

Tanker-Spreaders Clean Lagoon Out Fast

By C.F. Marley

When Leslie Johnston and sons, Mason, Ill., decide the time is right for hauling manure out of their hog lagoon, they make things happen fast with huge home-built spreaders.

They wanted the biggest equipment possible in order to take advantage of the hauling "window" that comes up after bean harvest and before corn harvest, which is when the ground is usually firm enough for spreading. Both of their big spreaders are pulled by 4-WD tractor.

The newest of the tankers has a capacity of 6,600-gal. and was built from a salvaged semi fuel tanker. It's equipped with a folding gravity-fed boom that spreads manure out over a 24-ft. width. The front end of the tanker is carried by a semi-truck dolly with a fifth wheel that

they call a "yard dog". A total of 16 wheels support the weight of the spreader, including the spreader's tandem axles and dolly wheels.

The Johnstons' older tanker carries 4,200 gal. and also mounts on tandem truck axles. "We originally rigged it for 12 wheels, but we normally don't need that many. Eight will do it, but we can add extra wheels if ground conditions call for them," says Leslie.

The 4,200-gal. spreader shoots manure out the side through a big 9-in. pipe. "We think our rear folding boom is an improvement," says Johnston.

Gates open and close on both tankers by way of hydraulic power. There are also gates on the undersides of the spreaders in case they're needed for cleanout.



"When everything goes right, we can spread 6 loads per hour with each tanker. That's when dumping nearby. We don't add any extra fertilizer on ground going to corn, except for nitrogen. Actually, we've found we can overdo manure

spreading. When we spread 3 or 4 years in a row, we test the soil so as not to overdo it," says Johnston.

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Do-It-Yourself Tractor Fenders

"While building a transport trailer that doubles as a quick way to move tractors between fields and farms, I came up with a cheap and easy way to make fenders out of plastic chemical barrels," says Robert Lee Greenwood, Bellwood, Neb.

"They cost very little since we used all salvaged parts. To start out I made mounting brackets out of 1/4 by 1 1/4-in. strap iron formed to match the arch of the tires. It's held in place by two L-shaped brackets, positioning the arch at the center of tire width and at least 2 in. above the tire surface.

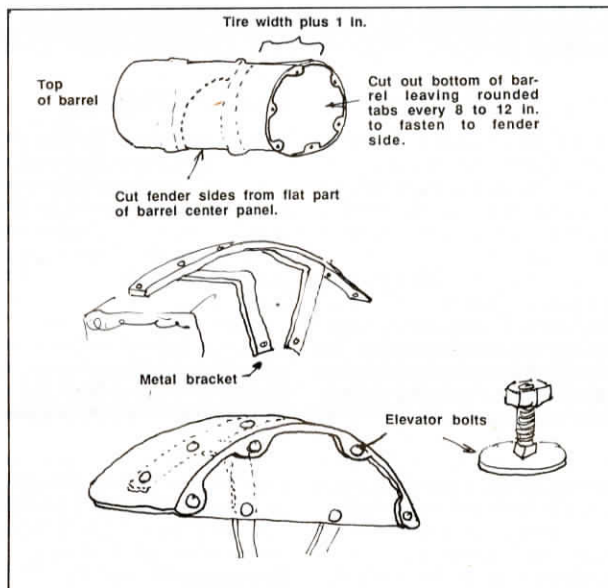
"I cut the fender out of the bottom of a plastic chemical drum and bolted it to the support bracket using large-headed bolts that are normally used to repair the paddles

on Deere clean grain elevators.

"The trick in making the fenders is to use the bottom of the drum for the feeder. The fender should be cut about 1-in. wider than the width of the tire and when you cut out the bottom of the barrel, leave rounded tabs every 8 to 12 in. to fasten the side of the fender to. The fender side can be cut from the flat part of the barrel center panel. Then use the elevator bolts to fasten the semi-circles to the sides of the fenders. The last step is to round off all the corners.

"These custom fenders are tough, flexible and rust-free."

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Old Plow Coulters Assemblies Convert Planter To No-Till

The high cost of converting his International 400 4-row planter to no-till prompted Chris Carlson, Bock, Minn., to look for a cheaper solution. He salvaged old International plow coulters assemblies and mounted new Deere extra-wide "fluted" coulters on them.

Carlson removed the coulters assembly units, including shank, arm, and coulters, from an old 4-bottom plow that he bought for \$120. He threw away the straight coulters and replaced them with new 17-in. dia., 1 3/4-in. wide "fluted" no-till coulters designed for Deere planters. The mounting holes on the Deere coulters were too big to fit the plow coulters hubs so he welded a pair of flat washers into each hole and then filed the washers out to match the size of the hub. He made mounting brackets by welding lengths of angle iron and 2 by 3-in. steel tubing together. He clamped one end of each bracket onto a coulters shank and cut a notch in the other end to fit over the toolbar, then bolted it on. The coulters run 2 to 3 ft. ahead of the planter's disc openers.

"I wasn't getting the stands I wanted because I pick about half my corn and the picker doesn't grind up corn stalks as well as a combine. My planter couldn't cut through them. Salvaging the plow coulters assemblies was cheaper than buying new no-till coulters assemblies



which can cost \$150 to \$200 per row. Each plow coulters assembly cost \$30 and I paid \$33 each for the new coulters so my total cost per row was only \$63. There are lots of old plows that can be purchased for \$50 to \$100. I painted the new coulters and the plow coulters assemblies red to match the planter.

"My coulters have shear-bolts instead of springs like most no-till planter coulters. They work great except where the ground is very hard. I keep my speed up at 6 1/2 mph to keep the coulters cutting right."

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Bean Bar Mounts On Cultivator Tractor

Edson Murrell, McCallsburg, Iowa, mounted a bean bar on front of his Deere 4020 tractor so a pair of riders can spot spray weeds as he cultivates.

Murrell bolted a 15-ft. length of 2 by 4-in. steel tubing to the front of the tractor and mounted two seats on it. A hydraulic pump delivers herbicide from a 20-gal. tank to a pair of spray wands. He cultivates the 30-in. rows at the same time with a 3-pt. mounted International 6-row cultivator.

"I had to spot spray weeds anyway so I thought I might as well cultivate at the

same time," says Murrell, who's used the system for four years. "I spot spray mainly to control cocklebur and velvetleaf and use a mixture of Roundup and 2,4-D. Each rider watches three rows. I had been hiring kids to walk beans, but they missed quite a few. My bean bar lets them see the weeds better and results in better weed control."

Murrell spent \$750 for the bean bar system.

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