Snowblower Switched To Loader Mount

Frustrated with his front-mount snowblower's inability to handle big drifts, William Nadeau decided to mount it on a front-end loader. That meant changing it from a pto drive to motor-powered.

"It only lifted about 4 to 5 in. off the ground, and we have snow banks 6 ft. high," says Nadeau. "Plus, mounting it on the tractor required removing the loader. By making a quick-attach plate for it and putting a motor on it, I can use it on deep drifts or replace it quickly with the bucket when needed."

When Nadeau bought the 1025R Deere tractor with loader, snowblower and mower deck, he didn't realize the limitations until it came time to move snow. In addition to removing the loader, he had to switch from a short pto shaft needed for the deck mower to a long one for the snowblower.

"I bought a skid steer plate and converted it to work with the Deere loader," says Nadeau. "I welded rectangular tubing to it to pin the snowblower in place."

Nadeau extended the very short pto stub shaft and added a double belt, 5/8-in. pulley. The belts connect to a 22 hp. Predator engine from Harbor Freight.

"I wanted to use an electric clutch with the motor, but the one company I found that offered one for a 22 hp. motor required an engineer's certificate of safety before they would sell it," says Nadeau. "Instead I used belts with a little slack and an over-the-center, spring applied idler for manual control. I added a remote control box that also had ignition shutoff, a light switch and spout control."

He has to get off his tractor seat to engage or disengage the belts, but the shutoff gives him a quick way to stop the snowblower if needed.

He also changed the spout from a hydraulic cylinder to a linear actuator. It added about $80 to Nadeau's estimated $800 to $900 cost. The idler was in Nadeau's salvage pile, but the engine cost $699. The skid steer plate was another $160 to $180.

"I'm very pleased with it, " says Nadeau. "However, to do it over, I would get a self-powered loader-mount snowblower in the first place."

To better handle deep snowdrifts, William Nadeau converted his front-mount snowblower to a self-powered one that mounts on his front-end loader.

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How To Do More With An ATV Or Compact Tractor

Oakwind Mfg. has the tools you need to get more work out of ATV's, UTV's and compact tractors. Their 3-pt. mounted and tow-behind tools include cultivators, rippers, plows and packers. The tools are sized for wildlife food plots, market gardens and more. The small tools are perfect for getting into tight spaces or large areas for landscape or conservation work.

"I had been farming and working as an engineer my whole life," explains Ross Koberlein, Oakwind Mfg. "When I retired from my last engineering job, I decided to make and market smaller size equipment that is high quality. All our main frames are powder coated, and our welds are all high quality."

Currently Koberlein makes all the equipment in his farm shop. However, his equipment is building a nationwide reputation. He has shipped pieces from California and Washington to states in the South, throughout the Midwest and the East.

"My first piece was a 5-shank cultivator/ripper," says Koberlein. "Over time I added the single shank ripper, brush and clippings rake, disc and other tools. The cultipacker is our best seller. You can till with lots of tools, but if planting small seeds, they need to be firmed down. You need something to roll it."

Oakwind tools with 3-pt. mounts match up to any Cat. I hitch tractor. Tools like the cultipacker and the cultipacker/disc are pull-type for even wider applications.

Prices vary with the pull-type cultipacker and disc combination listed at $1,395. The straw crimper/cultipacker and roller/spiker are priced the same. Both the 3-pt. cultipacker and the pull type are priced at $995, and the single shank ripper with stand is priced at $275.

Oakwind sells its tools online and from select dealers.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Oakwind Mfg., 500 N. Main St., P.O. Box 40, St. Elmo, Ill. 62458 (ph 618 292-2001; ross@efarmtools.com; www.efarmtools.com).

Oakwind Mfg. makes a variety of 3-pt. mounted and tow-behind tools sized for wildlife food plots, market gardens and more.

"No Tile" Drainage Dries Wet Fields Fast

Dave Horn has a "magic bullet" for draining wet spots or even entire fields, and it doesn't involve using drain tile. His trailer-mounted knife cuts through hardpan to a depth of 5 ft., towing a bullet-shaped tunnel-maker behind it. Equipped with RTK, LiDAR or GPS, the so-called mole plow provides the benefits of tile drainage without the tile.

"Because you're not laying pipe, you can travel much faster, and it costs less since you aren't paying for pipe," says Horn, Horn's Welding Shop. "The knife creates a passage for water to move down and into a tunnel created by the bullet. You can create a tunnel on grade to pull water away from wet spots to drainage ditches or simply down slope. Just start at the wet spot."

The bullet-shaped piece of steel creates a 4-in. dia. tunnel. The knife is a 1-in. thick bar of Algoma GP100 steel with a tensile strength of 120,000 psi, or 3 times that of mild steel. The angled edge slices through the heaviest soils. A shoe at the end of the knife acts as a pre-opener for the bullet. The bullet is chained to the shoe as well as to the knife itself.

The knife is mounted to a 12 by 8 by 1/2-in. steel arm, which in turn is mounted to a 2-wheel trailer with 12 by 12 by 1/2-in. steel for the frame. Heavy-duty cylinders on the arm raise and lower the knife.

"Our unit is built heavy enough to handle a 600 hp. tractor," says Horn. "However, we've pulled it with 250 hp."

The soil type, ground conditions and depth can affect the horsepower needed. They also can affect speed.

"In dry conditions this past summer, we were pulling the knife at 5 mph at a 5-ft. depth," relates Horn. "As the RTK reduced the depth, we reached 8 mph at a 3-ft. depth."

According to Horn, the bullet-created tunnels should last 8 to 10 years in soils with at least a 45 percent clay content. Freeze and thaw cycles don't seem to affect them.

"Tunnels created in northern Minnesota 3 years ago are still flowing," he says. "If a tunnel stops flowing, just move over a few feet and make a new one."

Initially priced at around $40,000, rising steel prices are driving up Horn's costs and resulting prices. Horn builds the units to order with pricing based on the cost of steel at the time.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Horn's Welding Shop, P.O. Box 223, Oak Bluff, Man. Canada R0G 1N0 (ph 204 736-2908; daveswelding@hotmail.ca).

Dave Horn's trailer-mounted knife cuts through hardpan to a depth of 5 ft., towing a bullet-shaped tunnel maker behind it. Tunnels pull water away from wet spots.

"Because you're not laying pipe, you can travel much faster and it costs less," says Horn.