



Two-bale processor uses a grapple to load bales. It can feed out two bales at once, blending different types of forage.



If bale plugs up in processor, grapple can be used to reposition it.

Two-Bale Processor Blends Feed On-The-Go

This new 2-bale processor makes blending higher and lower quality forage as easy as driving down the row. It can handle two bales at the same time being fed out at different speeds. This lets the operator vary the blend on-the-go and, if needed, make higher quality feed go farther.

"People get real excited about the ability to blend forages and change blends on-the-go," says R. C. Patterson of RCMR, Inc. "We introduced a square bale unit a decade ago and realized nobody was doing it with round bales because we had the patent."

With customers asking for a unit, Patterson got busy. After three years of development, the round bale unit was ready. While their earlier square bale unit had a full set of options including scales and grain supplement

bins, the round bale unit is relatively simple. It has two feeding units, a rack for a third bale and a grapple to fill them.

"The one extra we put on the trailer is the grapple. People like being able to pick up different size loads from the ground or a stack. They can operate it all from the tractor seat," says Patterson.

He says customers like the fact that they can put a bale of alfalfa in one unit, low quality roughage in a second, and a third on the rack.

"One customer noted that with other processors, if a bale jams, you have to fork it out by hand," says Patterson. "With the grapple, if there is a problem, they can pluck the bale out and reposition it."

He adds that some use the grapple to rest

a fourth bale on the bale in the rack. The company is considering adding a cart that could trail behind with another three to six bales.

"The processor layers everything in a windrow, and the cattle come up and eat everything in front of them," he says. "It doesn't matter if you put the high quality hay on top or on the bottom."

"We come from the ranching business and understand the value in blending roughages," says Patterson. "Wheat straw, milo or corn stalks don't have the nutritional value needed, while alfalfa has the protein, but not enough dry matter."

He adds that chopping forages to get the right particle size has a 20 to 25 percent impact on feed efficiency. Blending the forages adds another 23 to 30 percent improvement.

His machine does both.

"If you can cut your feed bill by 20 to 50 percent, it's the biggest thing you can do to improve most ranching operations," says Patterson. "The hardest thing to do is feed the herd through the winter without breaking the bank. This tool is the missing piece of that puzzle."

The round bale processor has an introductory price of \$19,988 for the three-bale unit without grapple. The grapple with joystick control adds \$8,746.

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Self-loading feeder is tipped over top of bale. Pull-straps are positioned to hold bale in place, and then the feeder is gently pulled upright.

Round Bale Feeder Loads Itself

By Nancy Leasman

Five years ago Kim Smith had a few horses and an old tractor on his Minnesota spread. With the old tractor he could pick up a large round bale of hay to feed his horses but couldn't steer it very well. Not wanting to spend money on a newer tractor, but having metal bending skills and equipment, Kim came up with what he calls the Hay Sleigh. The feeder "loads itself" with a bale and then is towed with a tractor, ATV, or pickup to the livestock.

The feeder, which weighs about 100 lbs., is tipped over on top of an 800 to 1,200-lb. round bale. Pull-straps are positioned to hold the bale in place, and then the feeder is gently pulled upright. No tractor loader is required and the feeder slides smoothly across pastures or feedlot. The bale rests above the

ground for better hay access and less wasted feed. The welded tubular construction requires no assembly, has no sharp corners, cleans easily and stacks for storage and/or shipping.

Kim asked his horse-owning friends to field test the Hay Sleigh. "They just plain work. No problems," he says.

With 20 years in the iron working business, a provisional patent, and a price set at \$425 (plus tax and shipping), Smith is ready to take orders for the Hay Sleigh.

Additional information is available on his web site, SmithIronWorksMN.com.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup: Smith Iron Works, Inc., 3936 Stark Drive . P.O. Box 219, St. Francis, Minn. 55070 (ph 763 753-2938; SmithIronWorks@msn .com).



Feeder is towed with a tractor, ATV, or pickup to livestock.



To keep his 11 hp Snapper riding mower from rolling on steep terraces, Brett Hundertmark put duals on front and back.

Eight-Tire Snapper Mows Steep Hills

It took just one rollover while mowing his yard's terraces for Brett Hundertmark to modify his 11 hp Snapper riding mower with extra tires.

"I dued up the back by using 8 1/2-in. bolts and 1/2-in. electrical conduit cut in between the wheel hubs for spacers," Hundertmark explains. "In the front I welded 8 1/2-in. extensions out of solid 3/4-in rod to the front axles to mount my dued set of tires. It doesn't interfere with steering at all."

He didn't want to use a push mower to mow the hills on his terraces, but the Snapper didn't have enough traction. He got the extra wheels for the back from other Snappers he uses for parts. The front end still slipped so he put duals on front as well.

He's used his eight-tire mower for about five years with no rollovers.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Brett Hundertmark, 2119 120th St., Bode, Iowa 50519 (ph 515 379-2702).

Do-It-Yourself Tomato Irrigation

Chester Kubiak came up with a method for watering his tomato plants that takes a lot less work and makes it more likely that the plants will get all the water they need.

He plants tomatoes about 4 ft. apart and runs a length of 1-in. pvc pipe along the base of the plants, with holes drilled in it at 4-ft.

intervals to match the plants. He inserts a screw into each hole. To adjust the amount of water applied to plants, he just turns the screws in or out.

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