



Harry Coates cut off the back half of a 72-passenger bus, removed the floor and used windows from front half of bus to give his greenhouse two sets of windows down each side.

Steel salvaged from bus's frame was used to make planting boxes that run down both sides of bus and across the back end. Chicken wire covered with plastic forms the roof.

Low-Cost Schoolbus Greenhouse

Gardening is easier and more productive for Judy and Harry Coates, thanks to the recycled schoolbus greenhouse they built on their Codroy Valley, Newfoundland farm. The best part is that, other than \$10 worth of plastic to cover it, the unit didn't cost them anything.

Harry dismantled a decommissioned 72-passenger bus, taking only the parts that he needed. It was all free because they saved the owner the expense of having to haul it away.

He cut off the back half of the bus's 30-ft. seating area and completely stripped it down. He also removed the floor and took the windows from the front half of the bus.

Before beginning setup of his greenhouse at home, he made sure the site was level so the frame would stand straight, and this allowed him to easily slide the windows into place. Because Coates brought home only half of the frame, but all of the bus's windows, he was able to give his greenhouse two sets of windows down each side, making any amount of ventilation easy.

He mounted some of the salvaged steel

along the outside length of the wall's bottom edge, and also used some to make 15-in. high by 30-in. wide planting boxes, which run down both sides of the bus as well as across the back end.

"The planting boxes are almost knee high, so it saves a lot of heavy bending," Coates says. "On the back end, I used recycled storm windows to close it up, and on the front end, there are more bus windows on either side of an old, used screen door from a house. I had to shorten the door to about 6 ft., 3 in., but it works great because it is wide enough that you can go through with a wheelbarrow."

For the roof, Coates first covered the inside with chicken wire and then put a layer of 6 mm polyethylene on the outside. He says the chicken wire won't rust because it's on the inside, and it's multipurpose since it stops the plastic from baffling up and down in the wind, and also provides reinforcement for winter snow load. The chicken wire extends the life of the plastic, such that Coates only has to replace it every 2 or 3 years.

"We live in a very rural area and rou-

tinely get 100 km winds, so that's a real factor here," he says. "That's the beauty of the chicken wire."

Coates and his wife, who are in their 70's, love the greenhouse because it allows them to get a 3 to 5 week head start in the early spring, growing cabbage, cucumbers, zucchini, broccoli, cauliflower and flower plugs, all for planting in their outdoor garden once the last frost is over. Then, they continue growing tender things like lettuce, tomatoes and peppers inside the bus for the rest of the season.

The schoolbus greenhouse is oriented north-south, with the door on the north end. It's close enough to the house to "pop out" and get some greens for supper.

The couple grows 4,000 cabbage plants and produces their own homemade food products such as green tomato chow and mustard pickles, which they sell at a local agricultural fair.

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5-Ft. Long Grease Gun Hose Extension

"I often have to work by myself and sometimes have trouble reaching grease zerks on equipment. So I decided to solve the problem," says Tom Lass, Cromwell, Minn.

"I removed the hose from my grease gun, went to a hydraulic hose store, and had them make a 5-ft. hose extension. They fitted a male end to the grease gun and a female end to one end of the original hose so that it could be screwed onto the grease gun. I carry the grease gun in a homemade holster that hangs from my belt."

Lass says that with the original 18-in. long hose he often couldn't get the hose on

the zerk and maneuver the grease gun at the same time. However, with the 5-ft. long hose he can reach just about any zerk even if it's located above his head.

He made the holster out of 3-in. dia. pvc pipe. "I glued a cap onto one end, then cut a 1 1/2-in. wide slot all the way down through the center of the pipe and set the grease gun in it. I bent a 1-in. metal strap and riveted it to the other end of the pipe to form a loop that fits over my pants belt."

He paid \$15 for the 5-ft. long hose, including the male and female ends.

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Tom Lass carries his 5-ft. long grease gun hose extension in a homemade holster, made from 3-in. dia. pvc pipe, that hangs from his belt.

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