Home-built chaff spreader allows Glanville to put straw in a windrow for baling. He can spread chaff at the same time.

Chaff Spreader Doubles As Straw Saver

"It lets us put straw in a windrow for baling and spread chaff at the same time," says Lorne Glanville about the chaff spreader/straw saver that he and his brother Ken and nephew Dean built for their 1979 Deere 7720 combine. The design lets them either place the straw in a windrow or spread it out.

The combine was originally equipped with a straw chopper but not a chaff spreader. Chaff dropped into a windrow behind the combine which resulted in cold, wet soil under the windrow that delayed planting. Glanville's home-built chaff spreader consists of an aluminum pan that collects chaff coming off the sieves and feeds it to a pair of home-built spinners. A curved steel deflector bolts on behind the spinners to deflect straw coming off the walkers into a windrow. By unbolting the deflector, Glanville can still use the original straw chopper to chop soybean straw and spread it on the field.

The aluminum chaff-catching pan attaches to the combine with a spring-loaded clip. The spinners are driven by a separate hydraulic pump that's powered by the primary countershaft. The spinners are attached by two bolts to the rear axle, and the deflector attaches with two bolts.

"We use the chaff spreader for all our crops, whether we're saving straw or not. The nice thing is that we don't have to remove the spinners whenever we want to place the straw in a windrow," says Glanville. "We built it three years ago and spent about $900. The spinners are mounted farther back than the spinners on most conventional chaff spreaders, allowing most of the corn stalk residue that comes off the walkers to fall onto them when the deflector is removed."

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Curved deflector, mounted behind spinners, takes straw or corn stalks coming off walkers and deposits it in a windrow.

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A group of California farmers, who were already using Shelbourne headers, decided to build their own machine and eliminate many of the grain-cleaning components found in conventional machines.

COST HALF AS MUCH AS NEW MACHINES

Built-From-Scratch Combines Designed For Stripper Headers

Shelbourne Reynolds stripper headers do such a great job of stripping wheat and rice off stalks that there's no need for most of the grain-cleaning components found in conventional combines. So say a group of California farmers who designed and built their own combines geared for stripper-headers.

John Kalfsbeek, with the help of his partners and farm employees, built the combines from the ground up. The result was lower cost machines that get the job done faster. They reduced the time needed to harvest their 3,000-acre rice crop from 45 days to 24. The time needed to harvest their 800-acre wheat crop has also been cut in half.

It all started in 1993 when the Sacramento Valley farmers decided commercial combines were just "too much" machine for their super efficient 18 and 22-ft. Shelbourne headers, which strip rice, wheat, canola and peas from the stalks. So they built four combines of their own design that cost about half as much as the Case-IH and Deere harvesters they used before.

John Kalfsbeek, who passed away recently, felt that elevators and straw walkers and other grain cleaning components were "excess baggage", since "stripped" crops are mostly threshed before they reach the feederhouse.

"We wanted a machine that would handle the large volume of relatively clean grain that can be stripped at high speeds with the Shelbourne header," says Derek Scofield, John Kalfsbeek's grandson. He and his brother Bart now work for their uncle Jake Kalfsbeek in the family partnership.

"Three of the combines were built in our shop and one was built by Sweco (2455 Palm St., P.O. Box 259, Sutter, Calif. 95982; ph 530 755-0521; fax 1321). Each was built for about $150,000. Commercial machines sell for about $250,000," says Derek. "And we've been able to cut our harvest time in half."

The combines feature a 60-in. rasp bar cylinder and concave from a Deere 9600 and a Caterpillar 3208 turbocharged 250 hp engine.

The wide bodied combines measure 144 in. from center of tire to center of tire. They're equipped with Sweco-built twin 12-in. dia., 15-ft. long augers. They'll unload the 275 bu. grain in 45 seconds on-the-go. Unlike other combines, grain tanks on the company's machines are located at the bottom of the units. This lowers the center of gravity and eliminates the need for elevators.

Once grain is stripped from stalks, it passes up the feederhouse into the cylinder. From there, it's deposited on an elevator belt that elevates it and drops it onto a 60-in. by 10-ft. screen. Air blows away chaff.

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Unlike other combines, grain tanks are located at the bottom of the units which lowers the center of gravity and eliminates the need for elevators.