

Combo Tool Finishes Min-Till Fields

Getting fields in shape for planting gets tougher the more trash is left on the field. When Steve Weaver and his dad Gordon first made the switch to minimum till, they tried all the options, but no tool did the job quite right. So they decided to build their own.

The Weavers started with a Brady field cultivator and added rolling harrows from Unverferth. "The unit worked pretty good, but we wanted to get the cornstalks worked up a little more," recalls Steve. "We bought a used disk and mounted a couple gangs on the front of the cultivator. That worked better, but we started breaking shafts on the disks."

The solution was to lengthen the frame on the field cultivator by about four feet and rig up a set of springs to allow the disc gangs to flex. The hitch on the field cultivator was bolted to the main frame. To lengthen it, they simply unbolted it and had three 4-ft. long pieces of similar sized tubing fabricated with faceplates to match and bolted them into place.

A 3 by 3-in. steel tubing cross piece on the hitch both reinforced the hitch and originally anchored the first rank of spring shanks. Once the frame was lengthened, the Weavers used the crosspiece as the front support for the disc gangs. They welded a second piece of tubing to the crosspiece to raise the disc gangs as they originally cut deeper than needed. Similar crosspieces were mounted

on the extended frame to provide rear support for the gangs. This rear support consisted of two sections of 3 by 3-in. tubing mounted at a slight angle so the discs, when mounted, would throw dirt out from the center.

Four lengths of 6-in. channel iron were welded from front to rear gang supports. The gangs themselves are each mounted to two steel tubes, which are hinged at the rear cross support and suspended from a spring at the front. The springs came off an old IH 815 grain head. They rest on the topsides of the channel irons. A steel tube inside and two thirds the length of the spring acts as a guide for the spring. Threaded rods extend from the gang mount through the channel iron and the spring to a plate on top of the spring and a nut threaded to the rod.

"The springs let the gangs flex more," says Steve. "We simply tighten the nuts to take play out of the springs and gang movement."

A cross bar at the rear of the frame extension provides support for the frame. It also allows spring teeth to be offset on two different bars of the frame. Extending the frame and mounting the gangs farther forward better offset the weight of the rolling harrows.

"The entire unit is pretty well in balance," says Steve. "We also added a hitch to the rear so we can pull a packer behind as needed."

Weaver estimates their total investment at



The Weavers started with a Brady field cultivator and lengthened the frame by 4 ft. They added a couple disk gangs on front.

about \$3,500. That included the cost of the original field cultivator, harrows and disc gangs.

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Rolling Unverferth harrows on back of cultivator frame.



Hunter Teaches Others How To Fillet A Deer

Filleting a deer carcass right in the woods is the safest and easiest way to process a carcass, says Rich Richert, a New York hunter who's been cleaning deer that way for years. He's put together a DVD (or video) showing how to "bone out" a deer at the kill site without field dressing it.

Richert's methods are a way to avoid exposure to CWD or Chronic Wasting Disease, which afflicts deer and elk, similar to the way mad cow disease attacks cattle. The disease is found in the nerves, spinal cord and lymph nodes, as well as the brain and several other organs. Concern is high among deer hunters in areas where it has been identified, as well as in neighboring states. To deal with the problem and the concern, Richert developed his preventative methods of processing.

"We teach hunters how to process deer

easier while avoiding the parts of the body that carry the disease," says Richert, who has 30 years of experience as a meat cutter.

In the video he demonstrates removing all lymph nodes, while leaving all connecting bones attached. He uses a five-in. filleting knife to debone the muscles in a time-saving process for either home or field processing.

To fillet a deer, he peels back the skin and removes the meat without puncturing the body cavity. The entire process takes only half an hour and is his personal favorite.

"You need to check with your state's regulations to see if it is allowed," advises Richert. "I bone my deer out on site and walk out of the woods with a bucket of meat and my tag."

He suggests chilling the meat in the coldest part of the refrigerator for two to three weeks before packaging it for the freezer.

Key points he makes in the video related to C.W.D are to avoid cutting into bone or spinal cord and to find and remove all lymph nodes. With his techniques, there are only a few lymph nodes of concern, and he carefully identifies them for the viewer. If the head is to be saved or if it needs to be turned in for C.W.D testing, Richert suggests using a separate knife and soaking it in a 50 percent bleach/water solution for an hour afterwards.

The video sells for \$29.95, while the DVD goes for \$41.03. Shipping and handling is \$5.95.

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Rich Richert has put together a video showing how to "bone out" a deer at the kill site without field dressing it.

Hydrostatic Weeder Makes Crop Work Easier

Shayne Herr made his wife and his back happy when he put together what he calls his "G-Whizz" hydrostatic weeder. To build it, he married the back end of a 3-wheel Toro utility tractor to the front end of an Allis Chalmers G tractor. A 4 hp Briggs and Stratton powers the hydrostatic motors on the wheels. The combination, when equipped with a platform and foot pedals, lets the Herrs weed their organic vegetable fields without bending over.

"Any hydrostatic drive unit would work," says Herr. "It allows me to mount foot pedals on the deck so I can operate it laying down. It has infinite speeds, and I can raise the deck as the crop grows."

The first step after welding the frames of the two machines together was to widen the rear wheels with a piece of square tubing. Herr then welded a piece of square tubing vertically from the front end and two from the rear frame.

A horizontal framework of square tubing

welded to these uprights supports a corrugated tin sun and rain shield. It also supports three lengths of irrigation tubing that run the length of the roof, one to each side.

Warehouse racks from a local store form the deck, which hangs by chain from the irrigation pipe overhead.

When traveling to and from fields, the original Allis steering wheel is used to control it. In the field they use the foot controls. Their older kids can ride on the tractor platform while a safety seat for their toddler hangs from the roof frame.

"My wife Sherry is happy with the G-Whizz," says Herr. "Before this, we would crawl miles on our hands and knees, and they would ache at the end of the day. She thinks it's way more awesome than I do, but then she uses it the most."

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Hydrostatic weeder was made by marrying the back end of a 3-wheel Toro utility tractor to the front end of an Allis Chalmers G tractor. It's controlled by foot pedals so the Herrs can weed their vegetable fields while laying down.