

Grain Head Mounts On Self-Propelled Forage Harvester

When Bill Richter started growing oats and wheat as feed to supplement his corn, clover and hay crops, the Erie, Pa., farmer knew he either had to buy a combine or find a way to bring in the crop using his self-propelled forage harvester. The problem was he didn't want to chop up and harvest all that straw.

Richter decided to mount a grain head on his forage harvester.

"We're now able to use one machine to harvest wheat and oats as well as hay and silage and snapping corn, spreading the cost of the harvester over more acres and reducing the fixed cost per acre," he says. "The best part is that it took only minor remodeling in our shop to mount the head on the harvester."

Richter, who feeds 400 to 500 beef cattle, uses a Deere 5440 self-propelled forage harvester that he bought used for \$24,000. To improve performance, he equipped it with a special cutter knife kit made by Alan Mammoser, a product Richter read about in FARM SHOW.

He mounted a 13-ft. Deere small grains head on the self-propelled harvester using

a Deere adapter plate.

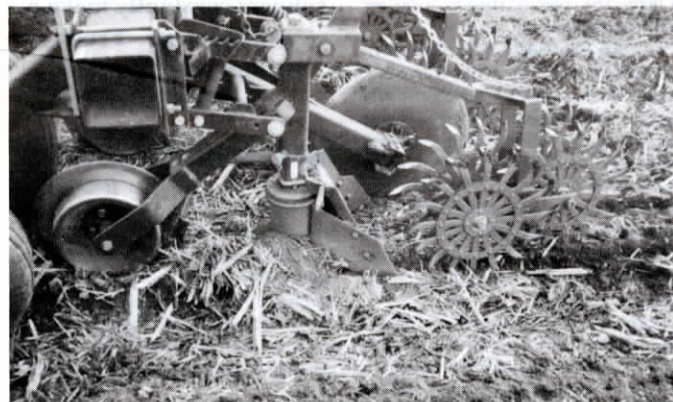
"We had to change the end of the drive shaft on the header and put different sprockets on it because gearing was too fast for the harvester," Richter explains. "We've run it on over 700 acres in the last three years and it works great."

"We cut oats or wheat for silage just below the head when it's in the late dough stage," he says. "We cut the straw stubble later, whenever it's convenient, and bale it for bedding."

Richter adds 8 to 10 lbs of anhydrous ammonia on-the-go to each ton of feed he cuts. That increases the level of protein enough to eliminate the need for additional protein in the feed.

He applies the anhydrous from a 124-gal. propane tank with special brass fittings that mounts on the back of the forage harvester. A trip rope in the cab activates the system, which injects ammonia from two hoses into silage as it enters the blower fan.

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Rotary Hoe Wheels "Strip Till" Ridges

"They help dry out the soil so that I can plant earlier and also help control weeds," says Mark Dallmann, Lake Lillian, Minn., who mounted two pairs of rotary hoe wheels behind each of the Hiniker horizontal rotating disc sweeps on his 8-row ridge till toolbar.

Each pair of rotary hoe wheels float up or down independently on a bracket that pivots up or down on a single bolt that acts as a hinge. The wheels are spaced 6 in. apart, with the back pair offset so that there's 3 in. of space between every wheel.

The Hiniker rotating disc sweeps are designed to shave soil off the top of ridges without loosening the ground. They're normally pulled ahead of a row-crop planter. Dallmann mounted a 3-pt. hitch on front of the toolbar and attached the hoe wheels on back to lightly till the cleared-off ridges.

"It fractures the soil and makes a nice, clean seedbed that dries fast. I can often

plant only an hour or two later," says Dallmann. "I had been using Buffalo Ridge Runners mounted in front of my Deere 7000 MaxEmerge 8-row planter. However, the furrow opener discs and gauge wheels often tended to plug up in moist soil. I eliminated plugging problems by making a separate pass through to strip-till."

"They cost far less and work better than intersecting row cleaners which just shave off the top of the ridge without fracturing the soil. They also work better than a conventional rotary hoe used in a separate pass ahead of the planter because the rotating disc sweeps scrape off the top of the ridge and throw weed seeds between the rows."

"I've built some units for other farmers."

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Salvaged Elevator Equipment Used For Wet Holding Bin

To help make harvest work flow more smoothly, Art Leefers, Carlinville, Ill., needed to find a large wet holding bin that would allow his combines to keep on working while grain dried.

After extensive scouting, he bought a 10,000 bu. bin and an 85-ft. elevator leg from a closed grain elevator. He had to disassemble them to get them to his farm and then refurbish them to get them into operating condition since they had sat idle for several years. For example, many of the buckets on the elevator were rusted out and had to be replaced.

Grain is dried automatically in a dryer next to the big holding bin and then augered to a horizontal storage building. Leefers, who feeds cattle in addition to raising grain, says the set up worked out so well he's looking for another holding bin. With all the elevator closings that have occurred over the past decade, he expects to find what he



needs at a bargain price.

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Chopper Chains Work Great On Combine

"Ten years ago when my two-row Case-IH silage chopper blew up in the field, it just so happened that my Massey combine needed new gathering chains. So I decided to try putting the gathering chains off the chopper on the combine head and made some fascinating discoveries," says Odessa, Minn., farmer Darrell Roehl.

For one thing, the chopper chains work great for picking up down corn. For another, they do a much cleaner job of combining standing corn.

"There are twice as many fingers on chopper gathering chains than on combine gathering chains, so you get twice the gather-

ing action," notes Roehl. "You can really tell the difference."

Roehl put the two chopper gathering chains on the outside row units of his 6-row Massey 443 combine. He says he'd put them on other rows if he had them.

"I haven't seen any disadvantages, like getting too aggressive," Roehl says. "They're even the same number roller chains as on the combine so you don't have to modify anything. They fit perfectly on the combine head."

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He Lets Cattle Graze Standing Corn

You can eliminate combining and drying costs as well as save a lot of money on your feeding program by rotationally grazing cows on standing corn stalks, according to Chuck Cornillie.

"The concept will work anyplace corn is cheap and hay is high-priced," says the Byron, Mich., beef producer who began rotationally grazing his 75 cows in strips of standing corn last fall.

Cornillie grows corn in six- and eight-row strips alternating with strips of soybeans. Strip cropping is perfect for rotationally grazing corn, he says, partly because it allows the field closest to the barn to be used for corn-grazing every year. He plants corn into soybean strips the fol-

lowing year.

With the rotational grazing program, cows eat about 18 lbs. of corn and 8 to 9 lbs. of corn stalks, supplemented with 7 lbs. of hay, per day per head. That compares with 36 lbs. of hay, supplemented with about 5 lbs. of corn, per day per head before.

That cut early winter feeding costs from about \$1.17 per cow per day to about 72 cents. Savings for the whole herd is about \$34 a day.

Cornillie, who calves in the third week in January, says grazing corn in December helps get the cows in condition for calving. (Wallace's Farmer)