



Dean Maschoff uses his modified golf cart to do a variety of jobs that make gardening work easier. Here he's laying down paper mulch.



Cart is designed so operator can kneel forward on a chest support, and also sit or stand. Photo shows cart set up to plant asparagus.

Do-All Garden Cart Eases Work

"I modified a golf cart to harvest my 10,000 asparagus plants and to plant onions and garlic. I love it every time I use it," says Dean Maschoff, Elm Creek Vegetables.

Semi-retired, Maschoff markets from \$50 to \$100 worth of vegetables a day from his farm gate, using the honor system. To supply demand, he has a good-sized garden and needed an easier way to work it. His modified golf cart gave him that.

"The first thing people said was they had never seen anything like it," he says. "The second thing was that I should make them to sell."

Maschoff had received this kind of advice before. After years of making extruded aluminum parts for a window manufacturer, he made an aluminum golf cart trailer for himself.

"Friends talked me into building them," recalls Maschoff. "I started Aluma Trailers in 1992 because no one was making an affordable or useable aluminum trailer. The company grew from 3 employees to 200."

Maschoff sold the company in 2000, but continued designing trailers for them. Now

he was hearing similar things about his modified golf cart. People liked the simplicity and compact design. He had lengthened and widened the cart. He decreased the speed by 50 percent and replaced and modified the electric controls for multiple operator positions.

The "Veggie Board" is 36 by 72 in. with a 2 hp. electric motor. The operator can vary the speed from 0 to 10 mph. All terrain tires handle tilled ground without a problem, and the all aluminum construction is nearly maintenance free.

Maschoff has used his original Veggie Board for a wide variety of crops and practices from laying plastic and mulch to planting, weeding and harvest. The optional side seat is ideal for trimming and harvesting a wide variety of fruit and other upright crops. Like other components, it is adjustable up/down, out/in and side to side.

"You can do all kinds of things with the Veggie Board," says Maschoff. "Unlike some carts on the market, you don't have to lay on your stomach, which has been shown to be bad for the back if done for extended

periods."

Maschoff designed his cart for kneeling forward with a chest support or simply sitting or standing. The adjustable steering wheel and throttle provide total control in any position.

"You can stand up and pick apples with the steering wheel right next to you, and you can adjust controls for sitting, kneeling or standing positions," says Maschoff.

Maschoff handles all orders in-house with a lead-time of 30 days. He is manufacturing them in a rented building, but looking for a permanent location. Distribution and marketing will be turned over to another firm.

"Currently, Ag Resource is my only dealer," says Maschoff. "I want to be sure the carts are durable. If changes are needed, I can make them."

Maschoff has considered offering a rooftop solar panel, but doesn't feel it would be economical at this time. While not promoting it, he does have one 5 by 9-ft. Veggie Board available. It has an 8 hp., 36-volt motor, larger tires and can be equipped with a side wing to seat 3 people. It has variable speed and other features similar to the model currently being made.



Adjustable steering wheel and throttle allows operator to stand and pick apples with the steering wheel right next to him.

Retail price as of now for the smaller Veggie Board is \$5,800 plus shipping. Maschoff notes that it can be shipped on a 4 by 3 1/2-ft. pallet and is easily assembled.

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Battery-powered portable canopy provides shade, seats, fans and racks for cold water. It was designed for tobacco field work to go in 36-in. rows.



"Shade Maid" Makes Fieldwork Comfortable

For labor-intensive field work in the hot sun, Shade Maid provides all the things you need to make the job more comfortable - shade, seats, fans and racks for coolers of ice cold water.

David King came up with the idea for what looks like a "carport on wheels" after he had heat stroke and was unconscious for 3 hours after working in a tobacco field without water on a hot day. Powered by a 24-volt battery pack from a solar panel, and 24-volt motors on each front wheel, the portable canopy travels up to 4 mph. It has 3 fans, 3 seats (center seat is removable) and at 12 ft. wide and 14 ft. long, there is plenty of room for 4 people to walk inside and be shaded under the canopy with an adjustable height. A battery usually lasts all day. Shade Maid has an accelerator pedal and steering control to move forward and reverse. It rolls on 14-in. tires with an 11-ft. wheelbase and drives like a golf cart.

King had the first one built a few years ago for family members, who tried it and told him

they wouldn't work again in tobacco fields without it. So King had Elmer Fisher, owner of Country Machinery, LLC in Leola, Penn., build them for King to sell. Recently Fisher took over sales, too.

While initially designed for tobacco field work to go between 36-in. rows, the canopy can be customized for other crops including hemp, strawberries, blueberries and other vegetable crops.

"One was custom designed to go to Virginia for a tomato picker, who wanted self-propelled drive, comfort, the shade and the fans," King says.

Shade Maid sold for around \$7,800 in the past, but as manufacturer and seller, Fisher may be able to cut the cost. Anyone interested in the original design or a customized version can contact him with details and for a quote.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Elmer Fisher, 609 Musser School Rd., Leola, Penn. 17540 (ph 717 656-9733; www.countrymachineryllc.com).



Solar-powered RoHand II crop cart has a canvas top with roll-down sides that protect the operator from sun or rain.

Crop Cart Lets You Lay Down On The Job

You can save your back while planting, weeding, and harvesting with a RoHand II, says Elmer Fisher, the owner of Fisher Sprayer Mfg., a family-owned metalworking and fabricating company that builds and sells the solar-powered machine.

"You can break production records while laying down on the job," he says. "It works for strawberries and many row crops such as onions and garlic - anything you have to bend over to do."

You lay face down on a chest pad that can be elevated and adjusted for all-day comfort. Foot controls for variable speed and steering keep both hands free for work. A canvas top with roll-down sides provides shade in the sun and protection from rain.

Having worked in the produce industry for many years, Fisher understands what operators need for comfort and to save time.

"A solar panel charges the lithium ion battery for the power that drives the motor and it has variable speed. Press the foot pedal

harder and it goes faster," Fisher says. He notes that the battery stores the energy and lasts a couple of hours, even on cloudy days.

Gear motors and cleated drive tires provide torque and traction for challenging field conditions. The 4-wheel design adds stability and allows easy on/off access on both sides of the machine. The durable frame is made with 2-in. tubing and painted with epoxy paint. Trays or totes of harvested food fit on shelves on the front and back.

He sells the RoHand II for \$4,700, plus shipping costs. Fisher also sells a Proveyor Wagon that uses a conveyor to gently and efficiently handle produce such as cabbage, melons and broccoli. Check out his website for more information.

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