



Ian Windlow converted a 3-pt. mounted broadcast spreader to lay compost down over the beds in his vegetable fields.



Hydraulic cylinder attached to top link on spreader's 3-pt. hitch allows hopper to tilt back and scoop up material.

Sawdust Spreader Converted To Handle Compost

Ian Wyndlow converted a 3-pt. mounted sawdust spreader to lay compost down in vegetable crops. Initially he used it to broadcast compost over a 45-ft. span to the side of the spreader.

"We have 15 acres of organic vegetable production, which we sell at a local farmer's market and to 70 CSA members, as well as to local restaurants," says Wyndlow. "We wanted to find a way to lay compost directly onto the seedbeds where we need it."

Originally, a hydraulic cylinder attached to the top link on the spreader's 3-pt. hitch allowed the 4-ft. wide hopper to tilt back 90° to scoop up material.

"When full of compost, the hopper was too heavy for my tractor hydraulics to lift it back into place, plus I needed more weight on

the front end," says Wyndlow. "The compost also bridged on the walls, especially if it was a little moist. The spreader needed to be modified."

Part of the bridging problem came from the sides not being steep enough to allow the compost to slide. Wyndlow welded a plate inside the hopper that reduced the volume about 20 percent and made for a much steeper wall. This in turn reduced potential weight and improved compost flow.

In order to lay the compost over the bed instead of broadcasting it to one side, Wyndlow removed the impeller with its pto drive and closed off the opening, replacing it with a hopper-wide slot at the bottom of the rear panel. He also attached metal sheets to either side of the slot to further compress the

flow to bed width.

Wyndlow removed the auger that fed the impeller, but retained the hydraulic motor that powered it. With the help of Ben, his 11-year old son, he replaced the auger with a beater.

"Ben welded tabs on a piece of pipe that we mounted in place of the auger," says Wyndlow. "He also helped with welding tabs on a rail that I installed below the slot. The tabs support a flap of rubber that blocks the flow of compost."

The rail is hinged to the spreader. Two pipes connected at right angles to each other extend from the rail up and then forward to the driver's reach.

"The pipe has a series of stops on it that keep it partially open when running and closed in transit," explains Wyndlow.

As the beater turns, it pushes compost out of the slot. A second beater installed above it helps further reduce bridging. A roller chain from a sprocket on the lower beater drives the upper beater.

"The upper beater, as well as bearings, shafts, gears and drive chain, were salvaged and repurposed from an old Deere silage box," says Wyndlow. "The only new component was a hydrostatic valve plumbed to run the rotation of the beaters or the tipping motion of the hopper."

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Two 5-ft. long boards, attached between loader arms, make it easy for Stemann to work on riding mowers.

Farmall Loader-Mounted Mower Lift

Neil Stemann gets double duty out of the loader on his Farmall H tractor, thanks to his home-built lift adapter. Twin 5-ft. long, 2 by 12-in. wood engineered boards are attached between the lift arms, making it easy to work on his riding mowers. He just drives the mower onto the boards and then raises the loader.

"The open center between the boards makes it easy to change the oil and work on the mowers. I can lift them to any height needed for service," says Stemann. While working on the mower, he also blocks the loader arms for safety.

The loader is original to the tractor, which was built in the mid 1940's. Stemann replaced the bucket with an angled blade purchased from a friend, which he uses to plow snow off his driveway. The back side of the blade is welded to a semi-circular steel frame. It pins onto another frame that Stemann built, which bolts onto the loader arms. The semi-circular frame and blade can be easily removed with one center pivot bolt and nut, and the blade's angle can be adjusted by changing the position of a pin.

To install the mower lift, Stemann



Loader can also be fitted with an angled blade that Stemann welded to a semi-circular frame. It pins onto another frame that bolts onto loader arms.

removes the blade and the semi circular frame, which were built as one unit. He then inserts each board between a pair of flat metal straps and into a length of channel iron across the back of the frame. Each plank is held in place by a pair of 3-in. long, 5/16-in. dia. metal rods, which run down through the channel iron and into holes drilled into the planks. A big washer welded onto the head of each rod helps keep the boards in place.

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Mud flows through pipes welded to wheel perimeter and falls back into track as pivot moves forward, preventing deep ruts in field. A steel reinforcing ring reduces stress on hub.



Self-Cleaning, Airless Center Pivot Wheels

You can reduce center pivot wheel ruts and keep your pivot from getting stuck by replacing the original wheels with this new-style "self-cleaning" steel wheel, says Corey Schaaf, inventor of the patent-pending Mud Commander wheel.

"It's the only wheel on the market that self-cleans, has no moving parts, and is airless and maintenance-free. It's the last pivot wheel you'll ever need," says Schaaf.

Schaaf farms under center pivots and is a Valley irrigation dealer, so he knows the problems involved firsthand. "Our customers were tired of buying \$500 plus pivot tires, only to have them go flat because the tires rotted in the sun. We tested the Mud Commander over 3 irrigation seasons to ensure proper operation and long life," says Schaaf.

The Mud Commander fits all brands of center pivots with an 8-bolt wheel pattern. It's made from 3/8-in. thick, powder-coated steel and comes with a series of 4-in. dia., 10-in. long heavy wall pipes welded onto the wheel perimeter, which serve as cleats. A 12-in. dia.

steel hub reinforcing ring (included) reduces stress on the hub.

"The open design allows mud to flow through the pipes and fall back into the track as the pivot moves forward, preventing deep ruts in the field," says Schaaf. "The wheels don't spin out or push mud out of the track like a rubber tire does. Another benefit is the rounded pipes cushion the shock on the initial start-up of the tower motor, which reduces stress on the drivetrain."

The Mud Commander wheel measures 48 in. tall, similar to a standard 14.9 by 24-in. tire and wheel assembly. "We use a short wheel because it allows us to ship the wheels by LTL freight on a 4 by 4-ft. pallet, which reduces the shipping cost," says Schaaf.

The Mud Commander is currently being tested on corner center pivots to determine performance. It sells for \$1,100 per wheel plus S&H.

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