

ATV Trailer Fitted With Snow Skis

Bob Coppock owns a WW II army surplus trailer that he pulls behind his ATV. The Alberta veterinarian wanted to use the high-clearance trailer on snow so he asked a neighbor if he could design skis for it. "I have a set of Mattrack tracks on the ATV, which I ordered direct from the factory in Karlstad, Minn., and the skis follow exactly in the tracks," says Coppock.

The trailer box is 6 ft. long by 44 in. wide and Coppock uses it to haul firewood. He estimates that the loaded trailer weighs between 1,200 and 1,300 lbs.

"The trailer pulls easy with the skis and it's a perfect match for my ATV. I like using the trailer in the woods because it works well on the narrow trails," he explains.

Harvey Schultz of Ryley, Alberta, fabricated the skis and welded a small 3/8-in. dia. bar to the center of their underside to prevent the trailer from skidding on ice and packed snow. The bar also protects the skis from wear if they contact snow-less ground.

"The skis bolt right onto the spindles, once the wheels are removed," Schultz explains. "I paid \$350 for the skis and am really glad I have them. With the Mattracks on the ATV and the skis on the trailer, this is the perfect combination for going through the snow," Coppock concludes.

Schultz says he's willing to make skis for other small trailers if there's interest.

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Bob Coppock had his neighbor fabricate skis for this WW II army surplus trailer. He uses the trailer to haul firewood out of the woods.

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"Four-Way Cross" Tolerant To Heat

Breeding beef cattle to be more productive in hot southern states was one of the goals of Dale Eppard's crossbreeding project. For the past five years he's been working on a four-way cross by breeding a Saler and Longhorn cross ("Salorn") with Senepol and Angus cross ("Senegus").

The resulting offspring have shorter hair, about 1/2 in. long, which makes cows more heat tolerant and comfortable, so they eat and gain at a better rate.

"They weigh 500 to 525 lbs, when weaned at 205 days old," Eppard says. Birth weights average 84 lbs. Crossbreeding adds to good hybrid vigor and faster growth, he adds.

Eppard has 20 years of experience as manager for Mi Tierra Cattle Co., which raises mostly Salorns on 1,000 acres, in Granby, Mo.

His new 4-way cross brings good attributes: calving ease as well as good udders

and milking ability. When fed at a feedlot, the cattle have been graded choice and select.

"We're real pleased," Eppard says. "The meat is tender with good marbling."

He keeps detailed computer records and is doing Igenity testing, a DNA carcass composition test.

The cross - which has not yet been named - is attracting the attention of beef producers. Mi Tierra sells stock and bull semen.

"The goal is to make a more tender, meaty animal that will work in our environment," Eppard says, adding that by changing the breeding slightly and adding a little more Angus or Salers the breed could be more suitable for colder northern areas.

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New 4-way cross was produced by breeding a Saler and Longhorn cross ("Salorn") with Senepol and Angus cross ("Senegus").

Mini Wands Make Seed Handling Easy

As a greenhouse grower in Adams, Mass., Thomas Morin wanted a better system for planting small or large seeds, so the "budding" inventor put his green thumbs to use in designing what he calls a "mini wand seeder."

Morin is president of Gro-Mor Inc., which operates a 13,000 sq. ft greenhouse operation. He also holds six U.S. patents (four related to seeding equipment).

"I needed an easier, quicker way to plant flower and vegetable seeds, and found that using a 6-oz. vacuum bulb with different sized tips worked really well," Morin says.

The three models all operate similarly, with a 6-oz vacuum bulb being used to create the suction control necessary to pick up and drop seeds. Each of the wand seeder units has a bulb extender sleeve and a selection of five color-coded tips for handling seed of different size categories. In addition, the seeders come with a small storage container for tips (the lid can be used to hold seed), and a magnifier tip attachment (that fits all tip sizes) for better visibility of very small seeds.

To use, you first squeeze the bulb to compress out all of the air. Then, while still squeezing the bulb and touching the tip to the seed, the grip on the bulb is released, and the vacuum action picks up the seed. To release the seed for planting, you just press slightly on the bulb to release the vacuum.

Another model has a hand trigger to maintain or release the vacuum (eliminating the need to continue squeezing the bulb). And there's a third model with a 4-ft. section of hose between the bulb and the hand trigger. This allows for foot operation of the bulb.

The five tips handle any size seed.

Prices range from \$18 to \$36 plus S&H.



"Mini wand seeder" uses a 6-oz. vacuum bulb with different-sized tips. The bulb creates suction to pick up and drop seeds. Three different models are available.



Gro-Mor, Inc. accepts both Visa and MasterCard.

Videos of the wands in action can be viewed at the company's website.

"We've sold thousands of our wands, including many large overseas orders. People just love them because they work so well," Morin points out.

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TommyJohn Quick Hitch lets you hook up a pto without getting off the tractor.

Quick-Hitch Also Hooks Up PTO

Quick hitches are common, but hooking up a pto without getting out of the tractor is not. So when word got out that a pto quick hitch would be on exhibit at the 2007 South Dakota State Fair, fairgoers came - looking for "the hitch guy".

The hitch guy is Tom Heller, a Seneca, S. Dak., rancher with a 500-head cow/calf operation. His TommyJohn Quick Hitch is the result of plenty of tractor time and four years of thinking how to hook and unhook his feed wagon's hitch and pto without getting off the tractor. Heller headed to his farm shop to weld up what his mind had created, and it worked. After using his hitch for a year, Heller patented it. With the help of partners - brothers Craig and Steve Heller and John Schiley, he found manufacturers and fabricators in Webster and Ft. Pierre, S. Dak., to build the hitches, which became available in 2007.

"Engineers told me it couldn't be done," Heller says. His design has simple frames of 3 by 3 by 1/4-in. steel tubing. The hitch on the tractor has a ball hitch on top, which is lowered, backed up to the implement, then raised to slip under a receiver pipe on the

implement hitch. When the ball hitch slips in, gears line up and the pto connects. A couple of latches on the bottom hold everything together.

"It's just like a drawbar and 3-pt. hitch," Heller says. "You don't have to do anything special to your implements."

Heller uses the hitch to feed cows and also on his manure spreader. It eliminates the need for a second tractor to load the spreader. His quick hitch is also on a bale wagon and a mixer wagon. He plans to work on adding hydraulics and hitching up snowblowers as well.

The hitch won the Minnesota AgrAbility award and was a winner at the 2007 Minnesota Inventors Congress.

The hitch is built strong, weighs about 400 lbs., and sells for \$2,995 through the TommyJohn Industries website or by contacting Heller or one of his partners.

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