

Made It Myself

(Continued from previous page)



Articulated 4-WD "Mini Versatile" Tractor

"My 4-WD articulated 'mini Versatile' tractor works great for plowing snow or grading gravel. I built it in proportion to a big 4-WD tractor," says Jack Miller, Shellbrook, Sask.

The chore tractor measures 4 ft. wide, 8 ft. long, and 6 ft. high and is equipped with a 5 1/2-ft. wide blade in front. Miller built the rig by narrowing up two Datsun pickup rear axles and connecting them with a home-built articulation system that he made by welding together two spindles salvaged from the front wheels of a junked car. New 7.60 by 15 lugged swather tires are mounted on the axles.

To power his "mini Versatile", Miller used an "Epic" 4-cyl., 40 hp gas engine from an old Chevrolet compact car made in England. He also used the car's 4-speed manual transmission.

"It works well and is handy to use around my yard and feedlot. It'll pull a 2-bottom plow with ease. I spent only about \$2,500," says Miller, who built the tractor

six years ago. "I didn't build it to any particular scale and I didn't plan on making it look like a Versatile. However, as I put the tractor together it started looking more like one so I built a Versatile-style hood and painted the tractor orange and yellow. The cab is small and lined with black leatherette to keep it warm. When I'm plowing snow I can work in my shortsleeves even when the temperature outside is 30 degrees below zero. It also has a radio and cassette tape deck.

"The hydraulic system is off an old Massey Ferguson 4-WD tractor. There are two double-acting cylinders on the tractor - one in front to angle the blade and one in back that controls the steering."

The Datsun pickup differentials both work at the same speed ratio. Miller had to cut 1 ft. off each axle to make them fit the 4-ft. wide tractor frame.

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Low-Cost Wagon-Mounted Grain Cleaner

"It'll clean grain just as good or better than any commercial grain cleaner but it cost only \$200 to build," says Steve Espeland, Canton, S. Dak., who designed a low maintenance grain cleaner that mounts on top of an old flare box dump wagon.

Espeland paid \$100 for the wagon at a farm auction. He removed the screen from

an old rotary grain cleaner and flattened it out into a 4 by 8-ft. sheet and then mounted it inside a plywood frame. He used a pair of 2 by 4's to mount it at an angle above the wagon, to which he added 24-in. wooden side extensions.

"It cleans my corn quickly and efficiently. I've used it for three years with no problems," says Espeland. "It cleans grain



"Army Truck" Silage Wagon

Norman and Neil Westerlund, Aitkin, Minn., converted an Army 6-WD truck into a self-unloading silage truck by mounting an old silage wagon box on top of the truck frame and using a hydraulic pump to operate the unloading chain.

"It goes through mud and snow very well and has a gas engine so it starts good, even in cold weather," says Neil, who uses the truck to fill feedbunks for his 200 beef cows.

Westerlund bought the truck with a stripped-down frame from a local town's fire department. He used a chain saw to

cut off the top part of the wooden box from an old H & S self-unloading wagon, leaving the sides 4 1/2 ft. high. He lengthened the unloading conveyor by 3 ft. so he wouldn't have to get as close to the feedbunks. Power is supplied by a hydraulic pump that's belt-driven off the engine. The pump powers an orbit motor that mounts in place of wagon's pto shaft. An on-off valve mounts inside the truck cab.

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Parking Lot Gate Keeps Cattle In

After trying different types of gates on the feedlot next to his barn, Orville Ioder, Bradford, Ill., finally came up with the idea of installing an electric-powered commercial parking lot gate to keep cattle in.

"It's the best cattle gate I've ever seen. For many years, I had a drive-over gate that consisted of three spring-loaded electrified wires positioned just off the ground and about a foot apart. That idea worked quite well but I had two problems. One was that a wire would occasionally catch on a hitch pin or something else. The second problem occurred when I started using cornstalks for bedding. A loose stalk would short the wires out," says Ioder.

"My son, Randall Ioder who works for Spoon River Industries (252 Larch Lane, Lexington, Kent. 40505) gave me this

new idea. He installs and maintains parking lot gates and surveillance cameras and had a number of good used gates on hand. He provided me with two gates and put radio receivers in them so I could use a remote control to open and close them.

"These gates were originally designed for a 7-ft. long 1 by 4-in. arm that raised up vertically. Since I wanted to use a 14-ft. long 2 by 4-in. arm, we had to counterbalance it with a 35-lb. weight. We also installed electric fence wire along the length of the arm to keep cattle away.

"New parking lot gates cost about \$1,500. However, used gates can be bought for much less. For me it was even cheaper since I got the gates from my son for nothing."

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as fast as a 6-in. auger can deliver it and removes 90% of the fines. I use the wagon hoist, which is powered by tractor hydraulics, to control the angle of the screen. The wetter the corn, the higher I raise the wagon. I raise it just high enough to keep the corn moving down the screen so that it has maximum cleaning time. I mounted a gauge valve between the hoist cylinder and a hydraulic fitting. After I raise the wagon to the desired angle I shut off the valve to keep the wagon from dropping back down. Then I unhook the tractor and use it to operate one of the augers. After grain drops off the cleaning screen, it

drops out a wooden chute at the back of the wagon into an unloading auger.

"My rotary cleaner had a motor and a lot of moving parts that required maintenance. This grain cleaner has no moving parts except for the augers. With the rotary cleaner I had to use a skid steer loader to remove the fines. When this wagon gets full of fines, I simply pull it wherever I want to dump the fines, open the end gate and dump them."

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