



Home-built hitch bolts onto tractor's 3-pt. quick hitch and can move everything from trailers to wagons and implements.

3-Pt. Hitch Converted To Versatile Trailer Puller

"I never have to get off my tractor to hitch up a trailer thanks to my home-built hitch. It bolts onto the tractor's 3-pt. quick hitch and also can be used to move wagons or implements," says Daniel York, Morgan Mill, Texas. "I can quickly unbolt it from the quick hitch and hook up any 3-pt. mounted implement."

He started with an old pickup bumper-mounted receiver hitch, welding the hitch's frame on back of another frame that he made out of square tubing. It has a ball hitch on top. He also welded links onto the front part of the frame, which hook up to the quick hitch.

"I use the ball hitch to move trailers around my farm, especially when the ground

is muddy and I don't want to get my pickup dirty," says York. "It takes only about 2 min. to remove the ball hitch, and then I can use the quick hitch to hook up to my 3-pt. mounted batwing shredder, hay conditioner, or hay forks.

"I came up with the idea because I got tired of taking the ball hitch on and off my tractor whenever I wanted to move trailers. The receiver hitch's frame moves the trailer back a ways from the tractor, which makes the hitch easier to see. It also keeps the trailer from jackknifing when I turn short."

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"Sewer Pipe" 3-Pt. Tractor Weights

Eric Petrevich was looking for an easy way to add rear ballast to his Kioti 25 hp. tractor, without losing use of the 3-pt. hitch or pto. He couldn't find what he wanted on the market so he decided to build his own out of a big steel pipe.

"All the ballast boxes I looked at had major flaws," says Petrevich. "On some the 3-pt hitch has to be raised when they're installed, which puts constant strain on all hitch components and also raises the tractor's center of gravity. Others are so large they'll scrape the ground as you drive up an incline, or they're in the way when you have to navigate tight spaces."

He started with a 2-ft. long, 16-in. dia. 3/4-in. thick sewer pipe given to him by a neighbor. He welded the pipe onto a homemade, 3-pt. mounted bracket with an expanded metal floor, as well as a ball hitch on back and 3 welded-on, homemade jacks. Each jack consists of a pipe that rides inside a larger 1 1/2-in. dia. pipe, which Petrevich welded onto the sewer pipe. Both pipes have a series of holes in them, and the jack's height can be easily adjusted by changing the position of a pin.

"The sewer pipe weighs just 240 lbs. empty, but the tractor's rear wheels are filled with ballast so I only needed a little more weight. If I need more weight I can drop rocks or other heavy objects inside the pipe," says Petrevich.

"It took about 3 days to build, with most of that time spent painting and sandblasting. All I bought were 2 pins and the ball hitch, which I use to pull trailers. The rest was scrap metal. My total cost was less than \$50."

By lowering the 3-pt. all the way, the



Sewer pipe welded to 3-pt. mounted bracket adds 240 lbs. of rear ballast.

ballast won't interfere with the pto, says Petrevich. To remove the ballast he just raises the 3-pt. and then drops the jacks to the ground.

He stores rakes and shovels in 2 vertical pipes that he mounted next to the 3-pt.'s top link. "I leave the ball hitch and a toolbox inside the pipe all the time. There's room for a 5-gal bucket inside the pipe to carry smaller items," notes Petrevich.

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AirCover System improves the efficiency of Case IH 1200 series planters in a variety of tough planting conditions.

Planter Closing System Works In Tough Conditions

Bruce Freed and his father Brian, owners and co-managers of Ag Focus, LLC, knew the Case IH 1200 series planter was a good piece of equipment when it was introduced nearly 20 years ago. They also thought it needed small tweaks to increase its efficiency. Bruce says, "We found that in certain no-till planting environments, especially harder or wetter ground, and in some soil types, the closing system didn't have enough power to do what we were asking it to do. We looked at ways to improve it."

That led them to design and build Planter Pro row cleaners and Fast Trac closing system planter attachments. Used on the 1200 series and other planters, they clear residue and create an environment for better seed placement and improved plant emergence.

Always looking to improve planting performance, Bruce Freed developed what he calls an AirCover system in 2016. After trial-and-error field trials, they successfully beta-tested it with a few customers in central Illinois. The mechanism was released commercially in 2017 and units have been sold to Midwestern farmers who've been battling complex soil compositions ever since.

That design uses their patent-pending bracket in conjunction with the Precision Planting® Clean Sweep® cylinder, plumbing and controller to adjust closing wheel down pressure from the tractor cab. Bruce

says with this attachment owners of 1200 series planters can get the same seed-to-soil contact efficiency without having to buy a new 2000 series planter. Another benefit is that AirCover eliminates the need to replace the wear points on the 1200 series closing system, which usually had to be done every couple years.

"I sold one to a farmer from Huron, South Dakota in 2019 and he told me he wouldn't have been able to plant a single acre if he didn't have the air covers," Bruce says. "Because of the system he planted almost 2,000 acres." Last year's wet planting conditions across the Midwest turned out to be a boon for the Freed's business.

"It was really a game-changer," Bruce says. "If you had this system on you could plant, and if you didn't, you couldn't." In the spring of 2020 Freed sold several of the devices in North Dakota to help farmers get at least some planting done despite soggy fields. Their entire system, which includes a bracket, air cylinder and plumbing equipment, costs about \$300 per row. Bruce says the air cover also works well on high-speed planters.

Farmers interested in the AirCover can purchase it from Ag Focus, from their Case IH dealership, or a Precision Planting dealership.

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3-Pt. Mounted Wire Winder

"I needed a heavy-duty wire winder to help fence off corn fields for my cattle to glean. So I made a 3-pt. mounted unit from the reduction gear off a grain auger, the pto shaft from a manure spreader, and an old wheel rim," says Richard Zigler, Charles Town, W. Va.

He used truck leaf springs and scrap metal to build a frame, bending the springs down at a 90 degree angle. The auger reduction gear was originally fastened to a big steel plate, which Zigler cut off and welded to the springs. The reduction gear drives a 2-in. dia. pipe that's fastened to a small metal plate, which has bolts welded onto it to support the wheel rim. He widened the rim by cutting the center out of a pair of disc blades and welding one onto each side of the rim.

"It works great, and is built much stronger than commercial wire winders mounted on a pickup bumper and driven by a starter motor and friction wheel," says Zigler. "Instead of having to drive alongside the wire to wind it up, I can just park my wire winder at one end of the wire and reel it in."

"I've even used it to pull a 1 1/4-mile-long wire strand off a cleared field. However, it takes 2 men to operate this machine safely -



Pto-operated wire winder mounts on the reduction gear off a grain auger. An old wheel rim contains the wire.

one to drive the tractor and watch for debris and knots in the wire, and the other to evenly guide the wire onto the wheel rim. If the tractor driver sees a knot in the wire, he can shut off the pto so the person guiding the wire into the winder doesn't get caught in it."

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