He Fits "Everything" Into Receiver Hitches

"I get a lot of mileage out of receiver hitches," says cow-calf producer Dan Ambrose of Grandview, Idaho, who recently sent FARM SHOW photos of the home-built receiver hitch brackets he uses on everything from welding trailers to shop welding tables and 3-pt. hitches.

The L-shaped metal brackets are designed to accept a standard receiver hitch. The height of each bracket can be adjusted by changing the position of a bolt.

"They're darned handy and allow me to use various tools interchangeably around my farm wherever I need them," says Ambrose. "For example, I can take the same shop tools I use on my welding table and mount them on my welding trailer so I can work in the field on my corrals or wheel line irrigation system. Tools like my drill press, pipe vise, pipe bender and anvil can be used interchangeably.

"I don't spend a lot of money, either. I build the L-shaped brackets myself out of 2-in. sq. tubing, and I buy the receiver hitches cheap at junk yards."

He welded 3 receiver hitch brackets onto the corners of his welding table and also welded 3 onto his welding trailer, one of which is used to hold a 100-lb. propane bottle that hooks up to an oxyacetylene torch. He made 2 brackets for a homemade 3-pt. hitch, using one to support a smaller propane tank that he uses with a flame burner to control weeds.

One receiver hitch is welded onto the frame on front of his flatbed truck to accept a home-built tow bar that fits onto the ball of another receiver hitch. "It allows me to tow the truck behind my pickup. I came up with the idea a few years ago when I bought hay from a neighbor. I used the pickup to tow the truck and trailer to his place and left them there overnight. The next morning I came back, hooked up to the loaded truck and trailer, and towed them home. I've towed vehicles at speeds up to 55 mph with no problems."

The home-built 3-pt. hitch has one receiver hitch welded on at the bottom and another on top. "It lets me use a tractor to pick up my 5th wheel trailer and move it wherever I want," says Ambrose. "I welded short metal tubes onto the sides of the 3-pt. where I store spare receiver hitch brackets. For example, if I need to move an implement that takes a pin hitch I can remove the ball and store the receiver hitch in one of the tubes."

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Dan Ambrose uses his home-built receiver hitch brackets on everything from welding trailers (above) to shop welding tables. "They allow me to use various tools interchangeably around my farm wherever I need them," he says.

Pull-type grader hooks up to the 3-pt. hitch's lower lift arms and is equipped with an oscillation joint that's used to control the hydraulics and to roll the blade forward.

"Teeter Totter" Grader Has 6-Way Control

"I can control the blade angle on my home-built, pull-type grader 6 different ways, which results in a nice clean finish," says Brenden Janssen, Vega, Alta.

The grader rides on a pair of 12 1/2-in. wide by 31-in. tall lugged implement tires and is equipped with a 10-ft. wide by 33-in. high blade made from 1/2-in. thick steel. The frame is made from 3 by 6-in. tubing.

The unit hooks up to the 3-pt. hitch's lower lift arms. The 3-pt. hitch is equipped with an oscillation joint that's used to control the hydraulics and to roll the blade forward. The oscillation joint is designed similar to a fifth wheel hitch and consists of one heavy wall pipe inside another that are connected by a pipe bushing. The back part of the frame is used to tilt the blade left or right, to raise and lower it, and to tilt the corners.

"The design between the front and back creates a sort of teeter totter effect," says Jannsen. "Letting the 3-pt. hitch down all the way allows the blade to roll forward for a more aggressive cut into the ground."

The implement is equipped with 5 hydraulic cylinders on back – 2 control the blade's tilt, 2 control the blade angle, and one pushes the wheels up or down which causes the blade to raise or lower.

"I use it to grade driveways and roads, to remove snow, drain potholes, do landscaping work, and make small ditches. It takes a tractor with 70 to 150 hp to pull it. I hope to sell this model and then build another one big enough to pull behind my 400 hp, 4-WD tractor and use it to do custom work. It'll have a 14-ft. blade with wings up to 16 ft. wide."

Steel hydraulic main lines keep the design clean. A full length, 18-in. high brush guard on top of the blade is tapered at the top corners to protect hydraulic hoses located behind the blade. "The brush guard allows me to get a bigger bite when plowing snow," says Jannsen, who notes that he spent about $16,000 to build the unit, including labor and materials.

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"Grain cage" consists of lengths of 1/2-in. dia. steel rod formed into a triangle, with sickle sections spaced about 5 in. apart welded onto the rods.

"Cage" Prevents Grain Bin Plug-Ups

"It greatly reduces the chance that you'll ever have to go into a grain bin to break up clogs," says Colin Blume, Redfield, S. Dak, about his new "grain cage".

It's designed to be installed before you fill the bin. The unit consists of lengths of 1/2-in. dia. steel rod formed into a triangle. Sickle sections are welded onto the rods, which are spaced about 5 in. apart. The sickle sections on top of the unit break the crust, and the unit's sloping sides push it off to the side so grain can flow through.

The Grain Cage fits all size bins and sells for $300 plus S&H. A round model designed for smaller bins up to 40,000 bu. is also available and sells for $250 plus S&H.

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