

## Hay-Hauling Flatbed Schoolbus

Around Morristown, Tenn., people like having their picture taken with the schoolbus turned hay hauler, says John Rouse, forage producer and third generation owner of Bailey Branch Stables. Besides custom haying and baling round bales, he and his crew put up 30,000 square bales of orchard/timothy mix hay every year.

Rouse owns a variety of trailers that haul 200 to 600 bales at a time. Though the 250 bales the 1984 International bus can haul is on the low end, it is ideal for some situations.

"We like the bus because it has an automatic transmission, and it's nimble to get in and out of places. It works well in tight quarters and in the mountains of North Carolina with steep terrain and narrow switchbacks," Rouse explains.

The bus can be loaded right in the field with

two workers on the ground throwing bales on and two workers stacking ricks of 35 bales and strapping them down to eye bolts welded on the frame.

The bus was modified for hay hauling by Steve Sublett, Rouse's neighbor and mentor, who used the hay-hauling bus for many years before selling it to Rouse in 2015. Sublett removed the bus seats and most of the bus shell before welding a back on the cab and adding channel iron on the outside to create a smooth stacking edge.

Rouse, who says he will ship anywhere in the U.S., likes to use the bus for deliveries of 250 bales or less to livestock owners that have narrow gates or live in remote areas.

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John Rouse converted an IH schoolbus into this self-propelled bale hauler. Bus is loaded by hand, with the bales strapped down to eye bolts welded on bus frame.



Converted bus serves as a camper and car hauler for vacations and weekend trips. It has room for a passenger to ride and 2 twin-size beds.

## "Camper Bus" Also Hauls Truck

In Poplar Grove, Ark., Nick Ashcraft transformed a 1989 Bluebird bus with a 5.9 Cummins diesel engine into a camper and car hauler for vacations and weekend trips.

After removing all but the driver's seat, he used a reciprocating saw to cut off the back panel and a good portion of the bus shell.

"I left enough room for a passenger to ride and two twin size beds," Ashcraft says. He welded the back on to the shortened bus, beefed up the remaining bed with channel iron, and welded 6 by 6 mild steel plates to hook straps to.

"I added a 1987 Chevy pickup bumper to the back of the bus to pull a trailer," he adds.

"We took a trip from southern Arkansas to southern Missouri pulling a 20-ft. trailer with an ATV on it and a Chevy Blazer on the bus bed."

With 7-ft. ramps, Ashcraft can easily load and unload the Blazer.

"It only had 70,000 miles on it and it has hydraulic brakes so I don't need a CDL to drive it," he says. "We got a good deal - less than \$1,000 for the bus and just \$200 to convert it, and we have a living space and hauler."

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Bus was originally used for refilling spray tanks. Now it's used for watering trees and fighting fires.

## Bus Carries Big Water Tanks

Leland Heuchert says his grandfather and father purchased a 1975 Ford bus to hold water tanks to fill sprayers a couple of decades ago. Now that they have a high-clearance sprayer to use on their grain farm, the bus is used for watering trees and fighting fires.

"They cut out one side to make a 7-ft. hole from the roof to the floor to put in 100 and 800-gal. poly tanks. They covered the hole with a large sliding door to give them quick access to the pump and hoses," Heuchert says, noting a chemical handler was mounted near the rear door. A 150 gpm pump provides good pressure for a 2-in. hose with an adapter for a 3-in. hose and firefighting nozzle. The bus is also equipped with a garden hose on a reel and a 1-in. hose with a firefighting nozzle.

"It's heavy when filled with water, and



A ladder on one side of bus provides easy access to top of bus for filling tanks.

there's no power steering either," Heuchert says, noting it only goes 40 to 50 mph. But it's useful for fires like the nearby 5-acre dry grass fire it helped battle last spring.

The Heucherts keep water in the bus throughout the warm season and drain it and treat it with RV antifreeze before storing it for the winter.

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## "Water Bottle" Fly Trap

An ordinary water bottle can be used to make a simple fly trap that will greatly reduce your fly population, says Dave Meiners, Edgerton, Minn.

He mixes one cup of sugar and one cup of vinegar with a half gal. of water and fills the bottle half full. A small wire is used to hang the bottle, with the lid removed, under a tree. As the mixture ferments, flies and other insects enter the bottle and drown.

"It's cheap to set up and costs nothing to operate," says Meiners, who has 7 of the traps set up around his place. "I usually empty the bottles every 2 or 3 days, making sure not to dump the mixture on our lawn because the vinegar will kill the grass. We live on an acreage with no livestock, and I'm sure that anyone with livestock would catch even more flies. It's important to keep the trap in the shade, because if it's out in the open it won't be nearly as effective."

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Bottle is filled half full with sugar, vinegar and water, and then hung, from a tree or fence rail. As the mixture ferments, flies enter bottle and drown.



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