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8-Wheeler ATV Never Gets Stuck

"It'll go through deep mud without getting stuck and is far more stable on hillsides. The difference is unbelievable," says Mark Bader of Green Bay, Wis., who added duals all the way around on his 2005 Kawasaki 650 4-WD ATV.

He bought four new "deep mudder" tires and rims and mounted them on the inside, moving the original wheels to the outside. The outside rear wheels measure 10 in. wide and the front ones 8 in. wide.

Bader says he came up with the idea after getting his ATV stuck in deep mud and later

watching the wheels spin in sandy soil while pulling a small disk. "I worked at a sod farm and noticed their tractors all have dual wheels. They never got stuck."

Each set of wheels is connected by four long bolts that run through pvc spacers between the wheels, using the rims' existing bolt holes. The rear wheels have 12-in. long bolts and 3-in. long spacers while the front wheels have 9 1/2-in. long bolts and 2 1/2-in. long spacers. Washers were made by cutting 1/8-in. thick steel into 2-in. squares and drilling holes through them.

"I never expected dual wheels on an ATV would make such a big difference," says Bader. "I had been using my ATV to pull a 6-ft. disk before planting food plots for deer. However, the wheels would often spin in the sandy soil which caused the ATV to bog down. It's no longer a problem. Also, now I can go through mud so deep my friend's dog can't even walk across it."

"I think the same idea would work on any ATV. I paid \$400 for the wheel rims and \$280 for the tires."

"I put the deep lug wheels on the inside

because I thought they would be less likely to spin and hold up better. The add-on wheels have a deeper, more aggressive lug design so they pull better."

Bader says the 8-wheeler does steer a little harder "and I've got to be more careful when going through narrow openings between trees in the woods."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Mark Bader, 1484 Eliza St., Green Bay, Wis. 54301 (ph 920 433-9931).

Farm Adds Color To 'Holly' Days

Gaylard and Helma Stewart's farm produces the colors of Christmas - the lush green leaves and bright red berries of their 1,500-tree holly orchard. The crop has had strong demand for more than a century and prices that have stayed fairly stable.

The Stewarts are one of North America's largest suppliers of festive Christmas trimming.



Gaylard and Helma Stewart grow holly and ship it all around the world.

The couple is the third generation to operate Amblecote Estate on Vancouver Island in British Columbia. Some of the trees are more than a century old.

Amblecote was established by Gaylard's grandfather who brought some holly trees with him from England and started selling holly sprigs in 1886.

Today, the Stewarts ship holly around the world. They sell to wholesale florists and grocery store chains, as well as to individuals by mail order or through their website.

Harvest usually begins in the last week of October and continues almost right up until Christmas, according to Stewart. Sprigs are clipped off by hand before being dipped into a liquid preservative, and drip dried. The fresh sprigs are then packaged and kept in cold storage before shipping.

Amblecote offers a selection of seven different packages for individuals as well as for fundraisers. They also sell in bulk to the wholesale florist trade.

"I'm 65 now and don't plan to continue doing this much longer," Stewart says.

None of the Stewart's four children are interested in taking over the farm, which is also being encroached on by urban development.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Amblecote Estate, 6387 Lakes Rd., Duncan, B.C., Canada V9L 5V6 (ph 250 748-4630; fax 250 746-2374; amblecot@islandnet.com; www.islandnet.com/~amblecot/index.htm).

Solar-Powered AC Chore Tractor

You can't plow with this solar-powered tractor, but the folks who built it say they use it every day for all kinds of chores.

"We use it to haul 1,500-lb. bales to feed sheep and to pull wagons for farm tours," says James Chapman at the Marshfield Renewable Energy Center (MREC) in Missouri.

The MREC trains homeless and unemployed veterans in renewable technology installation. Workers at the centers are also encouraged to experiment with renewable technology.

"We stripped the engine, radiator, fan and hood off an old Allis Chalmers and installed a 15 hp electric motor," recalls Chapman. "The shaft matched up to the transmission perfectly, but we did have to make a plate to bolt the DC motor to the transmission."

A 50-watt solar panel was installed over specially built fenders, and two banks of batteries were added to the side of the frame.

"When the sun is out, there is enough output from the panels for continuous work," says Chapman. "The panels can recharge the batteries in four hours or less."

Chris Allison, also of the MREC, says an important element of the system is the charge controller on each set of batteries. It prevents over charging, which can be a problem. He



Tractor is powered by a 15 hp electric motor, with two banks of batteries recharged by a 50-watt solar panel.

also cautions that the batteries must be kept from freezing.

"Each bank consists of three 6-volt deep-cycle storage batteries for a total of 72 volts, with an additional 12-volt battery dedicated to power the control panel and the starter," says Allison.

He estimates costs for the solar power conversion at less than \$3,000 for the electric

motor and about \$4.25 per watt for the solar panels.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, The Marshfield Renewable Energy Center, 3215 Hwy OO, Marshfield, Mo. 65706 (ph 800 228-5284; mobile 314 910-0594; info@moreenergy.org; www.moreenergy.org).

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