



Latest prototype under test features special sleeves which cover and protect individual springs (2.5 in. in dia. and 18 in. long) against dirt,

dust. Spring-loaded hub "floats" up to 7 in. in any direction when wheel strikes a rock or other obstruction.

12 LARGE SPRINGS SUPPORT CENTER HUB

Floating Wheel Prevents Axle Breakage

Farmers who've tested it say a new spring-loaded "floating" tractor wheel virtually eliminates axles breakage with dual wheel hookups.

"I think it has real possibilities," reports Al Kirchof, Westport, Minn., who put 130 hours on a prototype "floating" wheel during a recent field test. "In addition to preventing broken axles, it seems to give better footing on rough ground."

Encouraged by the "floating" wheel's performance in a variety of on-farm trials, the inventor—Ambrose Molitor, Sauk Center,

Minn.—and Greg Gran, president of Brooten Manufacturing, Brooten, Minn., are moving full speed ahead to get it into commercial production.

Here's how it works:

Twelve large springs support the center hub, allowing it to float up to 7 in. in any direction if the wheel strikes a rock or other obstruction, or drops into a hole or rut. Individual springs are installed partially compressed. If the wheel hits a rock, for example, the springs compress about 1 in. per 500 lbs. of impact force, according to Molitor. "Because the

springs absorb the shock, you don't have to run the outside dual with less air pressure to prevent axle breakage," Molitor points out. "And, you can pull scrapers and other heavy loads on sidehills without worrying about snapping an axle. In fact, you can even weight the outside dual and run it way out on the axle to get better traction, or the right row spacing, without undue concern about axle breakage."

On 4-wheel drive tractors, says Molitor, the "floating" wheel helps make for easier steering. He thinks

the first priority should be to use "floating" wheels on the outside pair where dual or triples are used. "It may pay to use them all the way around for certain jobs where axle breakage or traction are a problem because of rocks, uneven terrain, heavy loads, and so forth."

If you'd like price, "where to buy" and other information sent to you when the wheels become commercially available, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Brooten Mfg., Brooten, Minn. 56316. (ph. 612 346-2201).



As pickup overtakes animal, driver operates folding gates to gradually ease it into the chute.



Animals can be treated on the spot, hauled directly to headquarters, or to the vet.

NEW COW CATCHER, CARRIER

Equip Your Pickup for Punchin' Cattle

Without leaving the seat of his pickup, South Dakota rancher Herb Hoffman corrals the most stubborn critters in his "Cow Catch Carrier."

"I've never driven after an animal I couldn't catch," says Hoffman, who has opened up a plant in Platte, S. Dak., to produce this first-of-its kind chute for working cattle, and for picking up big round bales.

"You can send your wife or youngsters out to catch and bring in animals with this outfit," explains Hoffman. "Since they don't have to leave the driver's seat, you don't have to worry about them being out there alone with an ornery critter."

The all-hydraulic chute is controlled by two switches located in the cab. Two hydraulic gates, which the driver controls, are opened wide as the pickup moves forward to overtake the animal.

"You'd be surprised at how easy it is to overtake a cow or steer. Before they know what's happened, they're in the chute. And, there's very little danger of hurting an animal," Hoff-

man points out. "You can treat them on the spot, haul them to headquarters or, if necessary, directly to the vet for treatment." In calving out problem heifers, he sometimes drops off the chute and opens the gates to form a v-shaped temporary holding pen. It's available with an optional hydraulic headpull, and a dehorning attachment.

Hoffman notes that veterinarians are buying the unit as a service to customers. In a few cases, ranchers and other groups have teamed up to buy a unit which is kept in a central location for members to use as needed.

The "Cow Catch Carrier" weighs about 1,000 lbs. and mounts on most any 1/2-ton or larger pickup, or 4 by 4 vehicle. It'll catch and carry animals weighing up to 1,200 lbs. Sells for \$2,700, FOB the factory, including pickup mounting brackets.

For more details, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Herb Hoffman, Cow Catch Carrier Mfg., Platte, S. Dak. 57369 (ph. 605 337-3591)