



Jim and Bob Sorenson pull a 350 bu. grain cart behind their Deere 8820.



Cart auger has to be far enough back so combine auger can swing unobstructed over front edge of cart and empty into it.

ALLOWS OPERATOR TO MAKE FULL ROUND WITHOUT UNLOADING

'Tag-Along' Combine Grain Carts Catching On Fast

By Harold Johnson, Editorial Director

That farmer-built "tag-along" combine grain cart we told you about in FARM SHOW two years ago (Vol. 7, No. 2, 1983) is catching on fast, especially with ridge-till corn farmers.

Here's the idea: You hook a tag-along cart behind your combine to get enough extra carrying capacity so you can make full rounds without having to stop somewhere in the field to unload. In addition to saving valuable time, you eliminate considerable wear and tear on trucks and hauling wagons since they don't have to be driven into the field, over bumpy ridges, to meet the combine. What's more, in muddy conditions, a two wheel tag-along cart can work as a load transfer device, giving the combine enough of a traction boost to walk through mud and low spots that you wouldn't dare tackle with a truck.

FARM SHOW's report two years ago featured Minnesota farmers Marvan and Harlan Gohr, of Mountain Lake, originators of the "push button control" tag-along concept which is now catching on fast with other corn farmers.

The Gohr Brothers pull a four wheel (tandem axle) grain wagon trailer behind their 7720 Deere combine, equipped with hydraulic power assist on the steerable rear wheels and an 8-row head. With a total carrying capacity of up to 600 bu. (250 bu. in the combine grain tank and up to 350 in the tag-along wagon), the Gohr Brothers can easily make a full round on half-mile rows without having to stop somewhere in the field to unload.

In western Minnesota, where last fall's corn harvest was one of the wettest and most miserable in history, a tag-along cart had an excellent opportunity to "show its stuff" as a traction booster. "We literally drove the combine and trailing cart through water to get much of the crop out," says Gene Fynbolt, of Morris, who jointly owns a Deere 7720 with Keith

Stroman, of nearby Alberta. Their setup, patterned after the Gohr Brothers, features a Brent two-wheel grain wagon with 120 in. wheel tread. Its unloading auger was converted from pto to hydraulic drive. The combine was ordered factory-equipped with a 17 ft. unloading auger, which has sufficient reach to dump into the tag-along cart. Switches allow the operator to control all the action right from the cab. For example, the operator can swing the combine auger into position "on the go" for unloading grain from the tank into the cart. The operator can also pull up alongside a waiting truck and swing the augers into position for simultaneous (or independent) unloading of the combine tank and the cart.

"We have power assist on the rear combine wheels, which was nice to have last fall because of the unusually wet conditions. In a normal year, however, I don't think you'd need the power assist to handle a trailing wagon," Gene points out. "At the ends, the wagon unloads about 120 bu. in the same amount of time it takes to unload about 190 bu. from the combine's tank. During the off season, the grain wagon can be hooked behind a tractor and its auger operated hydraulically, or off the pto which provides somewhat faster unloading."

Gene adds that chaff and debris in the trailing grain cart won't be a problem. "The grain sample from the cart was as clean as from the combine tank."

Two commercial firms have "tooled up" to help meet mounting demand for push-button controlled tag-along combine carts.

Certified Power Train Specialists, headquartered in Mankato, Minn., provides components, complete with hydraulic hoses, connections and controls, for a push-button system that adapts to most makes of newer combines and operates right from the driver's seat. The kit includes an elec-

tric clutch hydraulic pump (20 gpm) which is belt driven off the combine motor's crankshaft; hydraulic reservoir; an electric over hydraulics actuated valve; low torque, high speed orbit motor to drive the grain cart auger; in-line relief valve; couplers for the motor; and all of the necessary hoses and connections. Cost of the components ranges from \$2,800 to \$3,200, according to Tim Chirpich, parts manager.

First on the market with a push-button controlled grain cart factory engineered and built for towing behind combines is J-Craft Inc., of Kimball, Minn. "We've developed and tested a prototype, and expect to be in production in a few weeks with this first of its kind grain cart," Ike Van Briesen, sales manager, told FARM SHOW two weeks ago. It holds 400 bu. and features a telescopic hitch which can be adjusted to fit the "reach" of the combine's unloading auger, two wheels with 120 in. wheel tread, a bottom unloading slide gate, and a single center-mounted unloading auger. It comes completely equipped with the necessary hydraulics and electronics for push-button operation from the cab.

In South Dakota, ridge-till corn farmer Darrell Nelson, of Yankton, built the grain wagon he and his

father, Morris, tow behind their 1480 International combine. Darrell extended the combine auger 4 ft. to get sufficient reach for unloading "on the go" into the tag-along cart.

Doesn't a trailing wagon put a lot of extra drag on the combine's engine?

"Not as much as you might think," answers Minnesota corn farmer James Sorenson, of Madelia. "The wagon is running empty for all or most of the first pass on half-mile rows and you never have to load more than a couple hundred bushels into the wagon."

James and his brother Bob rigged their 8820 Deere combine with a trailing J-Craft (400 bu.) grain cart. "About the only time we notice any engine drag is when turning at the ends with the tank full of grain, or when going up hill and unloading the grain tank "on the go" into the cart. Towing the cart behind the combine allowed us to harvest without hiring additional help."

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