

Circular Hog Feeder Built From Old Grain Auger

An Iowa hog farmer has built his own circular sow feeder for less than \$3,000.

Charles P. Woltermann, of Danbury, used a 12-ft. leveling auger from an old silo as the basic unit of the feeder. He mounted the auger on the collecting ring of the silo unloader and set it all on a 5 ft. pedestal.

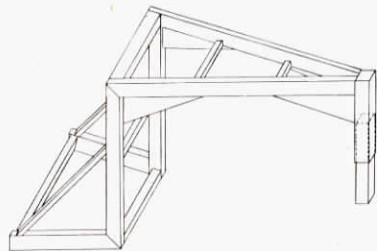
Next, he built a circular track of angle iron for the end of the leveling auger to ride on. The track is supported on 6-ft. posts, and a concrete slab was laid around the outside of the track as a feeding floor.

As the auger runs around the circle, it drops feed over the sows' backs onto the feeding

floor. To keep wind from blowing the feed as it comes out of the auger, Wolterman attached a piece of flexible hose to the discharge end of the auger.

There's plenty of room for the sows to feed around the 75-ft. perimeter of the circle, so there's a minimum of fighting and every sow gets her share.

Wolterman thinks this type of feeder could be used for finishing pigs, too, if they cleaned up their feed. It's not very adaptable to an inside operation, though, because it takes up so much space. The 12-ft. auger takes a 24-ft. circle, plus the feeding space around the outside of the circle.



"Convert-A-Hitch" Makes For Easier Trailer Towing

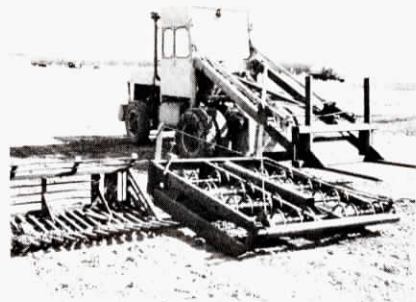
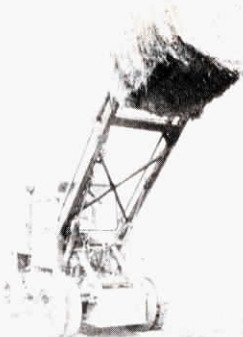
Now you can convert your horse trailers, equipment trailers, camper and travel trailers to fifth-wheel towing in minutes. Converting bumper-hitch trailers to fifth-wheelers lets you haul heavier loads, improves safety and makes the trailer easier to handle, according to Convert-A-Hitch makers.

Three Convert-A-Hitch models are available for trailers with 5,000, 10,000 and 18,000 lbs. gross weight. Hitch prices start at about \$800 for the lighter model, while the heaviest hitch is made to order and priced accordingly. An optional truck pivot is available for \$130 and may be attached to the truck frame and extended through the truck floor, or simply attached to the pickup floor for lighter trailers.

The Convert-A-Hitch has a ball which fits into the normal trailer hitch socket. The hitch is then clamped to the trailer frame with U-bolts. It can be attached to most trailers in a few minutes with no drilling or special fabrication, according to Ole Field, of F & W Econoheat, Belgrade, Mont., makers of the patented Convert-A-Hitch.

Field says converting to fifth-wheel operation improves trailer stability on the road, reduces tire wear on the trailer, and reduces trailer sway due to hitching in the center of the truck bed which is more stable than a rear hitch point.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, F & W Econoheat, 7 Andrea Drive, Belgrade, Mont., 59714 (ph 406 388-4911).



Self-Propelled Bale Loader Built From An Old Truck

Sterling Wolery, Joplin, Mont., built his own bale loader from an old truck, some miscellaneous parts and a Farmhand 8-bale loader head.

Wolery built his own loader, shortened the truck frame, and attached the loader to the rear end so the truck now runs backward. The seat and controls were reversed too. For better speed control and easier handling, he installed two transmissions. An automatic transmission was placed between the 400 cu. in. Ford engine and the original truck transmission. This reduces the load on the automatic transmission and provides the advantages of each type.

About 1,100 lbs. of extra weight were attached at the steering end to counterbalance the loader and improve stability. Wolery says when the machine was built he installed a power steering unit from a car which included mechanical linkage to the steering wheels. However, he says this causes too much play and makes the machine feel unsafe at speeds above 15-20 mph. There's no handling problem in the field. He has since learned that steering units with a hydraulic cylinder connected directly to the tie rods would be better and he plans to install this type soon.

Three hydraulic controls operate loader height, leveling of

the fork, and the bale handling head. Bales can be lifted about 14 ft. — high enough, says Wolery, to load or unload a semi to legal height limits, and about two layers higher than he can load with his Case Construction King tractor loader.

Wolery says he can load an average of 10 bales per minute, and unload even faster with the homemade loader. "We have no trouble keeping up with our tub grinder which has a rated capacity of 20 tons per hour," he points out.

Wolery said he has taken off the bale head and added forks for hauling big round bales. "Some of our round bales weigh almost a ton, however, and we

didn't feel safe hauling them with the Construction King tractor. But we've had no problems with the loader. We're always putting a chain on it to lift something. It's really handy for a lot of jobs and we use it as a scaffold all the time when we're working on buildings."

Wolery says this was an easy way to get a high-capacity, low-cost loader that is fast and easy to handle. "There's no secret to building one — just make it plenty strong and be sure the weight is balanced for safety and stability," he notes.