

## Big Steel Rake Clears Roots, Rocks Fast

Clearing land of roots and rocks is faster, easier and cheaper with the Rock 'n Root Rake from Harrell Ag Products, says Hugh Harrell, who points out that the heavy-duty rake can pay for itself with only 200 acres of use.

"One customer used his to clean up 300 acres and then sold his Rock n' Root Rake for 90 percent of what he paid for it originally," says Harrell. "He saved \$70,000 over the cost of conventional clearing, and the machine only cost him \$10,000 after resale."

Harrell says most buyers are landowners with between 200 and 500 acres to clear, cleaning a portion each year. Their conventional alternatives are hand labor or using a bulldozer or loader with some attachment to engage the roots.

"Conventional clearing of roots costs between \$200 and \$300 per acre," says Harrell. "We've had awful good products over the years, but this one ranks near the top as far as value to the user. It has such a quick payback."

The Rock n' Root Rake works fast. Wheels are independently mounted so they float with

the field surface. The rake is offset so tractor wheels run in clean dirt. Rear wheels are steered with a hydraulic cylinder for minimal turning radius. The wheel fingers engage the soil to a depth of about 12 in., pulling out roots. As the wheels turn, they gather roots from as much as a 12-ft. swath and roll them and any rocks into a windrow. Once in the windrow, roots can be burned in place or more easily loaded and hauled away.

Those with less than 100 acres to clear might find the \$59,900 price hard to justify. However, Harrell suggests partnering with other farmers with similar needs, or doing custom clearing of roots and rock as viable options.

"One of our customers is in the business of land clearing, and he has rented his rake out when not in use," says Harrell. The Rock n' Root Rake is built to handle a lot more than the 200 acres Harrell suggests would pay for it. The 6-wheeled rake has a working weight of 18,000 lbs. The wheels are made out of AR steel plate for maximum wear and durability.

"AR plate is highly resistant to abrasive material," explains Harrell. "We looked at



Rock 'n Root Rake has heavy steel fingers that dig down to a depth of about 12 in., pulling out roots and rolling them into windrows.

the rake with the greatest use, about 3,000 acres, and the fingers showed no significant wear. We thought about selling replacement fingers, but we don't think there will be a market for them."

You can see a video of the Rock n' Root

Rake in action at [www.farmshow.com](http://www.farmshow.com).

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## Home-Built Broom Sweeps Gravel, Rocks Off Lawn

During the winter Tom Feuerstein of Algoma, Wis., uses either a snowblower or front-end loader to move snow off his gravel driveway. Some gravel always flies up onto his lawn, and he got tired of raking the gravel off by hand every spring. So he turned an old 32-in. wide, walk-behind sweeper into a power broom that mounts on front of his Deere LX188 riding mower.

"It sure beats raking by hand," says Feuerstein. "A job that used to take 6 to 8 hours of hand raking now takes only about 1 1/2 hours, and most of that time I'm sitting down."

The same factory belt-drive system that's used to operate the mower and snowblower is used to operate the sweeper, as well as the snowblower and mower deck. "The snowblower mounts on a factory metal frame and belt-drive system that goes back under the tractor. "Once spring comes and I want to remove gravel from my lawn, I replace the snowblower with the sweeper."

He picked up the sweeper free in a local

city where someone was throwing it out. He stripped away everything except the brushes and metal housing. The brushes mount on a homemade shaft with a keyway at one end where he installed a pulley. He made another shaft to accept a pulley, which supports a long belt that runs back under the tractor. A pair of small idler pulleys are used to change the angle of the brush, which Feuerstein keeps at about a 20 degree angle.

The brush runs in the opposite direction as the snowblower so he had to move the pulleys over to the opposite side. A pair of small wheels that normally go on front of the mower deck are used to set the brush's height.

"It picks up all the stones in one pass and works great," says Feuerstein. "I built it 2 years ago and wish I would have made it long before that. It doesn't get all the stones, but it gets about 95 percent of them."

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Tom Feuerstein turned an old 32-in. wide, walk-behind sweeper into a power broom that mounts on front of his Deere riding mower.

## Semi Trailer Refrigeration Tanks Used To Haul Diesel

Leroy Keens found a simple way to refuel his farm equipment by converting a pair of 50-gal. aluminum diesel fuel tanks out of semi-refrigerator trailers. The tanks are fitted with hand-cranked pumps and mounted on homemade forklift brackets, making them easy to move around.

"They work great to fuel up our tractors in the field. They're safe and simple to operate, and I didn't have to spend a lot of money," says Keens.

He got the tanks from a local trucking dealer. The tanks were originally designed to hang about halfway back underneath a refrigerated semi trailer and came with U-shaped steel mounting brackets.

Keens turned the mounting brackets upside down and then welded on short lengths of channel iron to make mounting brackets for forklift spears. He also welded a 2-in. fitting on top of the tank and then screwed the hand-cranked pump, equipped with a 15-ft. hose, onto it.

"We use them mostly for emergency purposes. We don't need electricity to operate

the pumps so we can use them anywhere," says Keens. "The tanks don't hold a lot of fuel, but they're all we need for our 2 tractors. We fill the tanks up every now and then from a gas station that's 2 miles from our farm. For example, if a truck runs out of fuel somewhere we can quickly load the tank into our pickup and drive out to it. Each tank came with a mechanical fuel gauge on it. Our only real expense was for the pumps, which cost about \$140 apiece."

"We had been using big 500-gal. tanks, but they no longer conform to new codes that require a double-walled containment structure. You can get old refrigerated trailer fuel tanks at most trucking dealerships for anywhere from nothing to \$50."

Keens adds that refrigerant fuel tanks should only be used for diesel fuel and not gas, which is much more flammable.

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