



Paul Lawson's pellet systems can produce fuel pellets from virtually any type of biomass.

Start A Business With Pelletizer

By Jim Ruen, Contributing Editor

Paul Lawson doesn't just sell pelletizers; he helps customers add new products and even build new businesses. Lawson Mills Biomass Solutions' LM-72 pellet systems are midsize machines that can process up to 1,000 lbs. per hour. The company works with customers to develop products and customize systems as needed in the company's test facility.

"Our pellet systems can produce fuel pellets from virtually any biomass," says Lawson. "However, we also help customers develop fish and animal feed pellets and other specialty uses. We have designed over 50 different die combinations and worked with hundreds of different products."

Lawson pellet systems have turned recycled wallboard into gypsum pellets that can be spread on fields or added to ponds to reduce acidification. Lawson developed a die that helped a coffee roaster pelletize chaff otherwise discarded, yet worth \$13/lb. in coffee flavor and oils.

"One of our biggest success stories was working with a co-op of hops growers," says Lawson. "Hops are very light and fluffy, and shipping them any distance is very expensive due to bulk. We redesigned the roller and die to pelletize the hops without generating the heat that would have affected flavor. It cut shipping and handling costs and made it easier for the brewers as well."

Lawson's low temperature pelletizing has proven beneficial for preserving medication and other feed additives. One small feed producer paid for his system in only three months by using it to make horse feed that included herbs and seaweed with the low temperature system. The pelletizers can handle mixed wet and dry materials, such as combining flax meal and alfalfa with molasses.

Lawson offers test pelletizing of various

ingredients at no cost to prospective and current customers. He says it can pay even if he doesn't sell a machine.

"We had a guy in California ask us to pelletize pine cones for fuel pellets, as they are a fire danger in his area," says Lawson. "We proved it could be done, and then he bought a larger industrial system. However, we learned how to pelletize pine cones if someone else wants to do it. We've pelletized pine needles, too."

The pellet systems are assembled from German and Canadian-made parts for high quality and long life. His smallest mill is priced at \$31,000 (Canadian), installation and training included. The largest pelletizer offered by Lawson is \$46,000, with touch screen controls, feed, conditioners, moisture injection, cooling and screening mechanisms.

While Lawson admits much cheaper systems are available, they often don't work up to expectations and sometimes not at all.

"You wouldn't believe how many machines we have installed where a cheap Chinese-made pelletizer sat in the corner unused," says Lawson. "Ours are built to run 24/7 and can be linked if greater volume is needed. Most pellets can be made for around \$10 per ton. Most of our customers pay for their systems within the first year."

The company also offers hammer mills, hay bale breakers, grinders, augers and conveyers. Like the pellet systems, these too are high quality machines sized to match the LM-72 systems. Leased equipment is also available.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Lawson Mills Biomass Solutions Ltd., 67 Watts Ave., Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Canada C1E 2B7 (ph toll free 888 313 9424; www.makepellets.ca).



Skid steer-mounted disk lets Clyde Reilly apply more down pressure while working close to tree lines.

Skid Steer-Mounted Disk Ideal For Close Quarters

A skid steer-mounted disk lets Clyde Reilly work the soil close to tree lines. The shelterbelt removal and renovation expert adapted a compact tractor's rear-mount disk to work with his 533 Bobcat skid-steer.

"We had a wet summer and got behind on mowing and disking the tree lines we had worked on," explains Reilly. "When the mower was on the tractor, the disk just sat there. Mounting it on the Bobcat also let us put more down pressure on it for more aggressive action."

Reilly notes that disking behind his compact tractor had little impact on wheel tracks. Pushing the disk ahead of the skid steer eliminated that problem.

Adapting the disk to the skid steer was easy. Reilly simply welded two pieces of channel iron across the two rear-most bars on the disk frame. The channel iron was sized to fit forklift forks on the skid steer.

"I can offset the disk to get closer to the trees without hitting branches by how I position the forks," he says. "Perhaps the biggest reason I adapted the disk for the skid steer is it was a hot day and the tractor didn't have air conditioning, but the skid steer cab did."

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Lawson helps customers develop fish and animal feed pellets.

