Box 169, Grainfield, Kan. 67737 (ph 785 673-4321; toll free 800 728-9944; sales@grainfieldsupply.com; www.grainfieldsupply.com).

“Transfer Trailer” For Wild Hogs

Harry Stracener, Buda, Texas, built his own corral-style trap to catch wild hogs. At 81 years old, he needed an easy way to transport the hogs. So he came up with a 2-wheeled, 6 by 8-ft. “transfer trailer” equipped with a loading ramp on back that’s raised and lowered by cranking a hand winch. When the ramp is not in use, it folds back on top of the trailer.

“One man can set it up in a few minutes,” says Stracener. “The trailer has 4-ft. high sides made from heavy-duty gravel screen. A wire netting cover over the tops keep the hogs from jumping over the sides.”

The trailer is equipped with a tall metal pole at one corner on back that’s equipped with a winch at the bottom and a pulley on top. Cable is connected to the top of the loading ramp.

To load hogs, Stracener backs up to a gate on the pen and then cranks the ramp down onto the ground. He uses the same process to unload hogs.



Harry Stracener’s 2-wheeled “transfer trailer” is equipped with a loading ramp on back that’s raised and lowered by cranking a hand winch.

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