Best New Ideas From Europe

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Baler Hopper Adds Grain, Supplements To Bale

You can "beef up" the quality of your big round bales by adding grain or other supplements to big round bales as they're formed with a new add-on hopper for big balers.

Dugdales Ltd., developed the hopper for their own bale additive called Sweet'N Dry, a preservative for high-moisture big round bales that also boosts nutritional value. Sweet 'N Dry is added to hay baled at moisture contents as high as 80% or more. It absorbs 2 1/2 times its weight which keeps nutrient-rich liquids from running out of wet bales. It also promotes fermentation which produces acids that act as a bale preservative. Sweet 'N Dry is added at a rate of 5 to 30 kg. per bale, depending on moisture content.

Dugdales representative Alan Sayle, told FARM SHOW the add-on hopper can also be used to add grain or other granular supplements to bales. "It could be an excellent way to add protein to bales eliminating the need to feed supplements to livestock later on," he notes.

Four tubes feed material into the bale chamber. The hopper is powered by a 12-volt electric motor that's automatically activated by the bale chamber. The hopper is designed to fit Deere, Vermeer, Vicon, Welger, and Krone balers. It could be adapted to other balers.

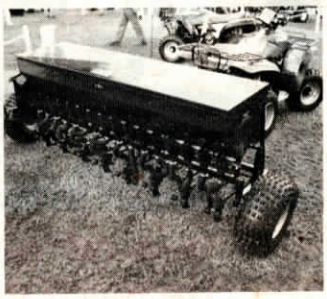
For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, B. Dugdale & Son Ltd., Bellman Mill, Salthill, Clitheroe, Lancs. BB7 1QW England (ph 0200 27211).

Look What They're Doing With ATV's

British farmers use their ATV's for just about everything thanks to a wide range of implements designed solely for 3 and 4-wheelers.

Crayford Equipment Co. introduced a new 6-ft. wide seed drill and an engine-driven snowblower at the Royal.

The seed drill rides on flotation tires so it can be pulled through even the wettest ground for early season seeding. The company says farmers also use the drill to "patch" skips in big fields and to finish off odd-shaped fields. The ATV drill seeds at a rate of 3 acres per hour and is equipped with a pegged-roller metering system that adapts easily to small grains and even tiny grass and vegetable seeds. A single control arm adjusts depth. The drill sells for $4,000.



Crayford's shaft-driven ATV snowblower is powered by a rear-mounted engine. A driveshaft runs under the machine up to the front-mount blower. The snowblower sells for $2,240.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Crayford Special Equipment Co. Ltd., High Street, Westerham, Kent. TN16 1RG England (ph 0959 62470).

New "Electronic" MF Combine

"We think it's the most advanced combine monitoring and control system ever developed," says John Garlick, representative of Massey Ferguson's British division about a revolutionary new computer system on the company's big MF 38, the largest conventional combine in the world.

The new computer monitor system almost completely eliminates all conventional mechanical gauges in the cab. All information is displayed on a 9-in. "TV" screen and on a built-in printer that provides print-outs of all settings and performance.

"Farmers like the simplicity of this system because it puts everything in one place and it's so easy to use. If you can read English, you can operate it," says Garlick.

The computer gives instantaneous yield amounts while harvesting, making it possible to check yields in any field or any part of a field. "It lets you get a clear picture of the 'good' and 'bad' areas of your farm, so you can adjust planting, fertilizing and spraying as needed," says Garlick.

Nearly every component on the combine is monitored and displayed on the screen including drum speed, concave position, top sieve spacing, sieve extension, lower sieve setting, main fan speed, wind guide position, table auger spacing, feeder elevator position, and many others. It also tells. Many of the settings on combine components - such as fan speed - can be adjusted by simply touching the computer's touch-sensitive screen.

The computer also monitors all mechanical components and sounds an alarm if any engine system fails, such as oil pressure. If the operator fails to act when an alarm goes off, the computer automatically shuts the combine down. The computer also reminds the operator of scheduled maintenance and, if a maintenance problem develops, the operator can ask the computer for advice on how to fix it. In some cases, the computerized system can even self-diagnose and fix mechanical problems itself.

All electronic fuses, relays and memory banks are housed in a dust-sealed compartment toward the rear of the combine. "The electronic modules that make up the 'brain' of the system are very reliable but if any should ever fail, they're easy to replace and the computer will probably even tell you how to do it," says Garlick, noting that the new computer-controlled combines sold out this year as fast as they could be produced. "It's the machine of the future. It greatly improves harvest efficiency and makes it easy for the operator to maintain control of what is the most complicated machine on the farm."

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Massey Ferguson, Stareton, Nr. Kenilworth, Warks. CV8 2LJ England (ph 0203 309221).

"No Rot" Plastic Lumber

"You can saw and nail it just like hardwood lumber. It can't rot so you can even use it under water," says Desmond Finnegan, Irish developer of a new process for turning waste plastic into "no rot" lumber that can be handled just like wood.

Finnegan says that up to now no one's been able to figure out how to combine different types of plastics, such as polyurethane and polypropylene, into a single product. His process turns any kind of waste plastic into a hard, UV-stabilized material that he says lasts virtually forever with no deterioration and at a price that's comparable to treated lumber.

"We've had tremendous interest for use in hog and dairy barns because our plastic wood wears like concrete and yet it's much warmer, non-abrasive, and it doesn't harbor bacteria. It's also non-toxic so there would be no danger if animals, such as horses, chew on it. Many farmers have eliminated the need for litter by building slats out of plastic wood to cover floors in hog, dairy, and sheep buildings," says Finnegan, noting that plastic wood also works great for fence posts (no insulators needed for electric fence), decorative fence posts, picnic tables, benches and any other use that requires constant exposure to the elements.

Nailing into the dense, plastic lumber is like nailing into hardwood except that there are no knots to get in the way. You can cut it with a saw and sand the rough edges, although you'll never get a splinter. The wood is black although it can be special-ordered in other colors.

Finnegan is looking for a U.S. manufacturer to license the process. He notes that one of the biggest markets for the product in England has been to the government for highway warning markers and signs because of the durability of the product.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, F.J.D. Finnegan, Superwood Holdings, Ltd., Corke Abbey, Bray, Co. Wicklow, Ireland (ph 823322).