"Feet" Keep Fence Posts In Ground

Here's an idea we spotted in the New Zealand magazine *Farm Equipment News* that might work well for any farmer who has trouble keeping fence posts in the ground.

John LeGarth says he's lost count of the number of fences he's put up on his rolling farmland. Repairing fence lines when posts pull out is almost a part time job. Posts in low lying areas always seem to work loose and start to rise over time.

One day, while brainstorming with a friend, Marc Pawley, the two started sketching on a piece of wood. The result is a new product – the LeGarth Post Foot – that they say solves the problem of rising posts.

It consists of wedge-shaped pieces of super-tough plastic that nail to the base of the post.

LeGarth points out that there are many methods of "footing" posts that farmers have tried over the years. "But most methods just won't last," he says. "They're also more complicated and expensive – like setting the posts in concrete or setting another post in the ground crossways."

Their idea is to attach the wedges to the post so it sets itself in the ground like the barb on a fish hook. After a bit of trial and error, the men decided wood would not be strong enough to hold a post under stress, so they started making them out of plastic.

The LeGarth Post Foot consists of wedge-shaped pieces of tough plastic that nail to base of post.

You simply nail one or two feet to the base of the post - with two nails per wedge – and then drive or insert the post conventionally.

The LeGarth Post Foot is being manufactured by True Design in Auckland, New Zealand.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, John LeGarth, Omana R D 1 Tangiteroria, Whangarei, New Zealand (ph 011 64 9-433 2886).

Offset Hitch Lets Farmer Mow Ditches Safely

Todd and Dwayne Dennis, Rosser, Manitoba, had a municipal ditch mowing contract but they were concerned about the rollover risk involved on steep roadsides.

To solve the problem, they built an offset hitch for their rotary mower which lets the tractor stay on the road when cutting down the sides of the ditch.

The mower is a 7-ft. wide, 5-blade rotary Lely 305 hitch-mounted unit. They use a Ford 6600 tractor.

They first built a square tubing box frame that mounts on the tractor's original 3-pt. A caster wheel mounts at the right rear outer edge. The mower reattaches to the outer ditch side of the new frame.

Nothing was changed on the original mower so it can be easily put back into its original position for the first cut. The new frame actually mounts in the middle of the original frame.

The switch to side mowing takes only a couple minutes. When the new frame is in place, one original upright bracket is not used. For the switch back, the new frame is dropped, the upright goes back and the mower reconnects as original. The same pto driveshaft is used for both settings, as the original shaft and over-running clutch remain untouched. An additional pulley is added to extend the belt drive over to the new mower position.

Offset hitch lets the 7-ft. wide Lely rotary mower stay on road when cutting down sides of ditch.

For road transport, the outer link disconnects quickly and the caster wheel lets the mower trail out behind.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Todd Dennis, Box 35, Rosser, Manitoba, Canada R0C 1E0 (ph 204 467-5091).

How To Handle A Bumper Tomato Crop

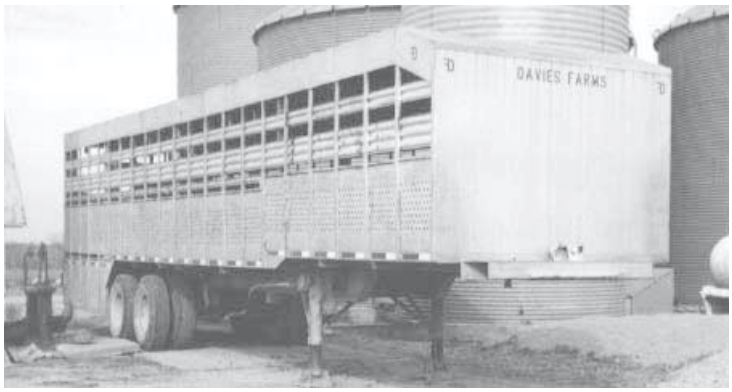
Here's an idea for handling bumper tomato crops.

Tom Martin, Bedford, Va., mounted two 16-ft. cattle panels about 15 in. off the ground on steel cable strung from three metal posts. The cattle panels stay in place permanently.

"The panels are high enough off the ground so I can work the soil in the spring with a small tiller from either side. And I buried a seep hose the bed for easy watering," says Martin.

Tomatoes are planted on the sunny south side. Each plant is tied individually to the panels. He grows 15-ft. tall Mexican corn on the back side, running a long cord behind the corn to support it against the panels.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Tom Martin, 1571 Toms Rd., Bedford, Va. 24523 (ph 540 586-8198).



Davies Farms built their own 40-ft. livestock trailer for only about $2,600. It can haul 26 full-grown cattle at a time.

Ground-Load Livestock Trailer

Davies Farms, Dawn, Mo., built their own 40-ft. livestock trailer that lets cattle load from the ground with no need for a loading chute.

"It lets us haul 26 full-grown cattle at a time and we spent only about $2,600 to build it. Commercial trailers of comparable capacity sell for $20,000 or more," says Don Davies, noting that he likes the design they came up with better than the trailers they saw on the market.

They started with a tandem axle 40-ft. trailer that had been used to haul ocean-going containers. They cut through the middle of the chassis and removed an 8-ft. section from the middle, then added a new 8-ft. section on back. The back section contains a ground-load ramp that gets cattle from the ground up to the three compartments. The ramp is raised with the help of a pair of garage door springs. To raise the ramp, the operator pulls on a cable, which lifts the front edge of the ramp up until it catches on a steel stand. The stands fold against the front of the compartment when the ramp is lowered.

They bought sheet metal with holes punched into it at a junk yard and used it to build the sides. Solid sheet metal was used for the top and front. A homemade tailgate swings out to the side.

"The ground-load ramp eliminates the need for an extra set of ramps to go from the lower compartment to the upper compartment. The back of the trailer is low enough to the ground so cattle can step right in. Even small calves will step up into the trailer and go up the ramp," says Davies. "The top end of the ramp is within 5 in. of the upper deck floor. We load the front compartments first, then drop the ramp and load the back compartment.

Trailer is designed to load cattle from the ground, with no need for a loading chute.

"We built it in one month during the calving season. We paid $400 for the chassis. We had been using a 6-ft. wide, 20-ft. long livestock trailer that could hold only 10 cattle at a time. It took a long time to move 100 cows.

"We use a 1982 GMC tractor equipped with a 3208 Caterpillar engine and an Allison automatic transmission to pull it. It's a single axle tractor with a short wheelbase so we can turn short. Because there's an 8-ft. overhang on back, we can turn as short as a 30-ft. gooseneck trailer pulled by a pickup."

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Donald Davies, Rt. 1, Box 194, Dawn, Mo. 84638 (ph 660 745-3350; fax 3360).

"Hauler" Brings Logs To Sawmill

"I needed a way to get logs to my home-built bandsaw mills so I used scrap materials to construct a log hauler which works much better than dragging logs behind a skidder," says Bill Reeks, whose home-built bandsaw mills have been featured in past issues of FARM SHOW.

"Lifting the entire log when moving it works much better because it keeps dirt off them so blades stay sharp longer.

"The log hauler straddles the log and two sets of homemade log tongs lift the log. I cut the tongs out of heavy plate steel. They're powered by two hand winches that mount together above the hitch. Steel cable from the winches runs through pulleys that boost lift capacity.

"I made a heavy frame out of square tubing and fitted it with stub axles salvaged from farm machinery. It'll carry logs up to 32 in. dia. The longest log I've carried was 20 ft. I can pull it empty at speeds of 50 to 60 mph on the highway.

Reeks's log hauler straddles the log. Two sets of hand-powered log tongs lift it.

"I don't have any plans together but the basic idea is pretty clear cut. Interest is still strong in the plans for our bandsaw mill. Hundreds of FARM SHOW readers have built their own mills."

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