



In-line mower can be pulled by horse or subcompact tractor. "Works great for getting rid of weeds between trees without using chemicals," says inventor Marvin Brisk.

Horse-Drawn Sicklebar Mower

Marvin Brisk built an in-line sicklebar mower that can be drawn by horse or subcompact tractor in response to requests from local organic vineyard and fruit growers, who were looking for ways to get rid of weeds and grass between trees without using chemicals.

"Most fruit growers have a green zone between rows," says Brisk. "I had one guy after me for several years, wanting a 4-ft. horse drawn mower to use at his vineyard."

The answer, decided Brisk, was an in-line sickle bar. He used New Holland off-the-shelf parts so replacement or repair would be easy.

"I made the drive based on a wobble box off a New Holland with a Pitman arm on it," says Brisk. "It's ground driven, using sprockets and no. 60 chain with pillow block bearings, all parts that are easy to get in any town."

Tires were used 16-in. front-end lugs from a 4-WD compact tractor.

The axle/drive unit uses a spring-loaded override Brisk designed. It allows one wheel to speed up while the other slows at turns.

"I get calls from guys with blueberries and

anything in narrow row situations with cover crops," says Brisk. "They want a mower that will cut a cover crop and lay it down for a mulch. Since it is getting mulched anyway, what little the horse hoofs knock down doesn't matter."

Currently he is working on a couple of 5-ft. units for more common row spacings. They will have a planetary drive to eliminate some of the vibration and also make the unit easier to pull. The wider mowers will be designed to be pulled by a team with foot pedal steering. If a team gets off a bit, the operator can keep from taking out a plant or vine. A tongue will also be available for use behind a compact tractor.

"With the new drive systems for the sickle bar, these 5-ft. units will have to be priced around \$4,500 to \$5,000," says Brisk. "Parts and steel aren't cheap."

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Weed-Free Fabric Has Built-In Drip Lines

Gardening couldn't be much easier than it is with the WeedFreeGarden blanket from EvoOrganic, LLC. The fabric blanket kills weeds and has drip irrigation built into it. Just spread it out, cut holes for plants, and turn on the water. The company sells the blanket in 100 to 1,200-ft. rolls in widths from 2 to 10 ft. The commercial grade material is also available in kits for common size home gardens.

"Our 8 by 10-ft. Garden Kit is ready to go," says Rick Harris, EvoOrganic. "Roll it out over the tilled bed, stake it down, cut holes to set seedlings, apply fertilizer and hook up the hose."

The \$69.95 kit consists of the double layer polyester blanket and four drip lines that run 12 in. apart, the full 10-ft. length. A standard 3/4-in. hose hookup with a pressure reducer comes with each blanket. The blanket can be used as is or cut lengthwise into two 4 by 10-ft. strips with two drip lines each. The drip lines have a 40 gal./hr. flow rate. Lines create a watering channel 2 in. wide, leaving a 10-in. planting channel between them.

The industry standard lines can be bent back on themselves and clipped when cut. Standard 8-mm connectors, available wherever drip lines are sold, can be used to reconnect the cut lines.

"You can make two 4-ft. wide, 10-ft. long beds or a single 4-ft. wide, 20-ft. long bed or an L-shaped bed or whatever is needed," says Harris. "With drip irrigation, the water goes 14 to 16 in. deep, and the roots chase the water. You can even put it on a timer and forget about it."



Fabric blanket has drip irrigation lines built into it. Just spread out the roll, cut holes for plants, and turn on the water.

Harris says the UV-protected blanket has a 5/20-year warranty. It will last at least five years if left in open sunlight. If covered with several inches of mulch, it has a 20-year expected life.

"The blanket saves up to 75 percent on normal water usage, encourages earthworms, bacteria and fungi in the soil for healthier, more disease resistant and better yielding plants," says Harris. "It leaves all the fun of planting and harvest and takes away the negatives like watering and weeding."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, EvoOrganic, LLC, 283 Gold Rush Rd., Lexington, Ky. 40503 (ph 859 296-2662 or toll free 800 731-6461; rick@evoorganic.com; www.evoorganic.com).

They Sell Bumblebees For Pollination

Wild honeybees have decreased in population across North America in recent years, resulting in lower yields of smaller fruits and vegetables for home gardeners and commercial producers.

Koppert Biological Systems aims to reverse the trend by selling "custom grown" bumblebees.

As the only commercial bumblebee producer in the U.S., the company offers some unique advantages. "You'll find that our bumblebees are a cut above other insects, such as honeybees, when complete pollination is the goal," says Koppert. "They work faster, visiting many more flowers per minute. Their large size lets them carry huge pollen loads, allowing longer foraging trips, and achieving better contact with flowers."

Bumblebees successfully pollinate in conditions that honeybees find intolerable. For example, they can pollinate in a greenhouse. They can also work in temperatures below 50 degrees, and this provides the perfect solution for pollinating early spring blooms. Not even strong wind or moderate rainfall will prevent the bumblebees from going about their pollination duties.

According to Koppert, one of the company's bumblebee Garden Hives will pollinate any garden up to 5,000 sq. ft.

Koppert Hives are maintenance-free, so "you don't have to be a beekeeper to have the benefits of proper pollination."

The hive is delivered to your door via UPS or another common carrier, at which point you remove it from the shipping box, place it near your garden on a cinder block or bricks, open the hive entrance, and walk away. The bumblebees will do the rest.

Although bumblebees can sting, they rarely do, according to Koppert. "In hydroponic greenhouses all over the world, Koppert's Natupol bumblebees work side by side with greenhouse workers," says Koppert's general manager Rene Ruiters. "Our bumblebees are very docile in comparison to other bees."

Koppert Biological Systems is a worldwide leader in the research, development and production of beneficial insects, including bio-



"Custom grown" bumblebees are better pollinators than honeybees, says Koppert Biological Systems.

logical crop protection products which can be used to control harmful insects in greenhouses, gardens or lawns for the professional grower or home gardening enthusiasts.

These include ladybugs, parasitic wasps, predatory mites and nematodes for the treatment of pests such as aphids, fungus gnats, Japanese beetles, grubs, spider mites, white flies and many more.

All of Koppert's insect products are shipped within the U.S. from the company's base in Romulus, Michigan. Canadian orders are shipped from their distribution center in Scarborough, Ontario.

The Natupol Bumblebee Garden Hive sells for \$74.99 (plus S&H). A larger unit, "The Quad," is available for commercial farming and provides 1 to 1 1/2 acres of pollination, depending on the crop. It consists of four hives, which are each priced at \$62.50 (plus S&H). Canadian consumers should contact their distribution center for pricing.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Koppert Biological Systems, 28465 Beverly Rd., Romulus, Mich. 48174 (ph 800 928-8827 or 734 641-3763) and Koppert Biological Systems, 50 Ironside Cres., Unit #2, Scarborough, Ontario, Canada M1X 1G4 (ph 800 567-4195 or 416 291-0040; asktheexpert@koppertonline.com; www.koppertonline.com).

How To Stop Horse Head Injuries

A new product called "Equiface Saver" protects horses from injuring their heads in a variety of situations where their instincts cause them to throw their heads up.

"It's not just for inexperienced or problem horses," says company president Paul Dyck, noting that facial injuries can occur when horses are being transported in trailers or housed in low-ceiling barns. It's also ideal when teaching young horses to be tied, and training them to load and unload, for teeth floating procedures, gelding procedures, and for working in close quarters with any horse that's head-shy.

"Injuries to a horse's face are difficult wounds to suture and care for," Dyck says. "When a horse has punctured or injured his face to the bone, there's a substantial risk of infection. This type of injury can be costly and lengthy to treat, and can lead to death, so it makes sense to do what we can to prevent it."

The Equiface Saver is hand made and has five layers of protection: a vegetable-tanned leather, a shaped polystyrene, a high density foam padding, a genuine suede, and a plush, long-knitted fleece.

The product comes in two sizes and two colors (walnut and burgundy). Other leather colors can be special ordered along with brass name plates and silver lettering for personalization. The product sells for \$185 (Can.) or \$169.99 (U.S.) plus S&H.



"Equiface Saver" has five layers of protection to keep horses from injuring their heads.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Equiface Saver, P.O. Box 3593, Steinbach, Manitoba, Canada R5G 1P7 or U.S. address: P.O. Box 78, Lancaster, Minn. 56735 (ph 204 346-9006 or cell 204 371-2300; fax 204 326-3446; info@equifacesaver.com; http://www.equifacesaver.com/).