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Spring-Loaded Chopper Uses No Hydraulics

Tom Wylie searched the internet for examples of manual-powered wood splitters before building a spring-loaded one of his own. It works so well that he calls it the Paul Bunyan Wood Chopper and has started selling plans for it, with a discount for FARM SHOW readers.

"It's amazing how much easier it makes splitting wood," says Wylie. "There are no spark plugs, hydraulic hoses, or maintenance.

The only noise is of the wood splitting."

Wylie made the splitter largely out of salvaged metal, using an old boat trailer tongue for the frame and setting it on a mobile home axle. The base post, boom, and splitting head are lengths of rectangular steel tubing. The splitting table is 2-in. home sawn lumber. It's 104 in. long, about 46 in. wide, and about 70 in. high.

The splitting edge is a salvaged splitting

maul. Operating it is easy. He places the wood round on the table and pulls the splitting head down. The 90-lb. weight of the head does the work with a spring returning it to a resting position.

"The biggest challenge was tensioning the spring," says Wylie. "Spring tension controls how high the splitting head sits at rest. That determines the average length of the firewood round that can be split. It had to be adjustable, yet steady and strong."

Wylie tried several different techniques, but all would either break or bind. He wanted to avoid hydraulics so he wouldn't have to deal with potential oil leaks. That ruled out a jack.

"One day, I saw the leveling screw under a scaffold," says Wylie. "I had one welded in place, and it worked great."

The splitter went through several prototypes before Wylie was satisfied. One key was to place the wheels under the heaviest portion of the machine. This past summer, he replaced smaller wheels with larger ones and a longer tongue for towing.

"The larger wheels made it more mobile," says Wylie.

Trained and licensed as an airplane mechanic, the Missouri homesteader worked on his design for the past 6 or 7 years. He feels he has it perfected, able to split anything he could with a maul but without the work. With his most recent changes, he developed plans for others to follow for building their own.

This past summer, he took his splitter to the

Modern Homesteading Conference at Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. "When people saw it work, they often asked how they could get one and if I build them to sell," says Wylie.

He's talking to several shops about building the splitter for sale. In the meantime, he's selling plans for \$25 in print and digital form. He also offers an advanced set of digital plans online with detailed videos on construction for \$49. All plans come with a detailed materials shopping list.

Wylie is offering FARM SHOW readers a 10 percent discount on printed plans. Use the coupon code FARMSHOW10 when ordering.

"Depending on available materials, I think it could be built for \$300 to \$500," says Wylie. "Using all new materials, it would likely be in the \$1,000 range."

He notes that the main component needed is the scaffolding jack screw. The spring and most other components can be found at a salvage yard.

"I went with the mobile home axle because they're usually easy to find and cheap, plus parts like bearings are easy to find," says Wylie. "I've also added a detailed drawing for a stationary design after having a request for it."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Tom Wylie, 82 Private Rd. 304-2, Alton, Mo. 65606 (ph 509-993-8524; handyhomesteadertom@gmail.com; <https://paulbunyanwoodchopper.square.site>).

New Technology Is Revolutionizing Cattle Health

ClicRtechnologies is a precision ag company using advanced vision software, machine learning, RFID tags and readers, and 3D imaging technology to replace traditional livestock weigh scales.

"The beef industry is trying to avoid stress for their animals in all situations," says Sergio Monge, ClicR's Global Sales Manager. "Typical scales use excess labor and create risk while handling livestock. Our technology helps cattlemen make decisions based on knowledge and data, available 24/7 in the palm of the hand. It's a positive step toward improved animal welfare."

ClicR's hardware, including a camera system and tag reader, is set up around water sources. When an animal drinks, it's identified, the computer activates, and the camera begins taking hundreds of pictures. Using artificial intelligence, an algorithm calculates a weight by relating measurements to the 3D composition of the photos.

The farmer uses a smartphone, tablet, or

computer to access a dashboard listing individuals, real-time weights, daily gains, feed conversions, and other performance factors from a cloud-based server.

The technology is trained to recognize different cattle breeds, and producers can enter milestones for improved marketability. It can also be programmed to mark cattle with spray paint when a target weight is reached or apply dewormer and parasite applications.

ClicR claims a 96 percent accuracy with its weight technology.

"Feed rations can be changed, non-performers removed, or marketable candidates gathered," Monge says. "ClicR is changing the way decisions are made, based on knowledge with just a click."

The hardware and software are manufactured in Raleigh, N.C. System costs are \$500 down and \$125 monthly over 36 mos. Installation and a full warranty are included.

ClicRtechnologies also offers weighing solutions for swine and alligators.



Use a smartphone, tablet, or computer to access a dashboard listing individuals, real-time weights, daily gains, feed conversions, and other performance factors from a cloud-based server.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, ClicRtechnologies, 9249 Lazy Lane, Tam-

pa, Fla. 33614 (ph 813-930-0012; info@clicrweight.com; www.clicrweight.com).

They Specialize In Fence Products

Kencove Farm Fence Supplies, Blairsville, Penn., sells a comprehensive range of fencing supplies and tools. These products are designed for securing and safeguarding various livestock and can be shipped directly.



The Rapid Tightener (\$124.75) makes it fast and easy to install EZ-Daisy strainers. A 1/2-in. drive ratchet speeds up tightening while a notched arm holds the wire and strainer in place to ensure an easy installation process for the pin. The Rapid Tightener is designed to fit SSDR, SSDN, and most other brands of EZ-Daisy strainers. Customers love how well made the tightener feels and believe it improves safety when tightening high tensile lines prone to snapping.

LockJawz designed the CB-360 Corner Brace Kit to be the fastest and easiest

way to build a corner brace, either with all wood or with a wood post as your end and a T-post for the diagonal and secondary brace post (both sold for \$29.99). The mounting brackets are fully adjustable and allow for repositioning without taking the corner apart. It's made in the USA from UV-stabilized resins in a high-visibility orange.

The Wedge-Loc Brace System (\$16.50) can make either a diagonal or horizontal brace with steel T-posts. It's designed to build end and corner assemblies quickly. The Brace System fits steel t-posts and is made from solid, rust-free aluminum. Each kit



comes with two collars, wedges, and either 90-degree or 60-degree sockets, depending on the preferred angle. It fits all standard steel T-posts made in the US, Canada, and Mexico.



The Gallagher Tumblewheel (\$99.75) rolls with you to replace step-in posts for quick, easy paddock moves. It's designed to ensure that the two legs on the ground are always neutralized while the others are electrified to prevent itching and rubbing from livestock. Instead of pulling and setting up rows of posts, the Tumblewheel makes it possible

to roll the fence with you as you move through paddocks. No tools are needed for assembly, and a built-in slot allows for quick installation of electric twine.

ReelFast (\$450) is a battery-operated fence reel created by Vogeler MFG that claims to be the most efficient fence management system on the market. It will reel half a mile of wire in under 7 min. and takes less than 10 min. to attach to a vehicle before use. It's ideal for rotational grazing setups where you must move animals frequently.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Kencove Farm Fence Supplies, 344 Kendall Rd., Blairsville, Penn. 15717 (ph 724-459-8991 or toll-free 800-536-2683; www.kencove.com).

