

## Hitch Solves Deere Clearance Problem

Anyone who owns a Deere 7000, 7200, or 1770 front-fold planter knows that when the planter is folded for transport, often there isn't enough ground clearance as you enter or exit a field or cross railroad tracks. If you catch the planter's folded row units on a road or ditch bank, they can get bent or broken, leading to expensive repairs and costly downtime.

Rex Fischer had that problem with his Deere 7200 planter, and he decided to do something about it. His new patent pending "Dandi Planter Hitch" gives the front row units an additional 12 in. of clearance.

The unit consists of a 45-in. wide by 54-in. high frame that attaches to the 3-pt. lift arms. A 4-in. sq. crossbar inside the frame forms a new "drawbar" for the planter and is raised and lowered by a pair of hydraulic cylinders. The cylinders operate off tractor hydraulics and are activated by a lever in the cab. A flow divider valve keeps both cylinders in synch.

"It adds height in transport but when the hitch is in the down position, the planter is positioned the same as it was originally," says Fischer.



Planter hitches to moveable "drawbar" inside hitch frame.

"I came up with the idea after I bought a 7200 planter three years ago. I had fields that I couldn't get in and out of. I use it on my International Harvester tractor and have a total of about 27 inches of clearance under the front row units. The exact amount of clearance will depend on what tractor you're using.

"It pivots the entire main frame of the planter upward, but doesn't raise the planter's rear end."

The hitch is designed for 12, 16 and 24-row planters.



Extra 12 in. of height keeps planter from catching on ditches, railroad tracks, or other obstacles.

A limited number of hitches will be available for this season. List price for the Dandi Planter Hitch is \$3,750.

Fischer also offers an optional hitch position indicator. It uses a magnetically mounted flashing light in the tractor cab to remind you

the hitch is not in the planting position.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Dandi Products, Inc., 500 West North St., P.O. Box 922, Kendallville, Ind. 46755 (ph 260 347-6830; fax 260 347-6829).

## "Quick Change" Pulley Tool For Deere Straw Choppers

"Anyone who operates a Deere 9000 series combine knows how difficult it can be to change the drive speed on the straw chopper. This new product can reduce the corn-soybean conversion time by 15 minutes," says Fred Grieder, Carlock, Ill., about his new "quick change" pulley tool.

"The belt that drives the straw chopper on Deere 9000 series combines should be changed from low to high speed whenever you switch from corn to soybeans," says Grieder. "Deere recommends that you slow the chopper down for corn and speed it up for soybeans. The problem is that making the change can be a 20-minute job. You have to loosen the belt and move it to one of two pulleys. But to loosen the belt you have to

loosen a stiff idler pulley.

"Some farmers slide the entire chopper forward to take tension off the belt, but that's a big job. Others don't make the modification at all. But operating the chopper at the improper speed can result in poor performance. If you operate the chopper too slow in soybeans, you'll get a less than uniform spreading pattern with uncut residue on the ground. Operating the chopper too fast in corn will result in excessive chopper wear, and the cobs will fly out like bullets."

According to Grieder, the quick change pulley insert tool completely eliminates the need to tension the belt. You just snap the pulley insert into the pulley. As you roll the belt a quarter turn by hand, the tool derails



Drive belt tool simply derails belt to move it over the next pulley. It eliminates the need to loosen belt.

the belt, pushing it over onto the next groove. The same insert works for all three pulleys.

The quick change pulley insert sells for \$32 plus S&H.



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## Girl Stumbled Across Prize Silkies

Amanda Samuelson was stuck on Silkies from the time she first saw them on the internet. Although one of the oldest of chicken breeds, the bantam-size chickens are far from common with their hair-like feathers and fluffy heads. With eggs the size of ping pong balls, they are prized only as ornamental pets or as brooding hens for difficult-to-hatch eggs.

The 17-year-old had raised other breeds of chickens in the past. The look and temperament of the Silkie caught the teenager's attention.

"We heard about a guy in a neighboring town that might have some," recalls Samuelson. "He had found a breeding pair at an auction and got 7 chicks from them."

Samuelson raised 4 of the chicks and exhibited them at her county fair. She won a trip to the Minnesota State Fair where she won reserve champion. Bystanders urged her

to enter them in an open show so she went to the Eastern National Silkie Show held in Menominee, Wis. One of her hens won grand champion out of 1,000 birds at the show.

"We got lucky when we found these birds," says Samuelson's mother Lorrie. The mother and daughter have made the most of their luck. They have built the flock from 7 to 28 and hatched out more than 80 chicks this winter.

Baby chicks sell for \$5 each with the price increasing with age of the bird. They sold adults at the Minnesota State Fair for \$25 each and were told the national champion was worth \$200.

The birds may be white, partridge, gray, splash, black, or buff and bearded or non-bearded. Only white or black have been bred for showing. All have black skin and black bones and are used for black bone soup in their native China.



After buying her first Silkie from a neighbor, Amanda went on to win grand champion out of 1,000 birds at a national show.

The birds are fed a high protein game bird diet. Full grown hens average about 27 oz. while the roosters are about 32 oz. Samuelson keeps show birds in a cage prior to shows to keep them clean. She shampoos them and blow-dries them for each show.

"They are really gentle, perhaps because

they can't really see you when you come into their pen," says Samuelson. "All they can do is look down at your feet."

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## Feeder Built From Combine Grain Tank

"It's easy to operate and saves us a lot of labor," says Carroll Swartzel, Greenville, Va., about the hydraulic-operated feeder he built out of the grain tank and unloading auger off an old Deere pull-type combine. He carries it on a set of 3-pt. mounted bale forks.

The feeder was actually put together by a local high school's vo-ag shop. They used square tubing to make the base; the bale forks fit into the tubing. Four steel legs, welded to the bottom side of the tubing, provide ground

clearance for the auger on back of the tank. The auger is operated by a hydraulic motor, which chain-drives the auger's original drive sprocket.

"We use it to feed cattle on pasture. All we have to do is pick it up with our 3-pt. hitch and connect the hydraulic hoses," says Swartzel. "We fill it by auger from our grain bin. Feed is unloaded into portable bunks lined up in a row in the pasture. The auger was modified to drop down low. We drive by

the troughs slowly and push the hydraulic lever to activate the motor."

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A local high school modified a grain tank to maintain a 3-pt. hitch for feeding cattle.

