FARM SHOW

"Made it Myself"

Some of the best new products we hear about are "made it myself" innovations born in farmers' workshops. If you've got a new invention or favorite gadget you're proud of, we'd like to hear about it. Send along a photo or two, and a description of what it is and how it works. Is it being manufactured commercially? If so, where can interested farmers buy it? Are you looking for manufacturers, dealers or distributors? (Send to: FARM SHOW, Box 1029, Lakeville, MN 55044).

Harold M. Johnson, Editorial Director

"Push 'N Pull" Cat Scraper

An old used Caterpillar scraper, originally designed to be pulled by a Caterpillar D6 or D7 tractor, works great as an earthmover for Mark Bauer, Faribault, Minn.

Last year Bauer bought the cable-operated 1955 model from a Caterpillar dealer. He removed the rig's cables, as well as pulleys and springs, and replaced them with four hydraulic cylinders. The cylinders let him control the big earthmover from the cab of his 150 hp Deere 7020 tractor.

"A used Cat scraper is bigger, stronger and cheaper than any commercial scraper sold for farm use. I paid $15,000 for my 4-ft. wide commercial scraper while this 7-ft. wide Cat scraper cost about $3,000. In addition, the big 16-ply tires on the Cat scraper keep it from tipping over on our rolling land," says Bauer.

The scraper is 27 ft. long with a 8 1/2-ft. wide wheelbase and supports a 7.5 cubic yard bucket measuring 7 ft. wide and 47 in. high. The two front tires are 14.00 by 20, and the two rear tires are 16.00 by 12 in. Turning radius is 22 ft.

An 8-in. cylinder with a 42-in. stroke serves as the main lift cylinder for the bucket. Two side cylinders, 3 by 24-in., raise and lower the front gate to set the depth of cut. A fourth cylinder, 4 in. with a 56-in. stroke, operates the push gate that ejects dirt out the front. Maximum depth of cut is 11 in. Maximum depth of spread is 15 in.

According to Bauer, any 4-WD with 150 hp or more can pull the scraper, which weighs 12,000 lbs. empty. However, a 150 hp tractor has only enough power to fill the bucket about three fourths full. To completely fill the bucket, Bauer pushes on the scraper from the rear with a small Caterpillar. "When the bucket is full, we raise it off the ground and the tractor pulls it up to 12 mph with no problem."

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Self-Unloading Truck, Trailer Combo

A self-unloading tandem Mack truck and pup trailer, coupled by a special flexible hitch, let custom hay hauler Laurie Brownlee, Unity, Sask., carry 34 round bales at once.

A flexible pintle hitch and a 12 1/2-ft. by 8-ft. hydraulic folding gate, which bridges the gap between the trailer and truck bed, allow Brownlee to unload bales without unhooking the pup trailer. He hydraulically raises the back end of the pup trailer until it just touches the ground, raising the gate into a 6-ft. high folded position. Then he uses a 2-ft. high steel "push gate" on the front end of the pup trailer to push bales off.

After all bales are off the trailer, Brownlee levels it. Then he hydraulically lowers the folding gate until it meets the back of the truck. He then winches bales on the truck back onto the pup trailer, unloading it a second time. "Unloading takes just minutes and we're on our way for another load," says Brownlee.

The folding gate which bridges the gap between truck and trailer is the key to winching bales between the rigs, says Brownlee. The gate is made from 2 by 6 in. box iron and is hinged in two places. "The gate always is in the raised position except while we unload bales from truck to trailer," notes Brownlee. Two conventional hydraulic cylinders raise and lower the gate, while a larger cylinder raises and lowers the trailer.

The trailer and truck bed are each 27 ft. long and 8 1/2 ft. wide. Each rig can hold 14 big round bales or 17 smaller ones.

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Gooseneck Chute Works Cattle Without Unhitching

"The gooseneck hitch on my home-built chute gives you plenty of room to work cattle without unhitching from your tractor or pickup," says Edwin Schaffner, Mondovi, Wis.

When Schaffner set out to build a chute, he wanted one that would be easy to move around the farm. The trouble with most tow-along chutes, he says, is that you have to unhitch them to have enough room to work.

The gooseneck on Schaffner's chute sets the chute back far enough so there's plenty of room to work around the self-locking gates. Hydraulic hoses run up the gooseneck and back to cylinders on the wheels that set the chute down flat on the ground. Two small tow bars, that run straight back from the tractor to the chute, can be quickly removed by pulling lock pins. Schaffner says they come in handy to direct animals to one side or the other because one or the other of the bars can be left in place.

"The chute is especially handy for moving a springer from the pole shed to the barn. You drive up to the barn, put a neck strap on her and let her out of the chute, removing the tow bar closest to the barn so she has nowhere else to go," says Schaffner, who's used the chute for a year for breeding heifers, vaccinating, and other chores. He also made two lightweight, 7-ft. long gates for directing animals into the chute.

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