

Mini Hummer Is Big Attention Getter

Ed Brown gets lots of attention with his mini Hummer look-a-likes. Built on Toyota truck frames, the rigs have all the looks of the real thing but at considerably less cost. After building three of them, he's now exploring selling do-it-yourself kits.

"I got the idea after seeing a story about a guy who put a Hummer front end on a Chevy Suburban," explains Brown. "I realized that all the metal on the Hummer is flat, and would be relatively easy to work with."

Brown drew up plans and went to work on an old Toyota, stripping away all the sheet metal and cutting the cab down to the dash in front and the chassis in the back. All the lines and wires had to be re-laid.

He used fiberglass for the front end, 1.28-ga. steel for the metal panels, and 16-ga. steel for the box floor. He constructed a rollbar cage out of 2-in. steel tubing.

Building the first 2-door model took him 14 months while employed full time. After being laid off, a second one took only six weeks and allowed him to make improvements to his basic plan. Building a 4-door station wagon-style took him about 8 months. He had to stretch the frame to allow for the rear seating compartment and lengthen the gear line and any electrical wires.

"One reason it took so long was that I also built jigs for all the pieces so if I wanted, I could produce kits to sell," explains Brown. "After building three of them, I have it down pretty good. I know the Toyota trucks backwards and forwards."

Brown is now thinking of building a fourth version. It would be a 2-door with right hand drive. He thinks it would be ideal for mail carriers and easy to build since it wouldn't require stretching the frame.



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Rebuilt Massey Has "Speeds To Spare"

When George Boe's old Massey Harris 55 gave up the ghost, he replaced the worn-out engine with a Ford truck V-8 that gave it more power than ever. Adding a truck transmission while keeping the old tractor tranny quadrupled his speeds and gave him a super creeper gear, too.

"I had four speeds in the old Massey and four in the truck transmission," explains Boe. "By hooking them together, I ended up with four ranges that have four gears in each range."

Boe installed the engine and transmission from an overhauled 1960 Ford truck that had seen little use. To fit the larger engine, he added a 24-in. frame and hood extension to support the radiator and grill. He also added a heavy grill guard to protect the new nose on the tractor.

"I took the bell housing and clutch out of

the Massey and used the Ford clutch and bell housing with the transmission," says Boe. "I took the universal out of the truck and made a short connection on the shaft of the Massey to connect to the truck transmission shaft."

Boe found he had to shave the bell housing a little to fit the frame of the Massey. An experienced welder, he made new motor mounts for the V-8. When he was finished with the mechanical work, he painted it Massey colors.

"I always felt the Massey transmission was a little fast for doing field work," he explains. "Adding the Ford transmission gives it more power at slower speeds. It has untold pulling power, and I can zip on the highway or really creep."

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George Boe replaced the worn-out engine on his old Massey Harris 55 with a Ford truck V-8 that gave it more power than ever.

He Switched To 15-In. Corn, Beans

After years of research, Panora, Iowa, farmer Mark Vogel switched his entire farm to 15-in. rows last spring - 1,300 acres of corn and 1,100 acres of soybeans.

He traded in his grain drill and 12-row, 30-in. planter for a Deere 1780 15-in. row planter that can plant either 16 or 31 rows at a time. He uses the same planter to plant both corn and beans. And he bought a 16-row, 15-in. corn header from Marion Calmer of Alpha, Ill.

Vogel went into the field with the Calmer header for the first time shortly before this issue went to press. "I paid \$45,000 for the planter, which I bought used, and \$57,000 for the new corn header. However, I think the yield benefit of 15-in. rows will pay for itself," he says.

Vogel made the switch to narrow rows after he expanded his farm by renting several hundred more acres.

"I needed more planting capacity, but I didn't want to spend the money for both a bigger planter and a bigger drill. Most farmers use the Deere 1780 planter to plant 30-in. corn and 15-in. soybeans. When I found out about the Calmer 15-in. corn head, I decided to use the planter for both 15-in. corn and beans. I think a planter works better than a drill for beans because it places the seed at a more uniform depth, which results in better germination. But in general, both corn and beans yield better in 15-in. rows than they do in 30-in. rows. Corn seed is spaced 13 in. apart in the row, whereas in 30-in. rows the seed is 7 in. apart. There's more room for each plant to grow.

"What I like about the Calmer corn header is that it's lightweight, requires less horse-

power, and has less trash intake. All three factors make it much easier on the combine. It has super short poly dividers and low profile poly hoods and uses a single chain instead of a dual chain on each row, which reduces weight."

According to inventor Marion Calmer, the header's ear guides form a retaining wall to maintain engagement of the ears with enlarged gathering chain paddles. Both the ear guides and the paddles are made of polyethylene. "By eliminating the second chain, guide, drive sprocket, driveshaft, idler block, idler sprocket and chain tension spring, we reduce the weight of the corn header by more than 30 lbs. per row and significantly lower horsepower requirements," says Calmer. "The hoods and dividers are super short which makes them more maneuverable and also helps reduce the weight by about 35 lbs. per row. Altogether, our header is up to 1,800 lbs. lighter than the competition."

The header can be factory painted to match your combine and is available with any color poly deck covers, dividers and wear points. Optional equipment includes hydraulic stripper plates, auto lubrication, stubble lights, and field tracker/contour master.

Calmer offers the headers in both 15, 20, and 22-in. models. "If you're thinking about switching to narrow row corn, order early because we always sell out on the corn headers early in the season," he says.

Calmer will be hosting narrow row corn workshops on December 8 and 9 at his farm in western Illinois. The dual purpose workshops will contain information on the agronomics of growing narrow row corn, as well as the mechanical side of harvesting



Mark Vogel switched his entire farm to 15-in. rows this year. He went to the field this fall with this 16-row, 15-in. corn header purchased from Marion Calmer of Alpha, Ill.

narrow rows.

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