

Flailing Speeds Hay Drying

Dean Nelson, Cloquet, Minn., speeds hay drying in the field by running it through a modified flail chopper that breaks up the stems and fluffs up the windrows.

Nelson flail chops directly behind his mower conditioner in separate operations. He's used the method for the past five years and says he's been able to save crops even when they're soaked with heavy rains. Nelson uses it on early cut hay that's high in moisture, then bales, with the use of preservatives, at

moisture levels up to 30%. He says there's virtually no leaf loss and, if the hay is rained on, he runs it through the chopper again, which forces the water out. When weather is good, he uses the method to dry hay down to levels low enough to store without preservatives. One of the main benefits is the fact that the method lets him harvest high-quality forage for his 40-cow dairy herd without the use of a silo.

Mail Order Christmas Trees

George Lind mails Christmas trees to people who can't get out or who live in places where trees are scarce or too expensive. The Eagle Creek, Ore., tree farmer thinks his new "trees by mail" idea will catch on.

Lind first planted five acres of Christmas trees 14 years ago and now has some 40 acres. He sells most to the wholesale markets in California but, about three years ago, decided to try mail order. When UPS said it would handle a 5-ft. long box, he was in business.

The trees are wrapped in nylon netting and put in a box with the butt end packed in moist sphagnum moss to keep them fresh. Trees are never cut more than a day before packing so they're usually fresher when they reach a mail order customer than most trees people buy.

Trees weigh about 25 lbs. packed in the box. Boxes are 11½ by 11½ in. in size and 5 ft. long. Mail order trees sell for \$30, including handling and shipping.

Lind sells his mail order concept at shows and fairs in the Northwest and also does some advertising but says most business has been generated by word of mouth. He has already shipped trees to customers from Florida to Hawaii. One young man bought a tree to take to the Caribbean as a gift for his girlfriend.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, River Ranch Christmas Trees, 25775 S.E. River Ranch Road, Eagle Creek, Ore. 97022 (ph 503 637-3378).

Elevator Lifts Cattle To Barn's Haymow Pens

Wisconsin farmer Joseph Boesl, of Boyceville, built an elevator to lift cattle and feed from the ground floor to the haymow of his remodeled barn.

The need for the elevator arose when Boesl built cattle pens in the haymow. Since he was putting most of his hay in the silo, he decided to make use of the empty space in the haymow. He put a 3-in. thick, 34 by 37 ft. concrete slab on the haymow floor. The concrete and cattle weigh no more than a barn full of hay, he points out.

He divided the slab into three sections for different sized cattle and ran water and electricity to the pens. Manure is pushed from the pens into 4 in. diameter pvc pipes — one for each pen —

that drop the manure to a gutter on the lower level.

The 34 by 37 in. elevator is situated next to the feed room so Boesl can wheel the feedcart into the elevator, raise it to the haymow and then wheel the cart out to feed the cattle. The elevator is also used to carry newborn calves up to the mow, and to bring 500 lb. cattle down.

Boesl made the elevator with steel mesh panels for sides and a steel floor. Two of the side panels are hinged to act as gates.

The elevator is powered by a reversible ½ hp. motor, winch and ¾ in. cable. The top pulley is anchored in the haymow ceiling. A garage door opener switch on each floor stops/starts the elevator.

Rancher Takes In "Boarder Cows"

An Oklahoma cattle rancher who sold off much of his registered Angus herd after three bad market years figures to make more money this year taking in boarder cows than off his remaining herd.

Newell Pixler, of Kinta, charges owners of cows \$210 per year to board them on his ranch.

He already has 300 boarder cows pasturing with his 500 remaining Angus, and has room for 100 head more, figured at a rate of four acres per cow-calf unit.

Pixler has a formal "custom cow care" contract that he uses with boarders. The owner is responsible for all shipping costs to and from the ranch and for pregnancy, TB, and bangs testing, or any other tests for shipping. Once on the ranch the owners pay for other vaccinations or health care. Pixler furnishes good pasture, a maximum of 1,500 lbs. of winter hay per cow, all labor, equipment, water, salt, and minerals needed. Pixler takes care of two artificial inseminations, if needed, and will run a customer's own bull with the cows.

The bull can be boarded free for 90 days during breeding but he charges an extra \$250 if the bull remains all year. The \$210 rate is for spring-calving cows. Fall-calving cows cost \$235 because he must provide supplemental feeding to get fall calves through the winter.

When Pixler advertised his service he got the most response from drought stricken areas. His first 200 head came from parched areas of Texas. The next 100 were from Missouri and Arizona ranchers who, for one reason or another, wanted to temporarily board parts of their herds.

The contract doesn't guarantee replacement in case of sudden death or loss for other reasons.

Pixler says he figures his costs, not including the land or labor, will amount to about \$100 in an average winter. He says his boarders probably will not make anything, even in a good market. They're saving their herds, however, he notes.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Newell Pixler, Rt. 1, Box 1965, Kinta, Okl. 74552 (ph 918 967-8435).

Motorized Wheelbarrow

A popular feature at Le Center, Minn., area parades is Wesley Erkel's motorized wheelbarrow.

Erkel says he decided to build the machine, which is strictly for fun and not for hauling loads, after some of his friends challenged him to do so. He started with an old wheelbarrow which, he says, was made 100 years ago, and added an axle and transmission from a riding lawnmower.

Power is from a 5 hp. Briggs and Stratton engine. The rig has low and high gears, a reverse gear and brakes. For turning, Erkel rigged up a tiller-type steering system — a lever which



is connected to, and turns, the front wheel.

Window Cleaner

Clarence Welander, Fullerton, N. Dak., has always been bothered by the problem of dirt and chaff coating the windows on the cabs of his tractors and combines. "By accident, I found out that you shouldn't use soap and water. Just wipe the excess dust and dirt off with a paper towel, then use a window spray cleaner that contains ammonia. Dust and dirt will not stick to windows thereafter — unless they get wet from rain or dew. Then, you simply repeat the process. It really works."

PTO Carrier

Dudley Johnson, Kanawha, Iowa, has an idea for securing pto shafts on equipment when in transport. "I welded a U-shaped steel strap to the end of a short piece of shaft which I then welded to the tongue of my stalk cutter. I put it 90° to the side of the U-joint which is in front of the gear box. I lay the pto shaft in this when not in use. It's out of the way and secure when in transport. This carrier would work on most any pto-powered equipment."