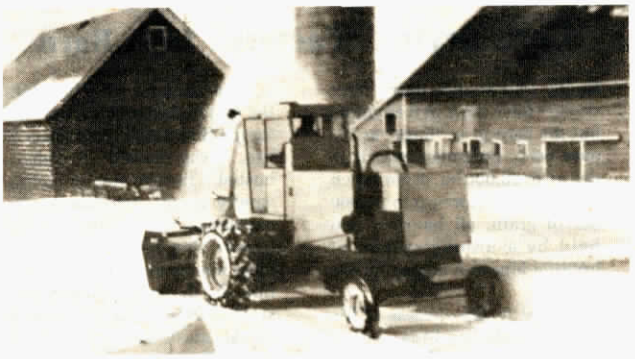


Old Combines Make Great Snow Blowers

Old combines make great snowblowers — if you cut off most of the old tin, build a new frame, add a 3-pt. and equip them with a second engine. Two Iowa farmers who did it say their snow-handling problems are over.

Art Vanderpol and Walt Sievert, neighbors who farm near Ashton, got together last winter and turned an old Case 900 combine from the late 1960's into a snowblower most any city would be proud to own.

"We practically stripped the entire machine," says Vanderpol. "The only components used from the original machine were the drive train, tires, cab, operator's platform and the engine."

The two men built an 8-in. channel iron frame around the chassis of the combine. Then, they mounted the cab between the front wheels of the machine and installed two engines on the rear. The combine's original slant-6 Chrysler engine sits in back and drives the V-belt, variable speed drive. A GMC 350 cu. in. V-8 powers the pto shaft in front which runs the snowblower.

"The 3-speed transmission with variable speed drive lets you maneuver easily into corners or over tough ground while the second engine, which powers the blower, runs at full power for maximum blowing capacity. Power feeding out the back of the front engine runs V-belts which convert to roller chain which, in turn, powers the pto shaft at 1,000 rpm's. We mounted a standard Cat. II 3-pt. hitch on front that'll carry any snowblower, or other 3-pt. mounted equipment," says Vanderpol.

All controls were fed into the original cab so the original control panel can be used. There are dual sets of gauges for the two engines. The blower on front is an 8-ft. Lundell blower, a brand which Vanderpol sells on his farm.

"The advantage of this design is that it puts most of the weight over the drive wheels, which gives it great traction and maneuverability," points out Vanderpol.

He says the combine snowblower took six weeks to build and cost about $1,000, not counting the blower itself. He and his partner say they would be willing to build similar machines for other farmers or local communities — using almost all used parts — for $4,000 to $5,000.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Art Vanderpol, Ashton, Iowa 51232 (ph 712 724-6126).

Vacuum Sampler For Grain Bins

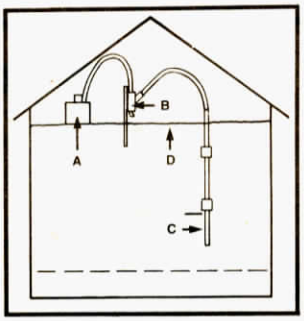
It's important to know moisture content at different locations in a grain bin, but it's often a tough job to sample with a conventional probe when moisture content of the grain is above 20%.

Here's an easier way — a vacuum grain sampler that you can make with a few simple, inexpensive materials. Designed by William Peterson, University of Illinois agricultural engineer, it runs on an ordinary shop vacuum cleaner fitted with two 10-ft. sections of 1¼-in. dia. flexible hose. The hoses attach to a 3-in. dia. plastic sewer "Y" with a 2-in. dia. elbow and plug. The probe itself is made of 5-ft. sections of 1¼-in. dia. steel thin-wall conduct with fittings.

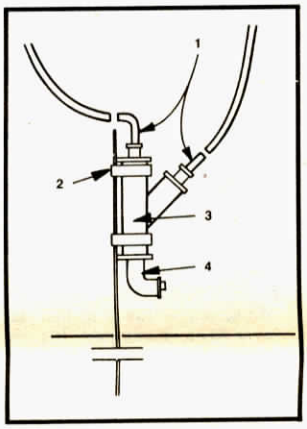
With the vacuum turned on, the probe sucks its way down into the grain. You add steel conduit sections as you go deeper. The grain sample collects in the chamber of the "Y" and can be emptied by removing the plug. More samples can be taken as the probe is pulled up through the corn.

Here's a couple cautions by Peterson: "Be sure the vacuum cleaner will fit through the roof hatches of your bin, and keep the fittings tight on the conduit so you don't lose a section of pipe. It's hard to retrieve from the bottom of the bin."

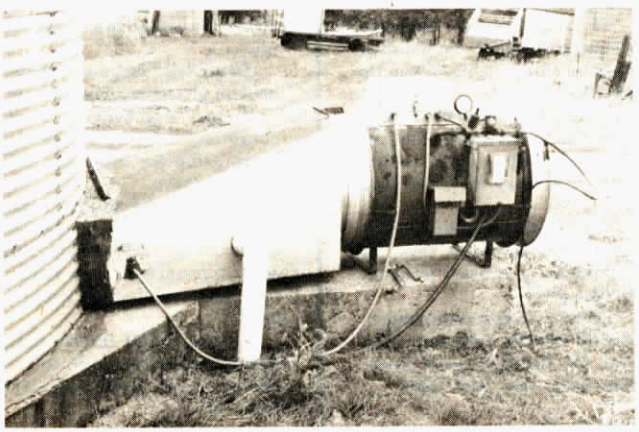
A sheet of instructions with a sketch of the probe is available from Peterson. In Illinois it can be picked up at county extension offices. Others should send a stamped, self-return envelope to: FARM SHOW Followup, Agricultural Engineering Dept., University of Illinois, 1208 W. Peabody, Urbana, Ill. 61801.



A. Shop vacuum. B. Plug (see accompanying drawing). C. Probe, made of 5 ft., 1¼-in. dia. steel thinwall conduits with standard fittings. D. Grain surface.



Closeup of plug B. 1. 1¼-in. adapters. 2. Clamp or tape plastic "Y" to rod or section of conduit to serve as a stand. 3. 3 in. dia. plastic sewer "Y". 4. 2 in. elbow. Don't glue — elbow must slip out to collect sample.



Warmer Solves LP "Freeze-Up"

"It was a big problem whenever we dried corn," says Robert Spereslage about the LP tank freeze-up problem that used to bring corn drying to a halt during busy harvest days when LP consumption was at its peak. Here's how he eliminated the freeze-up problem on his Greeley, Iowa farm.

"The tank usually froze up when it was down to about 1/3 full and when consumption was at its peak. We'd get thick cakes of ice on the side of the tank and would either have to wait for the tank to thaw or have the tank refilled."

He solved the problem by running a length of 4-in. dia. PVC pipe from the fan housing on the drying bin, where a small amount of warm air is captured, to the base of the Lp tank about 50 ft. away. The pipe comes up underneath the tank and blows warm air directly onto the tank whenever the dryer is in operation. Spereslage covers the tank with canvas to act as a tent to aid the warming process. The pipe is buried 12 to 14 in. under ground.