

## Made It Myself

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### Hay Handling Made Simple

Putting up over 3,000 tons of hay at the Two Dot Ranch in Leadore, Idaho is no longer a headache. Thanks to lots of ingenuity and homebuilt equipment, the entire task is automated and relatively simple.

"We think this way of handling hay is the best that has ever been developed. It's not only fast but cheap," says F.J. Whittaker, owner of the Two Dot Ranch. "We cut hay with four 7-ft. tractor-mounted mowers because the ground is too rough for anything larger and the hay is too short and thick for other methods, such as a swather. Our tractors cut 150 to 200 tons per day. We designed a

large 12-wheel rake that'll travel at high speeds, yet rake a large 21-ft. windrow. We pick up windrowed hay with our own specially built sweep rake that hauls the hay to our stack.

"The hay is stacked with a large grapple arm on a large hydraulically-operated boom that pulls behind a tractor. One person can stack 150 tons a day without anyone on the stack to help.

"We designed the equipment and had most of it built in local farm shops."

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## Corn Drying "Factory" In A Barn

Roger Datisman's dairy barn doesn't have cows in it anymore but the barn is as "busy" as it's ever been. Datisman uses it to dry up to 30,000 bu. of corn each year and it'll store up to 24,000 bu. of grain, all handled and held by a unique system of holding bins and augers he has devised.

Central to the success of his in-barn grain-handling system is the Sukup cornstalk-fired crop dryer that he installed just inside one end of the barn. The residue-fired burner has an automatic stoker system that feeds stalks into the burner automatically. Last year Datisman used almost no LP fuel to dry 30,000 bu. of corn, thanks to the system.

"Originally the Sukup burner was outside but that caused problems. Every time it rained the stalks got wet and wouldn't burn. So, I put it inside the barn," says Datisman.

In the hay mow above the dryer, Datisman built two wooden holding bins with drying floors and clean out augers. The first year inside the barn, he dried grain in the wooden bins by running the hot air coming out of the Sukup unit directly up into the loft. Although the idea worked, he had an ash buildup that was difficult to clean out, so he moved a conventional American grain dryer into the barn and channelled the cornstalk-heated air directly into the dryer. Now he uses the wooden drying bins above as holding bins, shuttling corn in and out of the bins and the dryer with a series of augers scattered throughout the barn.

"Everything worked fine with the system last year except that for the first time in four years of use, I was docked 25 cents a bushel at the elevator for having smelly corn," says Datisman, explaining that he modified the burner this fall so it doesn't blow hot air directly off the fire into the dryer. He plans to install a smokestack to carry smoke away and "scrub" the heat off from around the firebox. He has also modified the Sukup unit by adding a small oil burner to aid combustion, and an LP burner for added heat when needed. The automatic stoker that feeds stalks, hay or other residue into the burner is located next to the burner. A large door just above it lets Datisman dump in a stack of stalks or hay with his tractor as needed.

While the holding bins and dryer take up most of the room on one end of the converted dairy barn, the rest of the barn is also modified to handle and store grain. A hole was knocked in the top of an unused concrete cistern buried on the uphill side

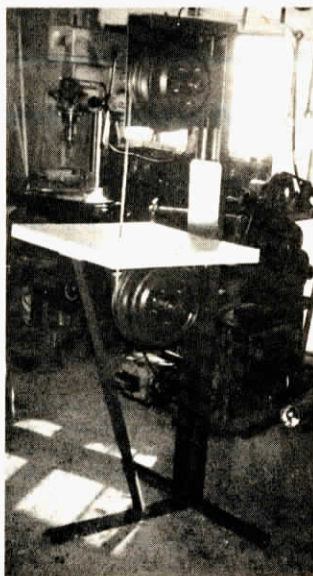


### Brake Drum Band Saw

Ron Van De Walle used old auto brake drums and bearings, 5-in. channel iron, and steel plating to build a band saw for his shop that he says works as well as any he could have bought.

Van De Walle's first step was to build a stand with the channel iron that would hold the two drums, the ½ hp. motor that powers the saw, and a cutting table. Each of the brake drums, which he salvaged at a junkyard, has a 6-in. shaft in the center that would ordinarily have fastened to a car axle. He bolted this shaft to heavy flat iron plates which are welded to the channel iron. The motor is mounted below the bottom drum and a belt running from the motor to the drum provides the power.

The ½-in. saw blade is wrapped around the outer edges of each drum, resting inside a



½-in. groove which Van De Walle cut out around the edge of each drum with a metal lathe. The groove is ¼-in. narrower than the blade to prevent the saw teeth from running against metal.

There's 12 in. of clearance between the blades on the slick formica cutting table on Van De Walle's saw. He uses the saw for cutting home-butchered meat and wood. He's also in the process of building a metal cutting band saw using the same used parts.

Van De Walle has built about 10 of the heavy-duty saws for neighbors at a price of about \$200 a piece.

For more information contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Ron Van De Walle, Cypress River, Manitoba, Can. ROK OPO

of the barn so that it can be used as a dump pit. Grain is dumped into it from the field and immediately augered out to either the holding bins, or to the big open end of the barn where last year Datisman managed to store 20,000 bu. of corn in a two-story pile.

"Using the cistern as an unloading pit lets me dump so fast I can keep a combine running constantly in a field 7 miles away using just 6 dump wagons," he says.

In the center of the barn Datisman gets still more use out of the old barn with an area set aside for storage, shop work, fuel tanks, and other equipment.

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