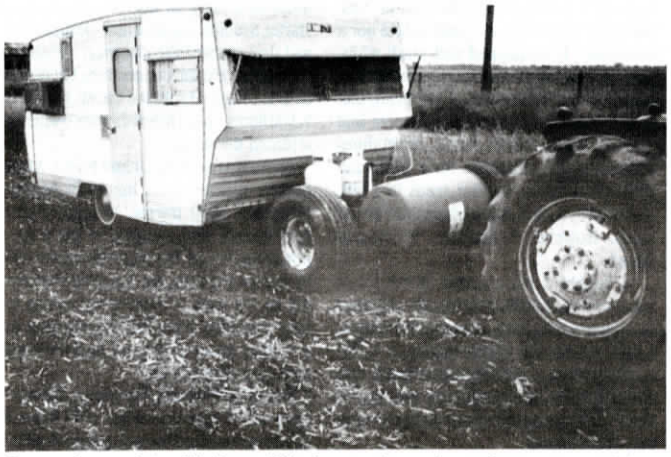


Camper is complete with air conditioning, running water and a propane cookstove.

Field Trailer Great Place To Take A Break

A used camper, complete with air conditioning, running water and a propane cookstove, serves as a portable office and lunchroom for Roland Schild, Greene County, Ill.

Schild bought the used camper for $600 and then adapted it for use in the field by making a 2-wheeled hitch out of the front axle off a wrecked wagon.

"It's nice to have when I'm several miles from home and need to take a break. It can be real refreshing," says Schild, who says he's got a cot, easy chair and refrigerator inside the trailer.

To make a hitch that would let him pull the camper with any tractor or pickup and allow the trailer to sit independently at the edge of the field, he mounted a ball hitch on the wagon gear. He first turned the axle upside down in order to get a lower hitch point for the socket ball. The axle was already equipped with a short tongue. He mounted a small gas engine driven standby generator on top of the tongue to provide electric power to the trailer. The generator is covered by half a plastic barrel.

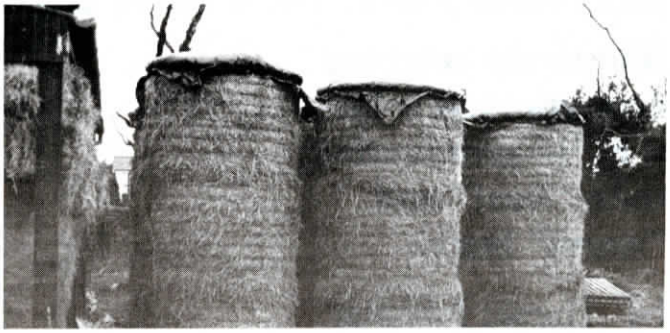
Fire Hose Great For Covering Bunker Silo

After he got tired of the yearly chore of putting tires on the plastic covering on his bunker silo, Kent Keller, Kinderhook, N.Y., bought 2 1/2-in. dia. fire hose and placed it around the outer edges of the bunker, then filled it with water to give it weight.

Keller got several 50-ft. lengths of wornout fire hose for free from his local fire department and hooked them together. He places both hose ends at the top of the 120-ft. long, 45-ft. wide bunker. He sticks a garden hose inside one end of the hose to fill it. After the hose is full, he kinks off each end. To drain the water he simply uncouples two of the hoses at the bottom of the bunker silo.

"It lets us remove the cover much quicker than we could with tires and provides a better seal for better feed quality without any air spaces," says Keller, who runs a dairy operation. "The weight of the water inside the hose provides a continuous seal all the way around. We add lengths of hose as we fill the bunker. We put up about three or four cuttings of new silage every year and remove the cover every time we add a cutting. We had been using tires to hold the cover down, but it was a lot of work to put them on and take them off. It takes only about 15 minutes to put the hose in place and fill it."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Kent Keller, Rt. 1, Box 446, Kinderhook, N.Y. 12106 (ph 518 758-7572).



Plastic "Hats" Keep Big Bales Dry

Here's an idea that's catching on fast with Irish farmers, according to Mike Donovan, publisher of PRACTICAL FARM IDEAS, a "what's new" publication for farmers and ranchers in Britain.

High rainfall in Ireland makes outside storage of bales difficult but farmers have started stacking bales on end and covering the top end of the top bale with a plastic cap.

A piece of poly is tied over the top of the bale with a turn or two of twine. Rain then runs down the sides of the bales with little damage to the hay or straw inside. Some farmers who've tried the idea suggest putting a bit of barnyard "muck" on top of the plastic in order to keep it from ripping off in the wind.

(PRACTICAL FARM IDEAS, P.O. Box 1, Whitland, Dyfed SA340H2 United Kingdom)

Car Hood Rock Skidder

"It's surprising how much you can haul on a car or truck hood," says Blaine Lundeen, Holcombe, Wis., who says he particularly likes the idea for hauling rocks out of fields.

"It's also amazing how big a rock you can skid out of a field on a hood. Because the hoods lie flat on the ground, they're easy to load. I just hook a chain on both sides of the back end of the hood and run the chain underneath the hood and pull from the front. The front of the hood tears off too easily if you hook onto it directly. We sell rocks to lake owners for $30 to $50 a pickup load. They use them along the shoreline.

"You can use car hoods to haul all kinds of things. Best of all, they're cheap."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Blaine Lundeen, Holcombe, Wis. 54745 (ph 715 595-6224).

Farm Machinery Co-op Celebrates 22 Years Of Successful Cooperation

In 1971, a group of Canadian farmers near Dafoe, Saskatchewan, began the Lakeside Machinery Co-operative. The original seven members were all under the same financial stress. Economic times were tough, grain prices were low, their machinery needed to be replaced, and most importantly, they wanted a way to help their sons get into farming.

The solution - after a year of planning - was to form a machinery cooperative as a legal entity. The written agreement, which spells out each member's rights and responsibilities, is renegotiated each year, taking into account changes in any member's land base.

A formal set of bylaws controls what happens if a member retires, dies, quites the co-op, or is asked to resign. It includes terms of equity payouts. For example, if one member retires or sells his farm, he'd have to give 90 days notice and would be paid his equity over a 3-year period to prevent financial drain on the organization.

Officers are elected at an annual meeting and include a president, vice president and secretary-treasurer. A coordinator is appointed to oversee the day-to-day work of seeding, spraying, harvesting and other jobs that need to be done. Informal meetings are held regularly to make joint decisions on cropping, marketing, harvesting and any other matter that needs input from all members.

Equity in Lakeside Co-op is determined by cultivated acres, owned or rented. Members build equity in machinery by having income deducted until land base and equity are equal. Each member has a much lower investment in machinery, equipment and buildings than if each farmed separately, says Glen Laxdal, one of the founding members.

Key to success of the co-op is that all Lakeside grain is pooled and each member owns a share of every bushel of grain, based on his percentage equity in the co-op. This feature eliminates the issue of whose field gets planted or harvested first. All decisions are made for the good of the group by majority vote.

Accurate accounting is important. Day-to-day bookkeeping is hired out and an accountant is brought in each year for an annual review and to give advice on taxation.

When the co-op started up, all members traded in their existing equipment for a new line of equipment that included two tractors, two combines, disks, grain drills, and grain trucks. As equipment needs have changed over the years, so have machinery needs. Today the co-op owns considerably more equipment.

The first few years, the co-op operated out of one member's farmyard. In 1976, a shop was built for maintenance and machinery storage on land bought by the co-op.

In 1979, the co-op grew its first field of pedigreed seed. Acreage devoted to pedigreed seed has since grown and is now an important part of the operation. The group started growing lentils in 1980 and now exports lentils to other countries. Their aim is to increase direct export sales in the future.

"Our pooled financial resources has encouraged us to test new options. As the risk to individuals has been reduced, it has been easier to try new crops, farming techniques, and equipment," says Laxdal, noting that there are currently five members in the co-op and all are sons of original members.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Glen Laxdal, Lakeside Machinery Cooperative, Dafoe, Sask. S0K 1C0 Canada (ph 306 554-2078 or 2086).

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