

walker concept, which is an antiquated idea. I installed a full circle "Stuecklized" concave to help cut down on walker loss. We've had Deere technicians come out a couple times and they just shrug their shoulders in the end and drive off. Another problem is that all meter shafts and bearings are metric so if Deere doesn't have what you need, you can't cross over and use commonly available bearings.

"I plan to look real hard at Gleaner combines since several of my combining associates are real happy with their R-62 and 72 series machines. No gearboxes on the rotor drive, easy servicing and repair, and an air-cooled motor."

**Case-IH:** "These combines have been improved every year since we bought our first ones in 1987," reports the Kansas owner of 1993 Case-IH 1688's. "Good power and capacity and puts an excellent sample in the bin. Few problems.

"The headers are the weakest part of the combines. The wobble box sickle drives need improvement. Both corn and grain heads require high upkeep.

"Case-IH Pro Harvest Support is a great aid to custom harvesters. I can't say enough about these people."

**Deere:** "Our 1993 Deere 9600's are pretty trouble-free except for electrical problems. Control boxes burn up and circuits go out often so we're constantly messing with them. Another problem is that the grain platforms don't feed evenly. However, we'd buy 9600's again because of high resale value and parts availability. Deere's harvest support trailers are great. We replace combines every three years and buy all the same model so they're all serviced the same."

**Case-IH:** "It does good work but needs improvement," says the Texas owner of a 1991 Case-IH 1680. "They should beef up the unloading augers, improve the cleaning system, install grease banks, and the ladder is awkward, weak and difficult to remove when transporting the machine. The new guards on the sickle bar are not as good as the old ones were. You have to use shims to put guards on. The cheap safety shields are hard to attach and short lived on the headers. The Cummins engine has been trouble, causing lots of down time. Broken injector lines, oil leaks. I fixed one myself in the timing gear cover but haven't been able to solve all the problems yet."

**Gleaner:** Grain quality and low grain loss are the two things this Kansas operator likes about his 1993 Gleaner R-72's. "I've cut with both Case-IH and Deere before and the Gleaner does the best job. However, it needs more horsepower primarily due to the fact that the rotor requires a tremendous amount of horsepower. Light switches should be relocated, black paint should be improved, they need to remove one of the two cab air filters for quicker service, and then make the air ducts dirt tight so the air has to go through the filter instead of the holes in the duct system. Great cab but poor lights. Dirt and moisture get inside lenses.

"I put a false floor in the feederhouse to prevent rattle chain from coming off. New '94 models have them installed at the factory.

"If I were buying a new combine, I'd buy the new Gleaner R-72 because they have gone to the L10 Cummins which should be a big plus for power and keeping the engine compartment more dust-free because the radiator fan will blow the dirt out. The air-cooled engine compartment fills up with dirt."

**Case-IH:** "For 20 years we ran Deere combines but then switched to Case-IH in the 1980's because of their rotary design," says an Oklahoma harvester. "For three years their performance was unparalleled but then, in 1991, we noticed a substantial change in metal fatigue. After rebuilding many engines - our downtime in 1991 was unbelievable - we decided they had lightened metal and changed vendors to cut costs. That affected durability and resale value. For that reason, we are presently changing back to Deere.

"One problem we have cursed and discussed constantly since 1988 is the sickle drives, which are poorly constructed and do not last. Pulleys split apart and sickle sections get dull because of light weight and cheap materials. We modified the cutter-bars ourselves to work better than new."

**Deere:** "I'm satisfied with my Deere 9600 and 9500 combines but on hillsides they lose a lot of grain over the sieves," says an Oklahoma harvester. "To help solve the problem on hillsides, I took out the plastic insert fingers on back of the sieves and made some with only three wires for hillsides. Works a lot better. You can't remove the whole thing because the return will choke up."

**Case-IH:** A South Dakota operator likes the simplicity and performance of his 1991 Case-IH 1680's but has several suggestions for improvement. "Equip it with a better cab and move the feederhouse out so you can see the back of the header. Beef up the concave supports so they'll take tough beans without bending and beef up chaffer sieve arms so they won't bend or break. The rock trap box should also be strengthened. The engine compartment should be sealed so it'll stay clean without gathering dirt, chaff, etc. The final drives and hydros need to be improved so they'll handle mud and duals better. Make the grate adjustment easier and beef up the concave adjuster crank.

"I'm basically happy with the headers available but we have had trouble with the wobble box on 30-ft. heads. Would like to see a 'catcher' on cornheads to catch cobs flying forward."

**Gleaner:** "Our three 1992 R-72 Gleaners are the easiest machines on the market to adjust to changing crop conditions. They're

### "Gleaners are the easiest machines on the market to adjust."

also unsurpassed for capacity," says this Kansas custom operator.

"Suggestions for improvement are that they could make the machine easier to grease and I would like to be able to adjust the concave from the cab.

"We've used MacDon draper headers for the past three years and they've done a good job. They feed the machine much better than conventional auger headers. We've had some mechanical problems with the 1993 model."

**New Holland:** "Ford New Holland service people are available and ready to help with any problem, small or large, at any time," says the owner of two 1986 New Holland TR96's. "They listen to customers and try to change and improve. We have run test machines and test parts for New Holland and they're always there making sure



A silo blower mounted on back of Hibbs's Deere combine blows cobs into a tow-behind wagon. He sells cobs to a nearby processor.

## MODIFIED SILO BLOWER LOADS COBS INTO TRAILING WAGON

# "Cob-Catcher" Mounts On Back Of Combine

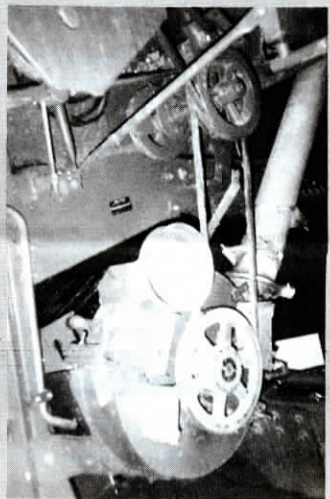
"We net \$15 to \$25 per acre for cobs. That's enough to make our combine payments," says Rick Hibbs, Conrad, Iowa, who mounted a "cob catcher" on the back of his Deere 9600 combine that lets him catch cobs at the back of the combine and blow them into a trailing wagon.

Hibbs sells cobs to a nearby processor that turns them into a variety of products. He predicts many more markets will develop as more cobs become available.

Key to success of his cob-saving system is a home-built finger grate that he installs at the back of the combine. Crop residue drops onto the grate as it comes off the sieves. Husks and other lightweight material slide backward on top of the finger grate and eventually drop off onto the ground, while the heavier cobs fall down through the fingers into a 6-in. dia. auger mounted across the back of the combine. The auger carries cobs into a 24-in. Badger silo blower that blows them back into the trailing wagon.

Another modification Hibbs makes is to cut holes in the straw walkers that allow cobs to drop down on to the chaffer sieve. Hibbs says the holes can be easily plugged when combining other crops and says the modification hasn't affected resale of machines.

"We get about 60 percent of the cobs but it's cost effective because of the low up-front investment," says Hibbs, who's put together a packet of information and will consult with other farmers (for a \$120 fee)



Combine chopper drive belt-drives silo blower and cross auger at back of combine.

to help them make the modifications themselves. He says the idea works well with straw walkers and could be adapted to rotary combines, too.

For more information, write (no phone calls, please): FARM SHOW Followup, Rick Hibbs, Cob King, P.O. Box 161, Conrad, Iowa 50621.

everything's adjusted right.

"We've fitted the combine with an air-flow chaffer from St. John's Welding, St. Johns, Kan., different rotors from Ford New Holland, and we reinforced the bottoms on the elevators, grain tank, and header with Teflon.

"One problem I had when I first got the combines was that I couldn't keep chaff off the rotor screen or radiator and had to sweep them off with a broom at each end of the field. I took them apart several times and couldn't figure it out. When I called Ford New Holland, they had a man out in the field the next morning and he discovered that the factory had forgotten to put seals in the screens. He installed them in both machines

and they worked fine. We'll buy our next combines from Ford New Holland."

**Deere:** "Our 1991 Deere 9600's have never had a breakdown and they do a very good job. The only complaint is straw walker loss in heavy straw and excessive dust coming out of the feederhouse. However, I think these combines will last much longer than the IH machines I used to run."

**Case-IH:** An Oklahoma harvester with five 1993 Case-IH 1688's is satisfied with his machines but has several suggested improvements. "They need a fold-up ladder, better visibility, a better air cleaning system, and a better fuel filter system. Also,

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