

## “Leaning Tower Of Feed” Provides Cheap Storage

When dairyman Stanley Sylla of Independence, Wis., bought an old 30-ft. long underground fuel tank to store bulk feed, he planned to mount it vertically with a fill-hole at the top. However, he soon found that the local feed company’s auger wasn’t long enough to reach the fill hole. He solved the problem by mounting the tank at a 60-degree angle and cutting a hole into the top side of the tank and welding on a 14-in. long “sleeve”.

The tank stands next to Sylla’s wooden-walled bunker silo on a concrete pad. It’s supported by a big pile of dirt at the back and along the sides. The semi truck driver backs into the bunker silo to fill the tank.

Sylla cut a hole into the bottom of the tank and installed a slide gate, which he opens and closes with a steel handle. The feed is then augered into a feed wagon.

“It looks kind of goofy but it provides cheap feed storage,” says Sylla. “I bought the tank cheap at a scrap yard. It holds up to 22 tons of soybean or linseed meal. The big advantage of mounting the tank at an angle is that the driver doesn’t have to back up directly to the tank but can instead drive alongside it.”

“I use a ladder at the back of the tank for access to the fill hole. I welded steel bars inside the tank so if anyone ever gets trapped inside it they can get out.”

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The 30-ft. long fuel tank mounts at a 60-degree angle next to Sylla’s wooden-walled bunker silo.



Sylla cut a hole into bottom of tank and installed a slide gate, which he opens and closes with a steel handle. Feed is then augered into a wagon.

## They’re Cutting Big Balers Down To Size

Cutting brand new big square balers down to produce a smaller size bale might seem like a drastic step to take but that’s what a fabrication shop in Britain is doing.

We read about the idea in the British farm magazine *Farmer’s Weekly*. According to Michael Coleman, managing director of the Big Bale Company, there’s been a big jump in demand for medium-size big square bales as opposed to the full-sized bales. He says small to mid-size farmers like them better because they’re easier to handle.

At this time, the company works on Massey Ferguson 185 and 187 balers. They are cutting them down to produce a bale 2 ft., 4 in. high instead of the original 2 ft., 11 in. high. But the company says the concept of altering the bale chamber would work to convert any baler to most any size.

They simply cut down the sides of the bale chamber and the bale plunger. Guides and



An example of a gutted bale chamber that was cut down to produce a smaller bale. Other components had to be repositioned. The job takes a couple weeks and costs about \$6,000. (*Farmer’s Weekly*)

## Heat Capture System Saves Drying Costs

When Jerry Coatsworth put a plastic barrel around the 15 hp. electric motor on his natural air drying blower, he was merely trying to protect the motor from snow and rain. But then he got the idea of siphoning off heat from the motor to help dry grain.

Although he figures he saves just a fraction of a cent per bushel by capturing the wasted heat, he spent only a few dollars on the idea and figures the savings will add up over the years.

He estimates the heat produced by the motor at about 6,886 btu’s per hour. He cut a hole in the top of the barrel and inserted a piece of 8-in. dia. non-perforated drain tile which runs up over the fan housing to the intake side of the blower. Coatsworth was careful not to restrict airflow on the intake side.



Coatsworth put a plastic barrel around the 15 hp electric motor on his bin’s blower. Heat is siphoned off and used to help dry grain.

The idea won first prize in this year’s Environmental Farm Plan contest which is sponsored by the Canadian government.



Gears on McKee’s “strawberry picker” are shifted with an overhead connecting linkage.

## One-Row Riding “Strawberry Picker”

Tom McKee came up with a one-row riding strawberry picker which he uses on his fruit and vegetable farm near Ramsey, Ill. There’s a cargo carrier ahead of the driver designed to carry boxes that hold harvested vegetables.

The picker is powered by an electric start, 3 1/2 hp Briggs & Stratton gas engine mounted on back and has three speeds forward and one reverse. Gears are shifted with an overhead connecting linkage. The clutch is centrifugal, so the amount of acceleration applied regulates travel speed. The rig steers electronically via a toggle switch. Pushing the switch one way steers the rig to the left, and pushing the switch the other way steers it to the right. A small electric motor drives a small sprocket which in turn actuates a larger sprocket via a link chain to turn the front wheels. Both the front and back wheels are spaced 28 in. apart.

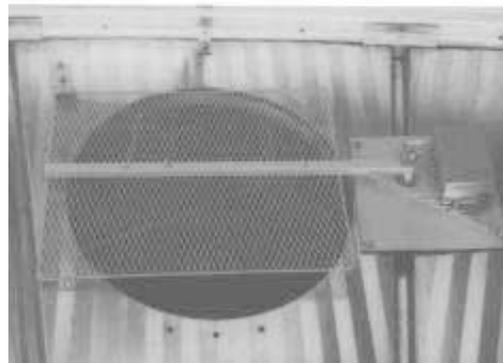
To make it easier to reach two rows, the seat swivels from side to side or adjusts up



Steering is accomplished by a small electric motor. It drives a sprocket which in turn chain-drives a larger sprocket to turn the front wheels.

and down. A drawbar on back allows the machine to tow a trailer that can haul up to 700 lbs. of harvested crops.

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“Lifesaver 2000” installs on underside of bin roof. It consists of an expanded metal screen that covers the bin opening.

## Automatic Auger Shut-Off For Grain Bins

“I came up with the idea after someone in our area was killed after he went inside a grain bin while the unloading auger was still running,” says Jake Lay, Tremont, Ill., about his automatic bin shut-off.

The patented “Lifesaver 2000” makes it impossible to enter a bin without cutting power to the unloading auger. It installs on the underside of the bin roof and consists of an expanded metal screen that covers the bin opening. The screen mounts on a spring-loaded hinged arm fitted with a contact switch that shuts off power to the unloading auger motor when the screen is pushed aside.

“I think it’s one of the most important inventions for grain storage in a long time,” says Lay. “I’d like to get bin companies to install it as standard equipment. Everyone worries about having a safety shield to cover

the belts on an unloading auger, which is important to keep from losing a finger. They also have a grate over the screw on the portable auger so you don’t get caught in it. Yet they have the top of the bin wide open and if someone goes in there they may never come out again alive. Another factor is that most of the bins being built today are equipped with stairs instead of ladders, which makes it easier for kids to go up the stairs, crawl through the man hole and play in the grain. With the Lifesaver 2000 they can’t get in without shutting the auger off.”

Lay sells the unit for \$250 and says he can custom design it to fit any size bin opening.

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