

Pickup 3-Pt. Hitch

Moving equipment from one farm to another is an easy job on the Dan and Loren Van Wyk farms near Pella, Iowa. The father and son team mounted a quick-tach 3-pt. hitch on the back of a Dodge pickup.

"We often have to move equipment 15 or 16 miles and we don't have time to do it with a tractor," says Dan, noting that the hitch easily handles their 8-row cultivator, rotary mower, blade and other equipment. The two men cut off the back of the

frame and mounted the 3-pt. — which they built from scratch — as close to the rear wheels as possible to put most of the weight over the rear wheels.

The 3-pt. has hydraulic cylinders on both lift arms and on the top link. A hydraulic pump and reservoir mount under the hood. Dan says they can equip the 3-pt. with a bale fork for moving big bales. The truck also carries a fuel tank and tools.

Low-Cost N-Serve Injector

"It saves us \$25 to \$30 on every tank of anhydrous," says Randy Mehringer, Jasper, Ind., about the gravity flow method he came up with for adding N-Serve nitrogen stabilizer to his anhydrous tanks. "When the dealer adds N-Serve, you pay for it by the gallon but, if you buy it by the barrel and add it yourself, you can save \$3 to \$4 a gallon. However, that usually requires an expensive pump."

Instead of a pump, Mehringer devised a way to inject N-Serve into anhydrous tanks, using a small LP tank like the ones found on gas barbecues and camping trailers. He put a fitting in the bottom that fits over the vapor valve on his anhydrous and put a valve in the top of the small tank. "You have to be extremely careful when cutting or drilling into an LP tank. I filled it with water before cutting into it to make sure there was no gas left inside."

Mehringer fastens the small tank down over the vapor valve on top of

the anhydrous tank, leaving the vapor valve closed and opening the valve on top of the small tank. He pours N-Serve into the small tank with the help of a funnel and closes the top valve. Then he opens the vapor valve on the anhydrous tank and lets the anhydrous blow up into the small tank.

"The first thing you hear is a 'whoosh' as the anhydrous equalizes the pressure and then you hear a gurgling sound as the N-Serve runs down into the tank. It takes slightly longer — 4 to 5 min. in all — but the savings are more than worth it. I've done this for several years with no problems, although you have to be very careful working with anhydrous," he cautions.

Once the N-Serve has mixed down into the tank, he turns off the vapor valve on the big tank and opens the valve on top of the small tank, letting the anhydrous vapor inside escape. Then he removes the small tank.

Turnips For Sheep

Sheepmen in New Zealand regularly plant fields of turnips for sheep and let the animals graze the fields over winter. Sam Harris, a Texas sheep producer, recently described his turnip experiments in an article in the Texas Farmer Stockman.

Harris planted 10 lbs. of seed per acre using a hand-operated broadcast seeder mounted on the tailgate of his pickup. The seed grew well, fertilized with 200 lbs. of a 30-15-0 mix. During the winter, the sheep were

rotated between the turnips, an oat field, and permanent pasture, but Harris says it was the turnips that really improved the quality of his flock. They produced a 130% lamb crop on less supplemental feed than ever before. He found that the Shogoin variety of turnips had the best leaf growth of the varieties he tried. He notes that sheep grub the turnips out of the ground and eat the entire vegetable.

"Long Arm" Light Bulb Changer

"No idea is old if you haven't heard it before," says Dr. Dale Welbourn, Neola, Iowa, who devised a simple tool for changing those hard-to-reach light bulbs in stairways and rooms with high ceilings.

Welbourn made his light bulb changer out of an 8-ft. long, 1-in. by 1-in. stick. He nailed the plastic top from a pressurized shaving cream container to one

end and glued a circular piece of rubber to the top of the cup. "The rubber gives it better gripping power to remove the old bulb and screw in the new one," says Welbourn, who also lined the inside wall of the container with electrician's tape to help grip the bulb. "It's important that the holding container be the same diameter as the bulb," he notes.

FARM SHOW

"Best Ideas"

Editor's Note: Have you got a "best idea" you'd like to share with FARM SHOW readers? It might be a new wrinkle in cropping, livestock, machinery or whatever. Maybe it's still experimental but looks promising. Or, maybe you've already proven it works. We'd like to hear about it. Write to: Best Ideas, c/o FARM SHOW, P.O. Box 704, Lakeville, Minn. 55044.

Tight "No Tire" Grain Cover

Piles of grain on the Fred Bergstrom farm near Brady, Mont., look neater than piles of grain on most farms. Bergstrom uses a simple technique to hold plastic down on huge piles of grain to seal out moisture — without having to pile old tires all over the top.

Bergstrom lays one line of perforated aeration pipe on the ground and then unloads the pile of grain on top of it. When the pile is finished, he covers it with plastic or canvas and seals the outer edge with a couple rows of straw bales. He then installs a small fan on the aeration pipe that draws air from the

pile, creating a slight vacuum that holds the plastic tightly to the pile. The plastic doesn't even ripple in a strong wind, says Bergstrom, and the fan is left on 24 hours a day.

Bergstrom's area of Montana is windy and he used to need lots of tires to cover the pile. He says the technique he now uses not only eliminates the need for tires but also the work to handle them. Plus, it does a better job. If the small fan is turned off, the plastic begins rippling in a couple minutes. But it stays in place, even during heavy blows with the fan turned on, says Bergstrom.

Square Bale Scale

Howard Hathaway, Battle Ground, Wash., found a way to monitor the performance of his square baler. "I mounted a bracket on my baler to carry a scale so I can weigh a bale occasionally and make sure weights don't vary," he says. The problem is that when conditions change, or when operating in different fields, weights of bales can vary drastically. Sometimes the variation is due to a change in the density settings on the baler. Now, says Howard, all his bales weigh the same.

Old Tire "Towrope"

When a tractor, truck or car gets stuck on the Clark Riley farm near Owosso, Mich., they get out an old tire and start towing. The idea is to use two log chains, one on the stuck vehicle and the other on the tractor or truck pulling it. Both chains are looped through an old tire that's positioned in the middle. "The advantage is that you can jerk on the tire casing with less stress on the two machines. It absorbs the shock and I think it's much safer than using nylon tow ropes," says Clark.