Wisconsin farmer Keith Merten added a windrow-forming hood to the back of his flail chopper. It makes windrows "just the right size" for baling.

ADD-ON CHUTE FUNNELS CHOPPED STALKS INTO WINDROWS FOR EASY BALING

Modified Flail Chopper Works Great On Stalks

"It does the job of a conventional stalk chopper and eliminates the need for a separate trip over the field to rake stalks into windrows for baling," says Keith Merten, Malone, Wis., who peeled the steel housing off an old water heater from his milk house to convert his 1978 Gehl 72 flail chopper into a stalk chopper that makes windrows "just the right size" for baling.

The water heater housing simply replaces the removeable rear part of the flail chopper's hood. It funnels chopped stalks into 2-ft. wide, 1-ft. high windrows. A rope runs from the rear of the curved housing up to the chopper's blower chute. He can control windrow height by adjusting the length of the rope. To use the rig to chop haylage again Merten simply removes the windrow-forming housing and locks the hood back in place.

Merten put up over 1,000 small square corn stalk bales last year with no problems. He uses them as bedding for his heifers and calves. "I chop two rows at a time and go 4 to 5 mph. I got the idea two years ago when I decided to switch from straw bedding to corn stalks because they absorb more moisture. I didn't own a stalk chopper so I decided to use my flail chopper. Some farmers in my area open up the rear portion of the hood on their flail choppers and let the chopped stalks fly backward. Later they rake the stalks into windrows. My stalk windrower lets me chop and windrow stalks at the same time."

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Keith Merten, N9306 Cypress Rd., Box 42, Malone, Wis. 53049 (ph 414 795-4249).

"BUILT TO HANDLE DOZENS OF JOBS"

Front-Mount 4-WD Articulated Tractor

A New Hampshire inventor who didn't like any of the tractors on the market built his own articulated 4-WD that positions the operator right up front for perfect visibility.

Maury Collins, of Nelson, N.H., says his 58 hp prototype is equipped with front or rear pto, front and rear 3-pt. hitch, foot-controlled hydrostatic 4-WD, center articulation and oscillation, and four 11.2 by 24 ag tread tires. It's powered by a Ford 140 cu. in. 4-cylinder water-cooled gas engine, with both driver and engine protected by a wire brush cage.

"I use it mainly in my 300 acres of woods to skid and haul logs, but I've also mounted a front-mounted flail mower, snowblower and forklift on it," says Collins, who has tested the prototype tractor for five years. "It'll handle dozens of different jobs. I built it because I thought it was crazy to spend over $20,000 for a 50 hp tractor and then have to back up with a snowblower or always turn around when digging post holes.

"On most tractors lifting all takes places behind the rear wheels, thus creating a lever effect which can cause the front end to come up. On my tractor most of the weight is between the front wheels and the center joint. Weight distribution is so good that I have yet to raise the front end off the ground while skidding logs.

"The tires are the same size front and rear and large enough to roll over objects without acting like a plow on turns in mud and snow. They're also of a size that's readily available. Hydraulic motors in each wheel provide positive 4-WD so there's no loss of power regardless of wheel position. There's no clutch so I don't have to stop and shift gears and lose momentum when I don't want to stop. Instead, single pedal hydraulic control provides unlimited speed selection. My tractor is designed so the average layman can do all of the routine service."

Collins uses a rear-mounted hydraulic winch and cable to skid logs up to 30 in. in diameter. A rear-mounted butt plate protects the rear tires. By removing the plate and installing a dump body he can haul cordwood. "My tractor would work great with a FARMI 3-pt. hitch front-end loader. I haven't done any plowing or cultivating with it, but there's no reason it couldn't be done."

Collins says he's looking for investors and manufacturers.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Nelson Tractor Limited, Old Stoddard Road, Nelson, N.H. 03457 (ph 603 847-3321).

Digger is equipped with opposing cylinders, located above the gearbox, that use the weight of tractor to apply down pressure for high-speed drilling.

TWIN CYLINDERS PROVIDE UP TO 4,500 LBS. OF DOWN PRESSURE

Powerful Post Hole Auger Drills Through Solid Rock

You can drill right through solid rock or reinforced concrete with the revolutionary "down pressure digger" from Belltec Industries, Belton, Texas.

Designed for 3 pt. mounting on a 30 hp or larger tractor, it's equipped with opposing hydraulic cylinders, located above the gearbox, which use weight of the tractor to apply up to 4,500 lbs. of down pressure for high speed drilling in dirt (only 16.5 seconds to drill a 4 ft. deep hole 10 in. in dia.) and, with special cutting tips attached, right through hard, dry or frozen ground, or even solid rock or concrete.

"It's more than a post hole digger — it's the only tractor-mounted drilling machine," says Donny Jones, vice president. "You can equip it to drill 9-in. dia. water wells up to 60 ft. or more deep. One owner has used his Belltec digger to drill 2 in. dia. holes in solid granite rock for setting steel T-posts."

Jones notes that the auger is "frame guided" to ensure a straight hole, even on side hills. Instead of shear pins, both the gearbox and driveline are protected by an automatic torque limiter.

Sells for right at $3,000, not including augers or top link cylinder. A 6 in. dia. auger for conventional use in dirt sells for about $400; a 6 in. auger for dirt and rocks sells for about $600.

The rear frame is enclosed, allowing the Belltec to be backed into an existing fence to drill holes for fence mending.

With special cutting tip, "down pressure digger" will dig through concrete.

"We think every farmer or rancher with 50 or more post holes to dig every year in soil other than sand should own one of our machines," says Jones. "It's twice as fast as conventional pendulum-type post hole diggers in normal soil conditions, and really shines in rocky, frozen and other problem soils that conventional diggers can't begin to handle," says Jones.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Belltec Industries Inc., P.O. Box 270, Belton, Texas 76513 (ph 817 780-1452).

There's 17 in. of clearance for rocks and stumps, yet the center of gravity is low.