

Easy-To-Carry “Toolbox” Wood Stove

Jim Forester, Thunder Bay, Ont., cut up a perfectly good toolbox to make a “toolbox” wood stove that he uses for everything from boiling coffee to grilling hot dogs and cooking bacon and eggs.

The toolbox mounts about 2 ft. off the ground on 4 legs. It has a chimney and metal rack “pot warmer” at one end. Both the legs and part of the chimney come off and store inside the toolbox for easy transport. A clothes dryer vent serves as a short chimney for small fires and is held in place by bent shelf brackets pop riveted to the top of the toolbox. An extension can be slid over the short chimney for larger fires.

“I got the idea because I had a new red toolbox that I wasn’t using,” explains Forester. “We do a lot of ice fishing and part of the fun is to make a pot of tea. We have to search for dry wood and a spot to make a safe fire, which takes away from fishing time. So as a surprise to my family I converted the

toolbox into a wood stove.

“It weighs only a few pounds. I store the wood, fire starter, dry paper, and the cooking grill inside. The handle is still on so I can carry it like a toolbox.”

He used a grinder to cut 8 slits at an angle into both ends of the toolbox, making the slits just big enough for a radiator hose clamp to slide through and hold 8-in. lengths of pipe in 2 spots that remain permanently on the toolbox. Small-diameter sections of pipe slide into them.

“It took a few hours to build but works better than I had ever imagined,” says Forester. “I designed it for outside use and cut a big slot into one end of the toolbox to let air in.

“I made it about 5 years ago and after making at least 100 fires, there are no weak spots or burn-through anywhere on the toolbox. I keep ashes in the bottom of the toolbox to protect it. I’ve used the stove to



“Toolbox” wood stove has a chimney and metal rack “pot warmer” at one end. Both the legs and part of the chimney come off and store inside toolbox for easy transport.

cook bacon and eggs, toast, hamburgers, sausage and steak. My grandkids also use it to roast marshmallows.”

Forester says if anyone is interested he’s willing to sell plans.

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He Built A Loader For His Simplicity Garden Tractor

“It’ll handle loads up to 300 lbs. and cost only about \$300 to build,” says Kevin Nell, Sturgeon Bay, Wis., who, along with his dad, built a front-end loader for a Simplicity garden tractor.

The bucket measures 38 in. wide, 2 ft. deep, and 2 ft. high. It can be raised up to 4 ft. high – enough to load a pickup bed – and dumped. A pto-driven pump on front of the tractor is used to raise and lower the bucket and also to tilt it. The pump is belt-driven off a pto shaft that Nell mounted on the tractor’s engine.

“I built it because I couldn’t justify the cost of a skid loader,” says Nell. “It comes in handy for a variety of jobs that would otherwise have to be performed by a large tractor. Some examples are to remove snow from driveways, to scrape and spread gravel, and to load a pickup or trailer.”

He started with a Simplicity lawn tractor

that he bought for \$350. The Briggs & Stratton 16 hp gas engine was worn out so he replaced it with another newer one. He used rectangular tubing to build the loader arms and heavy gauge sheet metal to form the bucket.

The loader frame is made from 2 by 6-in., 3/8-in. thick tubing and attaches to a homemade cradle made out of 2-in. sq., 3/4-in. thick steel. A subframe made from 2-in. angle iron goes from the front end to the back end to help tie the framework. A multi-axis joystick control, located next to the steering column, operates the lift and the power dump simultaneously.

The tractor is equipped with 3 cylinders – 2 to raise and lower the loader arms, and one to tilt the bucket.

“I paid \$200 for the steel and \$100 for the hydraulic cylinders. The hoses and levers are from old tractor equipment that I already



Kevin Nell built this front-end loader for his Simplicity garden tractor. A pto-driven pump on front of tractor is used to raise and lower the bucket and also to tilt it.

had,” notes Nell.

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“Easy Carry” Lamb And Kid Cradle

“Our Lamb and Kid Cradle is easy to use and will last forever,” says Kathy Hergert, Beaver State Plastics. “When you carry a lamb or kid in it, the mama thinks it’s walking alongside your leg and follows. She is able to keep her nose up to the baby so she doesn’t lose the scent and get confused.”

Hergert got the idea for a cradle the first time she saw her husband drag a lamb so the mother would follow. She told him there had to be a better way.

“Dragging a lamb or kid can result in pulled or herniated joints,” she explains.

A custom plastic mold maker and designer, her husband produced the Lamb Cradle by the next lambing season. The plastic cradle fits between the front and back legs. A hole for the navel prevents it from being rubbed. Two handles let you carry the lamb like a shopping bag. The cradle is also a handy sling for weighing lambs.

When the Hergerts replaced the sheep flock with goats, they tried the cradle on the kids and found it worked just as well.

Hergert says the cradle isn’t just for babies. It can handle a lamb or kid up to a weight of 50 lbs.

The handles make it easy to double up on a load, too. Hergert describes carrying two newborn kids in cradles with each hand, with two nannies following behind. She says the cradles also keep her safe.

The couple sell the cradle and other sheep and goat-related items through their website.



Handheld plastic cradle fits between lamb’s front and back legs.

They also sell it through Nasco Farm and Ranch and Sheepman Supply catalogs. The cradles are priced at only \$7.75 plus postage and handling.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Beaver State Plastics, 4052 State Hwy. 38, Drain, Ore. 97435 (ph 541 836-2203; toll free 800 578-2203; www.beaverstateplastics.com).

Wireless Alarm System For Center Pivots

“The WireRat™ alarm system actively monitors irrigation equipment to protect against thieves who try to steal wiring,” says Julie Stark of NetIrrigate, LLC, Bloomington, Ind.

The WireRat is a small battery-powered device about 3 in. thick and 6 in. long that mounts on the end tower or in a control box of a center pivot. The waterproof unit produces a low voltage current that automatically detects span cable tampering. The process is patent pending. Within 60 seconds of an alarm triggering event, the WireRat will send a message to the owner. Irrigate says the best feature of the NetIrrigate WireRat is that it doesn’t require external power to detect cable tampering. The WireRat supplies instant alerts to owners via text message, voice mail or e-mail upon cable theft, safety stops or stop-in-slots. Alerts can be sent to as many as 10 different recipients at one time. Stark says in the past year, NetIrrigate customers

have notified the company of 15 arrests because of WireRat instant alerts. Many other notifications have advised owners of equipment malfunctions.

Another feature of the WireRat is that a farmer can use it to start or stop an irrigation system from a telephone or a computer. The WireRat is also equipped with a GPS function that allows a farmer to detect the exact location of a tower and its degree heading. “These are safe guards as well as management functions,” Stark says, “and with the high cost of irrigation equipment, the return on investment to an owner is very quick. Many farmers have several irrigators going at once and being able to monitor them from one location, without driving to each one, is very important.”

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