Mulch Finisher Modified To Solve Ridging Problem

Steve Warters wasn't happy with his 1984 Deere 722 mulch finisher because it left big ridges. The Tuscola, Ill., farmer solved the problem by changing the angle of the disk gangs and reversing the position of the disk blades on each gang.

The mulch finisher was equipped with four sets of disk gangs in front followed by cultivator sweeps and a harrow. Each gang was factory set at a 9 degree angle to the frame. Warters reversed the direction of the disk blades so they would pull soil in toward the center of the tillage tool instead of pushing it out. He did it by swapping blades on the left side of each gang with the blades on the right side, moving the left outside blade to the right outside position, the second-to-left blade to the second-to-right position, and so on. He also changed the angle of each gang from 9 to 7 degrees by cutting apart the frame and moving one end of the gang slightly backward.
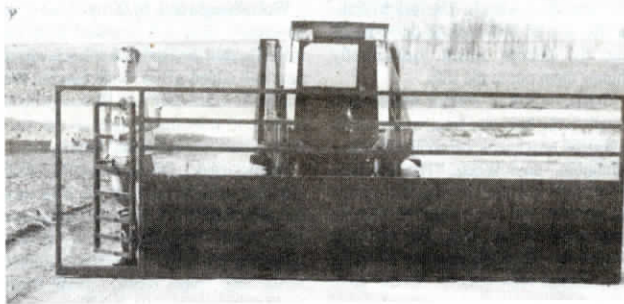
"As originally built it was a very poor tillage tool because it tended to push soil out past the cultivator sweeps, leaving big ridges with no way to level them out," says Warters. "I've used this modified rig over a lot of ground. It works so well that three other farmers asked me to modify their mulch finishers the same way. I made the changes after I found out my dealer wanted $12,500 - plus my old disk - to trade up to a new model. I figured I could make a lot of mistakes with my welder for that much money. Deere later came out with a model similar to mine, but it's not built as heavy."

Reversing the direction of the disk gangs left a 16 in. wide untilled strip at the center of the tillage tool. To solve the problem, Warters bolted a pair of disk hillers (designed for a Buffalo ridge till cultivator) under the hitch at the center of the frame. The disk hillers are bolted to a steel plate that bolts to the frame. Depth can be easily adjusted as needed.

He also modified the mulch finisher's self-leveling hitch by lengthening the pivot assembly so that the harrow won't drag on the road. He welded a pair of 1/2-in. thick steel plates onto the hitch to move the pivot point 4 in. farther back. "The problem was that if the hitch was level in field position, the mulch finisher tilted rearward on the road which caused the harrow to drag. Now the mulch finisher stays level whether it's up or down," notes Warters.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Steve Warters, Box 198, Tuscola, Ill. 61953 (ph 217 253-4530).

Old Volkswagen Converted Into All-Terrain Vehicle

"It'll walk right through a swamp," says Jake Langer, St. Paul, Minn., about the Volkswagen car he and his son and grandson converted into an all-terrain vehicle.

The car is powered by a 40 hp 4-cylinder gas engine and has a 4-speed transmission. Langer installed hydraulic steering by connecting up a pair of master brake cylinders to the steering wheel. When he turns the steering wheel to the left, it activates the left master cylinder which applies the brake on the left wheel, and vice versa on the right. Foot pedal brakes work independently of the steering wheel.

Langer used reinforced rubber belting and aluminum cleats to make the 10-in. wide, 8-ft. long tracks. He mounted a 2-wheeled trailer axle on springs between the front and rear axles and cut grooves across the tread of the rear drive tires to improve their grip on the belts.

"The springs on the middle axle give it a smooth ride. The belts have so much traction that the car can climb right up the steepest inclines. At one time we used a hydraulically-operated snowplow in front," says Langer.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Jake Langer, Truck Utilities Mfg. Co., 2370 English St. at Hwy. 36, St. Paul, Minn. 55109 (ph 612 484-3305).

Hog-Sorting Gate Mounts On Skid Steer Loader

A 15 1/2-ft. wide gate that mounts on the quick coupler at the front of a skid steer loader makes it easy to sort hogs, says Phil Short, Winthrop, Iowa, who raises hogs in open front pens.

"Our pens are 16-ft. wide so we made the gate about a half a foot narrower so it would easily fit between the walls of the pens. The gate lets us crowd the hogs to one end of the pen. Then we sort them for size through a small door that we built into one end.

"We covered the bottom 2 ft. of the gate with a steel panel so hogs can only see through the smaller door, which really helps in sorting them. The frame of the gate is made of square tubing. A 3 by 3-in. square tube along the bottom of the gate provides the strength."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Phil Short, 3036-370th St., Winthrop, Iowa 50682 (ph 319 934-3773).

"Range Cake" Storage Bin Built From Hopper Bottom Truck Box

"I feed 'range cake' to my cows on pasture and had to shovel the feed from a truck into my pickup, then from the pickup onto the ground. I made the job much easier by building a feed hopper out of an old 20-ft. hopper bottom truck box and mounting a dump box on a 1-ton pickup so I can unload on-the-go," says Tim Bruckner, Malta, Mont.

The truck box storage hopper mounts 6 ft. off the ground on a frame made out of steel pipe and other miscellaneous parts.

"It holds 13 tons and really works slick," says Bruckner. "To unload, I back my dump truck under it and open a slide. The truck is equipped with a 12-ft. dump box and hoist. I built it out of a 4-door crew cab pickup. The back of the box has a narrow V-shaped opening so I can dump feed out in a narrow row. I can feed 300 cows in about 10 minutes. I can also use the box to haul two round bales at a time and dump them off."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Tim Bruckner, HC 65, Box 6180, Malta, Mont. 59538-9602 (ph 406 658-2111).

Sliding Door

A standard overhead garage door opener can be easily adapted to open sliding doors, says Kansas farmer Homer Riffey.

He simply bolted the track of a chain-type opener to the header joist above a 7 by 8-ft. sliding garage door. Then he bolted a steel bracket to both the upper corner of the door and to the sliding bracket on the opener track. There was no modification at all to the opener and the emergency release on the opener still works if the power goes out.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Homer Riffey, Rt. 2, Box 166, Westphalia, Kan. 66093.

Opener Track

Header

Bracket Between Door And Opener

Door Track

Door