

Big Wheel Drills Help Plant Into High-Residue Fallow Ground

The 36-in. packer wheels on a 5,000-lb., 8-ft. wide, deep furrow drill prototype in Washington caught the attention of farmers who are used to 26-in. wheels on 1,800-lb. drills. But bigger wheels and other modifications appear to be what farmers need in that area. Researchers at Washington State University and product developers at The McGregor Company Equipment Manufacturing Division tested modified equipment last summer that will be tweaked and tried again this year.

Farmers on about 3.5 million acres in east-central Washington and north-central Oregon deal with unique growing conditions. They plant wheat as deep as 7 in. with deep furrow drills to reach moisture in tilled summer fallow ground. The region receives only 6 to 12 in. of annual precipitation. Soils are sandy silt loams. With fine soil particles, wind erosion is a huge problem so conservation tillage is advised — specifically leaving as much wheat stubble on the surface as possible. The soil lies fallow for 13 months between crops.

“The problem is the current deep-furrow drills farmers have were designed in 1966, and they can’t pass through a lot of residue,” explains Bill Schillinger, professor and

director at WSU’s Dryland Research Station. “Farmers are reluctant to practice conservation tillage because they are afraid of plugging their drills at planting time. Since there’s such a short planting window, they can’t afford to deal with plugged drills.”

Taller packer wheels with higher axles help prevent residue from building up and plugging the drill. The WSU researchers and McGregor developers are experimenting with various size packer wheels (some split, some solid), wider rows from 16 to 24 in., and various styles of residue-cutting coulters in front of the seed openers.

Despite some bugs in last year’s experiments, farmers are eager to use the larger, modified equipment in the future.

“The key to this whole thing is to allow farmers in tillage-based fallow with high residue to successfully seed through the residue with no drawbacks. The payoff is that with heavy residue the soil won’t blow away,” Schillinger says.

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Big wheel drills are designed to help plant into high-residue fallow ground, say researchers at Washington State University and product developers at The McGregor Co.



Taller packer wheels with higher axles help prevent residue from building up and plugging the drill.

Cowdog College Goes Online

If you can’t justify sending your herd dog to Cowdog College, you can bring the college to him. Merle and Sandy Newton own and operate Crystal Rose Cowdog College in Red Bluff, Calif. Together they bring more than 50 years of training experience to their work with cowdogs. Now they are offering a video based training program you can watch on your computer.

“We offer a growing line of teaching material people can download,” says Merle Newton. “The video is shot from multiple angles, including a helmet cam so the viewer can really see the dog and how he’s responding.”

Newton says some video is from actual lesson days at Cowdog College. For the past 20 years, the college has been the main income for him and his wife. They offer various levels of training depending on end use, i.e. whether a rancher wants to hone the skills of a dog used for daily work, a trial handler is out for a competitive edge, or the dog is a beginner that needs a comprehensive education.

“We’ve trained thousands of dogs over the years through clinics and month-long boarding sessions,” says Newton.

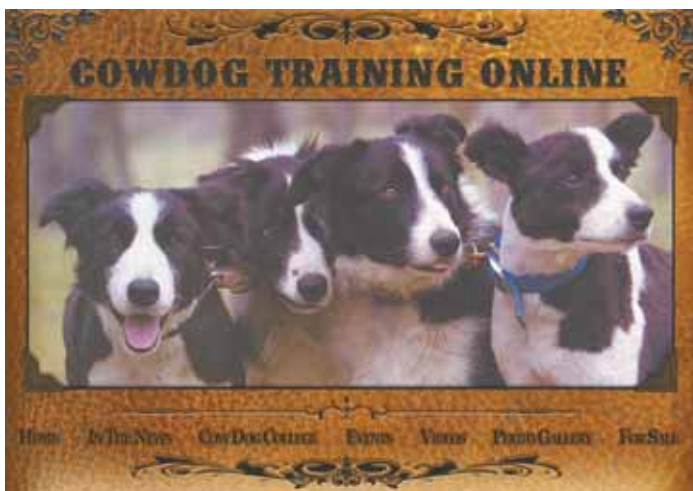
When it comes to working dogs, Newton is

partial to Border Collies, but it wasn’t always so. “When I was starting out, I wouldn’t have considered them. They’ve evolved. Breeding programs have developed border collies to go in and out of the flight zone, while a sheep dog works the edge of it all the time.”

One thing that Newton says sets their online training program apart is the ability to download. “Other online training limits the number of times you can watch,” he says. “This way you can watch it as many times as you want.”

Newton emphasizes that their phone is always available for customers with questions about their training efforts. Customers with questions also have the option of sending a video of their dog working to the Newtons. “We will critique the video and reply either by putting it on our website (with permission) or sending it back with the critique,” says Newton. “We would prefer putting it on the website as it may cover questions that others have about training.”

The videos are over dubbed with comments and explanations and are priced at \$15 to \$25. Current videos and ones being added include all levels and aspects of training a cowdog, from how to start with a new puppy to basic techniques a cowdog must know. The



Crystal Rose Cowdog College offers a video-based training program you can watch on your computer.

Newtons also offer a few videos on working with horses.

In response to the growing popularity of Rodearing, they offer several videos on training dogs and horses for this competition. In Rodearing, dogs and horses work together to sort cattle and move them through an

obstacle course.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Crystal Rose Cow Dog College, 14200 Red Bank Rd., Red Bluff, Calif. 96080 (ph 530 529-3700; crcd1@gmail.com; www.cowdogtrainingonline.com).

“Helper Hinge” Fits Any Utility Trailer

One person can quickly and safely attach a lay-down ramp on back of any utility trailer using this new “Helper Hinge”. It’s designed to replace the existing hinges on your trailer.

“It lets you attach the ramp one hinge at a time, which saves time and also saves on your back,” says inventor Duane Smith.

You cut off the existing hinges on the trailer and weld the new hinges in place. To attach the ramp, lay it on the ground and raise one side to capture its hinge, then walk around to the other side and repeat the process. Then you pull the ramp toward one side to lock it in place.

“Until now it took 2 people to attach a ramp, one on either side who have to precisely match up the hinge pins with the hinge pipes,” says Smith. “Each person has to hold up half the ramp’s weight for an average of 30 sec. until the hinges are attached. With the Helper Hinge one person can attach the

ramp in only about 13 sec. — or 2 people can do the job in about 3 sec.”

The one-person operation can lead to fuel savings when traveling down the highway, says Smith. “Instead of standing the ramp up on back of the trailer where it catches a lot of wind, one person can quickly remove the ramp and place it in the trailer bed, or stand it up along one side. He can quickly reattach the ramp once he reaches his destination.”

Two sizes are available. The medium-sized Helper Hinge is designed for utility trailers with a 3,500-lb. axle that are 5 ft. wide or smaller and have ramps that typically weigh about 120 lbs. The large sized Helper Hinge is designed to be used on trailers with 5,000-lb. axles and ramps weighing about 150 lbs.

However, the medium sized Helper Hinge can also be used on trailers with 7,000-lb. axles, by using dual ramps, each equipped with medium-sized hinges. “If you order 2



sets of Helper Hinges, you can use one set for each ramp so that you only have to lift about 100 lbs. on each side,” says Smith.

The medium sized Helper Hinge sells for \$45.99 plus S&H; the large size for \$49.99 plus S&H.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Helper Hinge, Inc., 1455 U.S. Hwy. 75,

One person can mount ramp by slipping pin into one hinge first and then lifting it to insert second pin. Makes ramp easy to remove when not in use or to travel down the road.



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