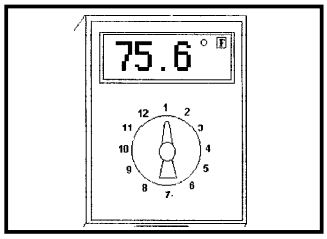
Low-Cost Grain Bin Monitor

"It's for anyone who doesn't need or want a complicated bin monitoring and control system. All it does is tell you the temperature inside your bins," says Craig Hermanson, Craig Industries, Inc., Mitchell, S. Dak.

The "Grain Watcher" consists of a 12-volt digital monitor that can be located in your house, machine shed, or anywhere up to 1,000 ft. from temperature probes in the bin. The system can monitor up to 6 bins at a time. You simply turn a dial on the monitor and read the temperature.

The 30-in. probes are inserted into the grain after the bin is filled and wired to the monitor. The probe snaps onto the underside of the roof and plugs into a jack that mounts next to the hatch. From there cable runs underground to the monitor.

"Farmers told us they wanted a simple, low-cost system that would let them monitor their bins and take care of any problems themselves. Sophisticated bin monitoring systems that turn fans on or off are expensive, inconvenient, and in many cases inaccurate. They sell for $1,300 to $1,400 per bin and often you still have to go outside to read the temperature. Our system can handle six medium size bins for a total cost of about $300 per bin."



Monitor can be located up to 1,000 ft. from temperature probes in bins.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Craig Industries, Inc., 200 West Havens, Mitchell, S. Dak. 57301 (ph 605 996-4674).

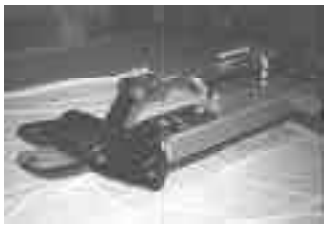
"Swivel" Drill Hitch Changes Depth Of Disc Openers On-The-Go

"Our new add-on hitch for double disc endwheel drills lets you automatically change disc opener depth on-the-go. It saves a lot of time and makes it much easier to get a good stand," says Tom Laubach, Canton, Okla.

The hitch bolts onto the tongue in place of the original drill hitch and uses a 2 by 8-in. hydraulic cylinder to raise the tongue up or down. A heavy wall pipe on the hitch serves as a bearing.

"It lets you adjust seed depth for different soil conditions by changing the geometrics between the press wheels and disc openers," says Laubach. "Extending the cylinder raises the tongue which puts more pressure on the press wheels, causing the disc openers to lift up out of the ground. Retracting the cylinder lowers the tongue which takes pressure off the press wheels and forces the disc openers down. It's a lot easier to use than having to manually adjust the depth of each press wheel.

"Works great on new endwheel drills equipped with positive depth control press wheels. In a normal year these drills do a decent job. However, if you always keep the press wheels at one depth the disc openers don't always plant in moist soil which can lead to poor stands. Last fall a lot of farmers didn't get their seed planted in moist soil which led to poor stands."



Hitch lets you change disc opener depth hydraulically.

Fits Deere, Case-IH, and Great Plains endwheel drills. Sells for $250, not including cylinder.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Tom Laubach, Box 8A, Canton, Okla. 73724 (405 886-2259).

"Calf Tape" Predicts Birthweights

By measuring the diameter of a newborn calf's hoof, you can get accurate birthweights without doing the heavy lifting required by spring scales, according to Farm Home Offices, Garrison, Iowa, about its Calf Scale measuring tape.

You can even use the tape to measure birthweights during labor to help predict difficult births.

The tape has weights printed on it. You place the tape around the coronary band of the front hoof, tighten it, and read the circumference in centimeters and the birthweight in pounds from the tape scale. One side measures bulls and the other side heifers. Weight at birth may vary by 7 lbs. for bulls and 6.4 lbs. for heifers due to hour of age and shrink or fill.

To predict calving difficulty, take the pelvic measurements (height and width to the nearest 1/10th centimeter) within 30 days before calving. Then use the Calf Scale to measure the calf's front hoof as it emerges during birth. Subtracting the average pelvic measurement from the hoof circumference gives the calving score expected (CSE). If the CSE is less than .4, little or no pull is required. A score of more than 3.0 means extremely hard pull or C-section will be required.

Tape measures diameter of calf's hoof to give you accurate birthweights.

Sells for $8.95.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Farm Home Offices, 1965 64th St., Garrison, Iowa 52229 (ph 800 788-7218).

Plastic tubing from extinguisher is laid around combine danger zones. If a fire breaks out it melts a hole in the tubing, replacing fluid from extinguisher.

"Foolproof" Automatic Fire Extinguisher For Combines, Other Farm Equipment

If you've ever had a combine fire - or worried about having one - you'll want to take a close look at this clever new fire extinguishing system that works automatically once it's installed.

Here's how it works: The extinguisher tank is connected to a pair of flexible plastic tubes which you simply lay out around and above the combine engine, being careful that the tubing doesn't touch any hot surfaces. If a fire starts, it'll start softening the plastic and pressure from the extinguisher will blow a hole in the tubing. Because of the design, the hole will be automatically directed at the center of the fire and will put it out.

Dave Melton of Sterling Safety Company, Ipswich, England, came up with the idea. "There's no doubt the system works. Once it puts out a fire, you just install a new extinguisher and piece of tubing. It generally puts out fires before they become more than a couple inches high."

A 5-lb. tank with two 9-ft. pieces of tubing sells for about $225. Options include an alarm that lets you know when the system has been activated.

The company seeks a U.S. distributor.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Sterling Safety Ltd., Unit 20 Knightsdale Rd., Ipswich, Suffolk 1P1 4JJ England (ph 01473 745151; fax 01473 240287).

"No Hydraulics" Tree Spade

You won't believe how easy it is to move trees up to 3 in. in diameter with this first-of-its-kind "no hydraulics" tree spade.

Instead of using hydraulics to force the four steel spades under the tree, you simply drive the spades into the ground with a fence post pounder, driving the steel shaft attached to each spade.

Once the spades are under the tree, you lift the 3-pt. mounted unit and drive away. Two-wheeled units with a hand-cranked lift winch are also available.

Units range in size from 20 to 30 in. A 24-in. dia., 4-spade unit sells for $1,645.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, TreeToad, Inc., 1799 County Road 90, Maple Plain, Minn. 55359 (ph 612 479-3099).

Manual tree spade easily moves trees up to 3 in. in dia.

Post Driver For 2 By 4's

You can drive treated 2 by 4's into the ground for posts with this simple adapter that protects the top of the post from splintering.

The driver consists of a piece of channel iron that slips over the post to hold it in place. A piece of 3/8-in. thick steel plate is welded to one end and a solid steel shaft welds to the top of that. You drive the shaft with a fencepost driver, just like you would drive a steel fencepost.

"Works great for reinforcing a fence, putting up a trellis, and other jobs since 2 by 4's are cheap," says Hoffman Machine & Welding, which sells the post driver for $29.95.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Hoffman Machine & Welding, W. Illinois Rt. 16, Nokomis, Ill. 62075 (ph 217 563-7623).

Adapter keeps posts from splitting.