A pair of Stihl backpack leaf blowers mounted on back of mower move air forward through lengths of 4-in. pvc pipe.

At front of deck, 90-degree fittings direct the air through blower nozzles that hook up to the pipes. Since these photos were taken, O'Neil replaced the split nozzles with a fan-type tip (inset photo above).

He Clears Trails Fast With Zero-Turn "Blowdozer"

Bob O'Neil clears his local school's mile-long cross-country running trail with what he calls his "Blowdozer", a Husqvarna zero-turn mower equipped with a pair of Stihl backpack leaf blowers.

"In the fall it used to take me 4 to 6 hrs. to walk the trail with a backpack blower," says O'Neil, an art teacher and former cross-country coach at Chippewa Hills School District. "I already had the zero-turn mower to mow the trail. Last year I made a crude mount to hang the blower on. This year I did it right."

O'Neil set the rollbar back 90 degrees (parallel to the ground) and built a platform on it for 2 Stihl BR800 backpack leaf blowers. To move the air from back to front, he mounted 4-in. pvc pipe, sized to match the blower tubes, to either side of the seat and around the mower arms.

"The blowers came with long and short nozzles," says O'Neil. "I didn't figure I would ever use the short ones, so I cut them off and hooked them up to the pvc pipes."

At the front of the mower deck, 90-degree fittings direct the air through a pine board attached to the mower's swivel wheel support arms. A second set of 45-degree fittings directs the air ahead of the deck board through slightly smaller pvc pipes to boost velocity. Pipe clamps that connect the 2 sets of fittings allow O'Neil to adjust the direction of the tips.

"The nozzles can blow in a V-plow pattern or shoot off to either side," says O'Neil. "At first I used a split tip on each nozzle, but now I have a fan tip. I took a 12-in. piece of pvc pipe and put it in boiling water to make the fan tips for each nozzle."

Everything is made to mount or dismount in about 5 min. Detaching just the blowers takes even less time. All O'Neil has to do is twist the blower tube and slide it back from the old nozzle. Bungee cords hold the backpacks in place. Most of the pipe connections are made with pipe clamps.

Just to finish off his project, the art teacher used the school's 3D printer and created his own logo - Blowdozer Stihl-Varna. He slapped it on after painting the pvc tubes black. It looks good and so do the trails.

"I can mount the blowers and clear the trails in about an hour," says O'Neill. "The mossy trails look like carpet when I'm done."

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Steel hog flooring panels serve as "weep walls" that allow liquids to drain away from the stored manure.

Hog Floor Panels Used To Drain Liquids From Manure

When the Nooyen family started manufacturing their Tri-Bar steel hog flooring panels in Holland more than 35 years ago, they had no idea that years later they would find an alternative use as "weep walls" to separate manure solids from liquids.

Normally, 3 panels are set on top of each other in a 6 by 6-ft. opening in the side of a concrete manure basin. Liquids pass through the panels, while solids are retained. No added energy, equipment or labor is needed.

"We introduced the Weep Wall System into the North American market about 15 years ago," says Nick van Ray, Nooyen Manufacturing. "The idea of using our panels this way originated with Kansas State University."

Nooyen cold rolls round steel rod into the 3/8-in. triangle shapes. These are MIG welded into 6 by 2-ft. panels with 3/8-in. spacing before galvanizing. "We galvanize them in-house to our own specifications. Our Weep Wall systems have a projected life span of 15 years," says van Ray.

"Our Weep Wall Systems are being used for manure management in herds from 20 cows to 20,000 cows in more than 17 states, as well as other countries," says van Ray.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Nooyen Manufacturing, 111 Adena Dr., Mt. Sterling, Ky. 40353 (ph 859 497-4429; sales@nooyenky.com; www.nooyenky.com).

Steketee Finger Weeder comes with a wide variety of finger types and sizes that all slip onto the same hub.

Finger Weeder Gets In-Row Weeds

"The Steketee Finger Weeder lets you change fingers to match soil types, spacing and crops," says Joe Sutton, Sutton Agricultural Enterprises, Inc. "Depending on the length and type of fingers you select, weeding can be more or less aggressive. They all slip onto the same hub. The system is very modular and adjustable vertically and horizontally."

There are a wide variety of sizes, row configurations and spacing. The standard 13-in. finger weeders for single row use with a walk-behind tractor start at $430. They range up to a 30-ft. long toolbar to weed 18 rows in a pass. The large unit starts at $100,000 and varies by spacing.

Flexible poly fingers are available in narrow (9-in.), standard (13-in.) and wide (16-in.) lengths for row spacing as close as 10, 12 and 15 in., respectively.

Brush-type fingers are available in 9 and 13-in. lengths for row spacing as close as 10 and 12 in., respectively.

Fingers are mounted to 9-in. long steel shanks fixed to a steel disc and dislodge the weeds as the units travel down rows.

Sutton is the exclusive U.S. distributor of Netherlands-based, Steketee finger weeders and has sold the finger weeders in Canada.

Fingers mount on 9-in. long shanks that are fixed to a steel disc, dislodging weeds as they travel down the row.

The company also carries spring-loaded arms and extension brackets in different sizes and styles for mounting the finger weeders.

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