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## Dealer Specializes In Chinese Tractors

If you've never taken a close look at the utility tractors coming out of China, maybe it's time you did.

That's the message you'll get from Richard Stewart, a tractor dealer in Spokane, Wash., who's doing a booming business selling five brands of tractors imported directly from China. They range from 18 to 80 hp.

Stewart, of Homestead Tractors and Supply, handles Lenar, Jinma, FarmPro, Futian, and Kama tractors. All models are diesel-powered.

Stewart hopes to become the leading supplier of Chinese tractors in the western half of the U.S. Last November he traveled to China to attend the country's biggest equipment show.

"These tractors sell for about 30 to 40 percent less than Deere, Kubota, and New Holland tractors," says Stewart. "They come with a 1-year warranty. Our market is people who would otherwise probably buy a used tractor. They want a tractor to move horse manure, snow plow their driveway, drill a few fence posts, etc. These tractors are well built and simple. Their fit and finish isn't as pretty as it is on more expensive models and they don't have many bells and whistles, but they're a great value. They remind me of the old Ford 8N tractors with a good, basic engine, strong pto, and a 3-pt. hitch. The differ-



Five models of tractor arrive from China in crates, including Lenar, Jinma, FarmPro, Futian, and Kama.

ence between them and the Ford 8N is that these tractors have power steering and diesel engines.

"Since my trip to China, I've spent quite a bit of time researching different tractor manufacturers to determine which tractors are built the best, which ones are being imported regularly, and which ones have parts readily avail-

able. With that in mind, I picked five brands that I thought would be the most intelligent choice if I was selling one to my brother."

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## Semi-Truck Fitted With Airstream Sleeper

When Tom Warren drives across the country in his GMC semi, he travels in style, thanks to the Airstream "sleeper" he mounted on back of the truck.

"You can buy a motor home and end up with it overloaded, not enough power and not enough braking," explains Warren. "This is awesome to drive. You have all the power you need, a good ride, Jake brakes and a 13-speed transmission. Not counting labor, I probably have less than \$20,000 in it."

The 1976 GMC had been rebuilt shortly before Warren bought it. It had a big Cummins engine in it, all new tires and wheels, and a new Peterbuilt Air Ride suspension. While the truck already had a walk-in sleeper, Warren wanted even more room for his cross-country runs. An ad for a 1972 26-ft. Airstream suggested a solution. For \$2,500, he got a trailer with everything in good shape and working order.

Mounting it was relatively easy for Warren. He has been converting buses for 40 years and restoring vehicles of all types for 30 years. He began by stripping off the sleeper and fifth wheel from the truck and extending the frame by 10 ft. to carry the Airstream.

"I built a 36-in. wide subframe and attached it to the trailer frame," says Warren. "The subframe is mounted to the truck frame on bushings, allowing it to flex."



"It's awesome to drive. I have all the power I need, a good ride, Jake brakes and a 13-speed transmission," says Tom Warren, who mounted an Airstream "sleeper" on back of his GMC semi truck.

Skirting on the Airstream are also mounted to the subframe. At the rear of the Airstream, a 1-in. gap separates the trailer from storage compartments and holding tanks as well as a power generator for the heater and air conditioner. Standard trailers can be hooked on or Warren can flip a panel and hook up a gooseneck trailer.

Warren cut a doorway in the cab end of the Airstream and connected it to the cab with

a rubber boot. "We can go between the cab and the trailer just like going into a walk-in sleeper," he says.

Wherever he goes with the big (24,000 lbs.) 38-ft. long rig, Warren attracts attention. "I have had people follow for miles, passing 8 to 10 times just to look at it," he says.

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