

Wet Fields Don't Bother Flying Farmer

By Dieter Krieg

SWAMPY FURROWS — As much as the wet field conditions are causing a lot of grief for anxious sodbusters, one innovative and resourceful Pennsylvania farmer isn't letting the muddy fields bother him too much.

Hans Hubschrauber, (that's him, flying the helicopter, above) is getting the jump on his neighbors by attacking his field work with his own air force. Having 1050 acres to prepare for corn, soybeans, spaghetti, and cotton, the 37-year-old former Air Force pilot is wasting no time to get his work done.

Using a slightly modified Augusta-Bell 204 helicopter, Hubschrauber has found his "aerial tractor" to be ideal for a number of jobs, including manure spreading.

During an interview today (April 1) Hubschrauber told Lancaster Farming that he likes the aerial application of manure procedure because there is no change of a tailwind splattering him with the home-made fertilizer. The blades of the big chopper force the manure down, allowing for better penetration of the soil and faster availability of plant nutrients to hungry weeds. Then when the weeds are off

to a good start, Hubschrauber hops into his helicopter again. This time he's armed with herbicides. The weeds die and provide good organic material for a better soil texture. Seeding is the next step, and as you may have guessed, it's also done by helicopter.

The depth of planting, says Hubschrauber, is controlled by the velocity of the chopper's rotating blades and the hardness of the soil. Under wet conditions such as shown in the picture, he'd drive kernels of corn about eight inches into the soil if his chopper's rotating blades are going at top speed. Hubschrauber is careful, therefore, to not have the blades spinning too fast.

"It works out real fine," he chuckled, "but you do have to be careful not to slow down too much."

"I really enjoy farming this way," said the Pennsylvania farmer. "I get a good view of my fields, I can spy better than ever before on what my neighbors are doing, and when I'm not using the chopper for field work, I can use it to fly to town or on vacation trips."

The chopper requires only minor modification, Hubschrauber revealed. Primarily, it was just a matter of installing a power-take-off shaft and two winches from which implements can be suspended by cables. His equipment needed minor changes as well. For example, he had to install a special gear box on his power-take-off-driven manure spreader to allow for the new direction of the shaft. Once that's all taken care of, there's no problem at all in being able to make sharp turns or "riding" over rough terrain.

Editor's note: If your first impression to the above story is "I don't believe it," you are 100% right. "The only thing Hans Hubschrauber was spreading was laughter for April Fool's Day," explains Dieter Krieg, editor of Lancaster Farming who originated the idea and wrote the story for his paper's April 1 edition. Our thanks to Dieter and Lancaster Farming for tickling our funny bone.

Perhaps the "air borne" spreader triggered some ideas on new inventions you'd like to see. If so, we'd like to hear from you. Mail us a description of your "far out" idea and perhaps a drawing or two to illustrate it. We'll share these new ideas for new inventions with FARM SHOW readers in an upcoming issue. Mail your ideas to: **New Inventions I'd Like to See, FARM SHOW Magazine, 8500 210th Street, Lakeville, Mn. 55044.**



Hans Hubschrauber takes to the air to get field work done.

Lancaster Farming photo by Dieter Krieg.

CAN YOU GUESS WHAT IT'S FOR?

"Non-Profit Cart"

Only about half of the farmers who walked by the "non-profit cart" at its first public showing could guess what it's for.

How about you? Before reading further, take a look at the photo. What do you suppose the non-profit cart is for?

If you're a hog producer, you probably had no trouble figuring out that it's a dead pig carrier, designed to move large, heavy dead sows, boars or barrows out of crates, stalls, pens or wherever. "We think it might have some other uses, such as toting bags of feed or bales of bedding," Jack DeVos, general manager of Delphi Products, told FARM SHOW.

The company's new non-profit cart is equipped with a winch and 5/16 in. cable for use in loading dead carcasses up to 700 lbs. onto the cart. You slip the cable on the animal's snout or head. As the cable is winched up, it slides the cart under the animal. "You keep cranking until the animal's weight is balanced on the back wheels," explains DeVos.

The frame is made of 1 in. pipe. The 6 in. dia. wheels are equipped with ball bearings for easy, one-man portability of heavy loads up to 700 lbs.



Jack DeVos demonstrates winch assembly on the "non-profit" cart.

Sells for \$100, fob, complete with wheels and rubber tires.

For more details, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Delphi Products Co., Delphi, Ind. 46923 (ph. 303-572-3752).



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