

FULLY AUTOMATED SELF-PROPELLED RIG RETRIEVES 90 BALES PER HOUR

“Best Ever” Bale Truck Retrieves At High Speed

“We wanted something that would get bales off the field quick with the least amount of compaction possible,” says Tom Fry about the fully automatic, self-propelled bale truck with flotation tires that he and his brother Jerry built.

The Montpelier, Ohio, fabrication shop owners built their first rig three years ago and have since used it to stack 35,000 to 40,000 big square bales. It's so impressive, the Fry Brothers have been contacted by major manufacturers - Hesston, New Holland, J.A. Freeman Co. - that are considering producing the bale hauler. They've even been visited by a British company that wanted a look.

“Based on the reception we've had from manufacturers and producers we've demonstrated it for in 13 states, we believe a production model will be on the market next spring,” says Fry. “It should be priced competitively with some of the other self-propelled bale wagons on the market, but it can do much more.”

What makes the new bale rig unique is that it's completely automatic. The truck zips around fields at high speeds. When

front-mounted bale tines make contact with a bale, the hydraulic lift arms are automatically triggered, lifting the bale quickly onto a chain conveyor that runs across the top of the cab. The bale rotates 1/4 turn as it's dumped off the back of the cab onto a bale fork that lowers it down onto the 17 1/2-ft. long flatbed that holds 8 bales, automatically stacked two high.

The entire process - from the time the front tines strike the bale until it's in place on the flatbed - takes only 10 seconds. The only thing the driver has to do is drive.

Once 8 bales are in place on the truck, the flatbed lifts up 90° to stack bales four high on the ground, unlike other big bale haulers that stack bales only three high.

The bale hauler is built on the frame of a 1990 L 9000 Ford semi. It's powered by the truck's stock 240 hp Cummins diesel engine and coupled with an Allison automatic transmission that the Frys installed.

The truck has a double-reinforced frame to handle the weight of a full load, which ranges from 28,000 to 36,000 lbs., depending on the type of 4 by 4 by 8-ft. bale.

Wheelbase is 150 in. from front axle to



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the floating axle on back. Front tires are 18 by 22.5 in. flotation tires and 31 by 48 by 20 in. tires mount on the front rear axle. The rear floating axle has low profile, 255/70R by 22.5 in. semi trailer tires.

Operation of all bale-handling components on the truck is completely hydraulic. The Fry Brothers have four different types of tines for varying types of big square bales.

“It's so fast it'll easily keep up with two Hesston balers. No other machine comes close to the speed and efficiency of this one,” Fry says.

By the time the machine comes on the market, there'll be a few minor improvements to enhance its versatility and performance even more, Fry says.

For example, the truck's sophisticated hydraulic system will be driven by a piston pump on the engine instead of a gear pump powered by a 52 hp Perkins diesel pony engine that currently mounts on the side of the truck.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Tom Fry, Fry Brothers, 09 351 Rd. 10, Montpelier, Ohio 43543 (ph 419 485-5325).

Add-On Turntable Rotates Bale 1/4 Turn

“We've tested the two automatic bale turntables we've built so far on over 10,000 bales of straw and 5,000 bales of hay. They make bale retrieval a lot easier,” says Tom Fry about the bolt-on bale turner he and his brother, Jerry, make for big square balers.

The idea is to turn the bale sideways as it comes out of the bale chamber. That makes it easier for the Fry Brothers' bale retrieval truck to pick up bales because it can travel in the same direction as the baler.

The turntable is 7 ft. square and built of box tubing and sheet metal. It's fitted with a pivoting arm along one side that's controlled by a 2 1/2 by 8 in. hydraulic cylinder. The mechanism, which is controlled by the baler's on-board computer, turns the 4 by 4 by 8 1-ton bales 1/4 turn sideways as they're pushed off the table.

One turntable rides on a single 95L by 14-in. tire, sufficient for lighter bales and smoother ground. The other rides on dual

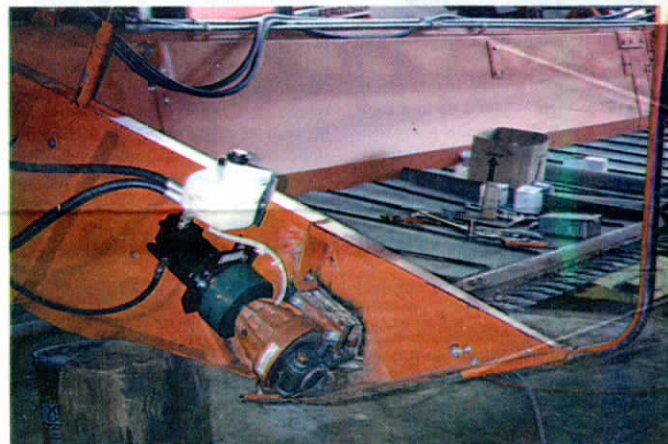


14-in. tires for heavier bales and rougher ground.

The Fry Brothers fabrication shop builds the turntables for Hesston 4800 and 4900 balers. It's easy to attach because it uses the same bolt holes as a 3-bale accumulator.

Fry Brothers plan to have their turntables on the market next winter.

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Possberg split the swather's 34-ft. long sicklebar in two and fitted the “extra” sickle with its own hydraulic motor.

34-FT. SICKLEBAR SPLIT IN TWO

“Double Drive” Swather Sicklebar

Leonard Possberg, Humboldt, Sask., converted a conventional swather into a “super swather” by splitting the machine's 34-ft. long sicklebar in two and fitting the “extra” sickle with its own hydraulic motor.

Possberg bought his Massey-Ferguson 200 self-propelled swather equipped with the 34-ft. header four years ago. “I came up with the idea of cutting the sicklebar in two because the original sicklebar broke a lot. It took a lot of time and money to repair and I was limited to swathing only in drier conditions.”

He cut the sicklebar so that one section is 14 ft. long and the other 20 ft. He mounted a hydraulic motor on the right side of the header along with an extra hydraulic oil reservoir.

The knives run completely independently of each other. To keep them from

hitting he added an extra 3-sickle section to the 14-ft. section, turning the three sickle sections upside down so they would run smoothly against the underside of the outside three sections on the other sicklebar. He used flat head bolts on the inverted sickle sections and widened out the sickle guards to make room for the doubled-up sections.

“I used it for the first time last year and was very pleased with it,” says Possberg. “I was able to cut in almost any moisture condition and to cut everything from ripe grain to tough slough grass. I was concerned that the two sicklebars running together could cause a lot of vibration, but I don't feel much extra vibration at all.”

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