New Bi-Directional Tractor

The first thing you notice about Valtra's new bi-directional tractors are the sleek cabs with lots of glass area and sharply sloping hoods for great visibility of front-mounted implements. Visibility is excellent in all directions – whichever direction you're running - and noise levels are extremely low.

A company spokesman told FARM SHOW that the layout and design of the cab is better than in any other bi-directional tractor because all controls pivot with the operator so they're in the same location no matter which direction you're moving.

The high-tech tractors – which come in 200, 230, and 260 hp models – have built-in "service diagnostics" which are transmitted back to your farm computer. In the future, the information will go directly to the dealer who will be alerted to upcoming repair needs and can order the parts ahead of time.

The Finnish-made tractors are not yet on the market in North America.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Valtra Oy Ab, 44200 Suolahti, Finland (ph 011 358 14 549 111; fax 011 358 14 549 1533; Website: www.valtra.com).

Valtra's new bi-directional tractor has a sleek cab with lots of glass area.

Invention Winners At The Smithfield Show

The Smithfield Show in England sponsors a contest for farmer-inventors. Here are some of this year's winning entries. (Our thanks to David Cousins of Farmers Weekly magazine for the photos and stories.)

3-Pt. Mounted Hydraulic Hose Holder

Cables or hydraulic hoses that snag on tractor lift arms are a familiar nuisance.

Brian Anning's simple idea is to attach a steel bar to the 3-pt.'s top link bracket. A slotted loop welded onto the end of the bar supports hydraulic hoses and keeps them out of harm's way.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Brian Anning, Watchford Farm, Yarcombe, Honiton, Devon, England.

Steel bracket attaches to 3-pt.'s top link to keep hoses in place.

"Pairer" Groups Two Bales Together

An add-on bale "pairer" puts two big bales together behind John Cowie's New Holland 640 baler.

The first bale rolls to the end of a platform built into the back of the baler, coming up against a horizontal retaining bar. This bar does two jobs. It stops the first bale, and then lifts as the second bale exits the chamber to allow both bales to roll onto the ground. A gravity-operated toggle switch is used to lift the retaining bar.

The bar is built in two parts: a main section that pivots at the baler's rear, and a shorter section that pivots on it and is attached to the chamber door by a strap.

As the door lifts for the first time, only the upper retainer bar goes up. The main section stays put, ready to stop the first bale. Bale number one rolls out and as it comes to the back bar, it turns a cup-type latch. This latch locks the upper and lower bars together so that when the second bale is made and the door lifts, the whole retainer bar goes up and both bales roll out. Pressure then goes off the latch and gravity re-sets it, releasing the upper bar so that it's ready for the next pair of bales.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, John Cowie, North Auchininna, Fortrie, Turriff Aberdeenshire, England.

John Cowie's homemade bale "pairer" lets him put two big bales together behind his New Holland 640 baler.

Feeder Wagon Bagging Chute

Graham Band turned a side-unload feed wagon into a handy "bagger" by adding a home-built bagging chute to the side of the unit.

The chute mounts over the unloading door and the feed wagon controls were moved from the cab to a bracket on one side of the machine. Bags can now be filled up in a fraction of the time it took to do it by hand.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Graham Band, 70 Willow Drive, Wellesbourne, Warks, England.

Side-unload feed wagon was converted to "bagger" by adding a chute.

"Strip Sprayer" For ATV's

Weed-free strip is created by a pair of shields that mount to one side of ATV.

A "strip sprayer" on the side of an ATV lets Keith Harris create a weed-free strip around fields and kill weeds on walking paths or other areas.

A pair of shields adjust in width from 20 to 39 in. wide. A single spray nozzle mounts on the parallel linkage that supports the shields.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Keith Harris, Manor Farm, Silton, Gillingham, Dorset, England.

Automatic Bucket Filler

To get water to his small flock of free-range chickens John Dadswell fills buckets from water taps. He got tired of wasting water when buckets overflowed.

His solution was to design a double-chambered device that measures out a preset volume of water. And while one bucket is filling, water for the next bucket flows into the device.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, John Dadswell, Ceunant Cottage Farm, Newmoat, Clarbeston Road, Pembrokeshire, England.

Chamber measures out a preset volume of water. While one bucket is filling, water for next bucket flows into device.

Tractor-Mounted Soil Tester

In-crop soil testing is possible with this 3-pt. mounted unit which can be used in standing crops, unlike ATV or pickup-mounted testers.

The sampling arm is powered by a double-acting hydraulic cylinder that mounts behind the tractor. A stainless steel tube takes samples and then ejects them into a metal chute alongside the driver where they can be tested or bagged for later analysis. Core number and position are recorded on a laptop computer mounted ahead of the driver.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Ian Scott, 22 Grange Farm Drive, Stockton, Southam, Warks, England.

The big advantage of this 3-pt. mounted soil tester is that it can be used in standing crops, unlike ATV or pickup-mounted testers.