



Lewis Hacault started with a sprayer cart and ended up with this home-built bale shredder.



Rear forks load bales into shredder, eliminating the need for a second loader tractor.

Home-Built Bale Shredder Saves Straw, Labor

A home-built bale shredder helps Lewis Hacault use less straw and save labor.

"I built it mostly to spread straw at first," the Mariapolis, Manitoba, farmer explains. He wanted to use one large bale for inside and outside bedding areas for his 30 beef cows, but it was difficult to do by hand without wasting straw. More straw meant more time and cost and cleanup time.

With his small herd, Hacault knew buying a \$12,000 shredder was impractical, so after seeing someone else's shredder, he combined his mechanic skills and some scrap equipment to build his own.

He started with a sprayer cart and ground off brackets and unneeded parts. He welded anhydrous cultivator scraps to make a frame

and added round pipes on top to support a bale. "Inside the cart, there's a feeder chain that the bale sits on made from an old New Holland baler," Hacault says. "It actually turns the bale to feed it in. The chain is run with a hydraulic motor."

He made flails from 2 by 3/8-in. flat iron hinged with 1/2-in. pins welded to a 7-inch heavy pipe from an old John Deere combine to spread and throw the straw into pens, or feed in front of the cows.

"It blows straw about 30 ft. with the flails," Hacault says, with a direct drive pto that spins the pipe at 1,000 rpm's.

"I have an automatic hydraulic loader so I don't have to unhook the tractor to load bales," Hacault says. Tines slip under the



Hacault made flails out of 2 by 3/8-in. flat iron.

bale, then lift it into the cart.

"I do everything from the tractor, and it gets the job done much quicker," he adds. He spent \$300 and a winter building it in his spare time, but it was a good winter project,

he says, that has worked well for five years.

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No-Freeze Stock Waterer

A Pinckneyville, Ill., man has been watering his cattle for more than 15 years with a totally maintenance-free system he designed himself.

Robert Przygoda loves his automatic watering tank because it uses no electricity, yet the unit has never frozen shut in winter, and the shaded water doesn't get hot in summer, so there's no algae growth.

"The concrete tank has a roof over it so it's like a cave. The opening across the front is the only part that's not insulated by dirt," he says. "The front opening has a curtain made from strips of old, used carpet and the cows push the strips out of the way with their noses to get a drink."

Przygoda says there have been a few times when there's been a 1/8-in. skin of ice in the tank after the temperature has been around 0 degrees F with a harsh wind for several days. But his cows easily break through that themselves.

The tank holds about 250 gal., and the 16-in. high opening is about 4 ft. wide, allowing three cows to drink at a time. The rug curtain is cut in 2-ft. wide strips, which are tacked

onto a board that's nailed to a post on either side of the tank.

In the summer, he's proud to report he's never had to clean the tank out because algae doesn't grow in the shady water.

When building the system, Przygoda dug 18 in. into the ground and made forms to pour concrete. He used old lumber to make the inside form, and relied on the earth wall for the outside form. He poured the floor and walls at the same time, and then the roof. The front end of the roof sits five feet above ground level and it tapers toward the back to about three feet.

Przygoda covered the back end of the tank roof with four feet of dirt, and tapered that forward to none at the very front.

"My water source is a lake so I have a gravity-fed 2-in. dia. pipe that feeds underneath the tank," he says. "Five feet underground, I located a valve on the pipe, just before the water enters the tank. Then, packed in sand just above the valve, I placed a 5-ft. section of 6-in. dia. pipe that gives me above-ground access. In case of an emergency, I can shut that valve off by using a 3/4-in. dia. pipe (5-



Freeze-proof watering tank uses no electricity, yet has never frozen shut in winter, says Robert Przygoda.

ft. long) that I can stick down there. I welded a couple of 1/4-in. bolts onto the end of that pipe, which allows me to turn the valve. I've never used any of that, though - I just leave the water on all the time."

Przygoda says the system cost him almost nothing to build 15 years ago. The work took him about 15 hours, once he had come up with a plan.

"If we could make these tanks and deliver them like a septic tank, it would be a good deal," Przygoda comments. "I have just recently passed the farm onto my son, so I guess that will be his decision."

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Backhoe Designed For ATV's

Bill Ganswich, of Riverdale, Utah, is a "recreational miner" who got tired of digging test holes with a shovel.

"It's a whole lot easier to just flip a lever from the seat of an ATV," says the former aerospace engineer, who designed a backhoe for his 1994 Suzuki 250 ATV.

It worked so well that he patented the design and found a manufacturer. He and his partner, Dean Beckstead, started selling the Gan-So Digger in 2007.

The digger has a 108-in. reach. Each cylinder develops more than 5,000 lbs. force. The boom swings 60 degrees. It can dig 6 ft. deep, and the 7-in. bucket holds about 3.2 gal. level measurement and an additional gallon when heaped. An optional 10-in.

bucket, which holds 4.5 gal., is available.

Ganswich recently upgraded to a 2005 Bombardier 650cc ATV that works very well, he says. He also made the digger more versatile by making two versions - one that mounts on the front and the other with 21-in. wheels that tows behind any vehicle.

The ATV-mounted digger is fastened by U-clamps to the front metal bumper. Customers need to add an optional straight bumper if the ATV has a curved bumper. Ganswich notes. The 6 1/2 hp gas engine and hydraulic oil reservoir assembly fastens to the rack on back of the ATV to counterbalance the digger's weight. The whole system weighs 415 lbs.

"You don't need outriggers," Ganswich

says. "It has a lot of stability." He has outriggers as an option, but doesn't recommend them.

Ganswich says most customers prefer the tow version. At 525 lbs and 133-in. long, the digger tows on a 2-in. ball hitch. Wheel width adjusts from 56 to 75 in. and it can be towed at highway speeds.

Either model costs \$4,588 FOB and comes with a 90-day warranty for ordinary use and 30-day warranty for commercial use.

"We contract with an Ogden manufacturing company to make them," Ganswich says. "The workmanship is superb. I'm very particular on how things are made."

He adds that he is interested in adding dealers and notes that he plans to test an ATV



Bill Ganswich designed this backhoe for his 1994 Suzuki 250 ATV. The boom swings 60 degrees and can dig 6 ft. deep.

front loader this summer.

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