

## EasyPick Cart Boosts Berry, Veggie Picking Productivity

Hand picking produce can be a real pain, but Greg Naber's pickers have it made in the shade. Thanks to his comfortable, shaded cart, they pick strawberries faster and better than conventional pickers ever could.

"We would never consider going back to people on foot picking berries," says Naber. "On our operation, we have seen a minimum of 30 percent savings on labor. Kids who normally mess around will pick steady, and there is no question about who picked the row or how well. We have a crew of seven on one machine, and they can work eight to nine hours a day, six days a week, and it's not a problem."

Naber began work on his "EasyPick Harvest Assistant" more than eight years ago. In addition to five acres of strawberries, Naber runs a welding and machine fabrication business. Over a few years time, he modified and improved the EasyPick, replacing the chain reduction drive with planetary drives and increasing engine horsepower. A year ago, he began limited marketing of the EasyPick with a two-row Economy model for smaller growers and four-row and larger machines for larger producers. The Economy model, with its single wheel drive, sells for \$5,660. A six-station 2-wheel drive machine sells for \$17,800. Options include 4-WD on-board conveyers and as many stations as are needed.

Regardless of size, the basic design remains the same. Pickers stretch out on a pad over the row. An adjustable head rest takes pressure off the neck. A carrying tray holds containers to be filled, while a storage rack beneath the picker's pad holds trays as they are filled. At a break point in the rows, the operator stops the machine, and all filled trays slide off for transport to storage.

"Units can be modified to hold different size boxes, and it is even possible to have a conveyor set up to load a trailer pulled behind the EasyPick," explains Naber.

On all machines an operator/picker controls speed and direction. Naber suggests as-



Hand picking produce is a lot easier with Greg Naber's comfortable, shaded cart. Several different models are available.

signing your best person to operate the machine. Larger models have a guidance system that automatically follows the row of plants or the furrow. On the Economy model, a toggle switch adjusts the hydraulic steering system.

"Using hydraulics eliminates the jerking you get with a mechanical system when the wheels go over an obstruction," explains Naber. "The hydrostatic drive makes it easy to make slight adjustments in speed on the go. We can vary speed from 2 in./min. to 120 ft./min."

An overhead shade keeps both pickers and berries cool and shelters them both from rain.

The EasyPick is a very flexible machine and can be used for picking a variety of bed and row crops from strawberries to asparagus, cucumbers and snap beans. It can also be used for weeding, blossom removal and any situation where bending and kneeling is required. In addition, the machine can be adjusted quickly with seats for planting and transplanting.



Pickers stretch out on a pad over the row. An adjustable head rest takes pressure off the neck.

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## Drive-In "Wheel Lock" Holds Mowers, ATV's On Trailers

Anyone who frequently transports riding mowers, ATV's, or utility tractors will appreciate this new drive-in "wheel lock."

"It eliminates the need for straps, ties, or chains. Just drive the mower in and it automatically locks into place," says Brian Clarke, ProEquipment, Jensen Beach, Fla.

The spring-loaded "ProLocker" locks onto a single tire. To use it you simply drive the mower into the device until a metal guard automatically snaps into place. The guard is locked in position by a single pin. Once at the job site, the operator simply pulls the pin back, gives it a quarter turn, and then starts the machine and backs it off the truck or trailer.

The unit can be removed from the truck or trailer by pulling a pin from a metal bracket that bolts to the deck. The bracket remains flat against the bottom of the deck, in place for a simple one-pin re-installation.

Three different models are available to fit tires ranging from 7 to 10 1/2 in. high; from 12 1/2 to 16 in. high; and 21 to 26 in. high. The 21 to 26-in. model can accommodate ATV's. Prices start at \$149.99 plus S&H. The company says models for skid steer loaders and golf carts will soon be available.

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Spring-loaded unit locks onto a single tire.



You drive mower into device until a metal guard automatically snaps into place. Guard is locked in position by a single pin.

## Posthole Driver Equipped With Drill

You've never seen a posthole driver like this new Munro Digger-Driver that's equipped with an auger. It lets you drill a pilot hole and then use the driver to pound the post into the hole.

"You can switch from the auger to the driver in seconds," says Levi Van Sambeek. "Because the post is following the pilot hole, it doesn't require as much force, and you end up with straighter posts."

Van Sambeek found the Australian-built Munro post driver while searching the web for fencing equipment. He and his father Leo were looking for a better and faster way to fence their southwestern South Dakota ranch. They were so impressed with the way it worked that within a year they had signed up to be the Australian company's North American distributor.

"We had 1,000 acres to fence, and my dad has a full-time job off the ranch," explains Van Sambeek. "We found we could average 20 to 30 posts per hour with the Munro Digger-Driver, where we were doing pretty good to get five posts an hour with a post hole auger."

The unit features all hydraulic operation including the reversible auger, forward, back and sideways tilt adjustments, and the driver head. A built-in damper cushions the driver head on backstroke for longer cylinder life, while a safety valve allows downward strokes to be stopped at any point without damage to the unit.

Prices range from \$6,995 for an 8 1/2-ft. model to \$9,295 for an 11-ft. model. Accessories include different size augers, rock cut-



Munro Digger-Driver is equipped with an auger. It lets you drill a pilot hole and then use the driver to pound the post into the hole.

ting auger tips, and a side shift mount that allows the operator to drive along an existing fence.

"The rock cutting tip lets you drill right into shale, hardpan or even sandstone and limestone," says Van Sambeek.

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