

Axle Extensions Convert Deere To Wide Front

Front axle extensions can turn rare Deere “vegetable tractors” into an even more rare, wide-track style. Harold Mulder ran across a Beet and Bean tractor with its skinny, 42-in. diameter rear wheels, long rear axle and wide front axle.

“A quick call to Vicki Eller at John Deere Archives verified it was a genuine vegetable tractor,” says Mulder.

After bringing the tractor home, he began to research Beet and Bean tractors. He learned that an optional front axle extension kit once was available to widen the track of the front wheels to match the track of the rear wheels. This made it possible to straddle 2 beds when cultivating or planting.

“After searching for a pair of these front axle extensions for more than 8 years, I

decided a niche market might exist among other Deere vegetable tractor collectors for the extensions,” says Mulder. He sells his kits under the company name TMS, LLC.

He credits his tool and die maker background for being able to put a kit together for himself and to offer it to other collectors. His kit is intended for use with all Deere, 2-cylinder, lettered and numbered, Waterloo-built vegetable tractors manufactured from 1947 to 1960.

“My AB3841R (original part number) kits are machined to OEM specifications,” says Mulder. “Each kit includes an extension housing, tie rod and lock bolt. The extension housing is made from 8625 alloy steel, and the tie rod is made from 1045 carbon steel.”

The price per kit is \$225 each or 2 for \$400.



Front axle extensions for Deere “vegetable tractors” widen the front wheels to match the rear wheels.

Shipping is extra. Mulder prefers receiving calls in the evening.

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Chainsaws are stored on one side with oil and fuel cans on the other side. Chainsaw bars extend through gap at the back.

Chainsaw Stand Eliminates Clutter

“My four chainsaws and the oil and fuel needed for them were cluttering up my shop floor, so I built a chainsaw stand to keep everything organized. It cleared up a lot of floor space,” says Dave Neil, New London, Iowa.

The 38-in. tall stand is 2 ft. wide and 1 ft. deep. Neil used 1-in. square tubing for the frame and 1/16-in. thick sheet metal for the

shelves and a partially-enclosed back side.

“I store the saws on one side of the shelves and the oil and fuel cans on the other side. The chainsaw bars extend through a gap out the back so they’re always out of the way,” says Neil.

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Cheap Fix For O-Ring Leak

Ben Wagner faced a \$2,000 bill to fix a leak around the dipstick on his 7.3 Power Stroke Ford truck until a friend shared a tip. All he needed was a 20-gauge shotgun bore brush and a piece of string.

“My Ford dealer said he needed to pull the engine to remove the oil pan to do the job,” says Wagner. “That’s because when you remove the flange nut on the dipstick bulkhead, the bulkhead will drop into the oil pan. Instead I used the brush and string to retain the bulkhead.”

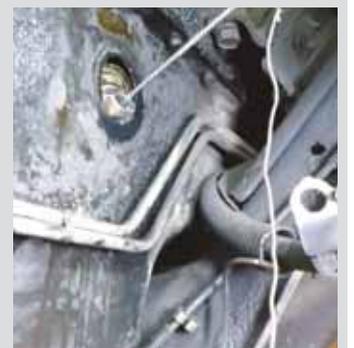
Wagner and his friend aren’t the only ones using this idea to save money. Videos on YouTube walk viewers through the process (see video at FARMSHOW.com). The fix starts with removal of the starter. Wagner then removes the 10 mm bolt that fastens the dipstick to the side of the valve cover and removes the dipstick.

“I tie heavy braided fishing line to the end of the brass barrel cleaning brush and push the brush into the dipstick opening,” explains Wagner. “Once it is in far enough to give me resistance when I pull back on it, I remove the flange nut from the threaded neck of the bulkhead.”

Once the flange nut has been passed over the bore brush and string, Wagner is able to jiggle the bulkhead loose, yet retaining it with the bore brush.

The common cause of leakage at the dipstick is a leaking O-ring. As the O-ring gets oil on it, it can swell up and jump out of the groove. As the bulkhead is loosened, the O-ring may fall off and be easily removed, just as the flange nut was.

“If the O-ring or parts of it stick, I use a dental pick to clean out the groove,”



Heavy braided fishing line is tied to the end of a gun barrel cleaning brush, to keep the bulkhead from dropping into the oil pan.

explains Wagner. “Once I get the O-ring off, I use carburetor cleaner to clean off the bulkhead. You want to get it as grease-free as possible.”

Once the bulkhead is clean and dry, Wagner slips a new O-ring over the string and brush and the neck of the bulkhead. After working it into the groove, he pulls the bulkhead back into place with the neck at the original angle and threads on the flange nut.

“You want to snug up the flange nut, but the bulkhead is machined brass, so don’t over-tighten,” says Wagner. “Replace the fastening bolt, dipstick and starter, and you’re done.”

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Custom-Made Gaskets Are Just A Click Away

“Thanks to the internet and PayPal, I was able to grow a tiny custom gasket-making business into one that supplies customers in the U.S., Canada, Britain, Australia and many other parts of the world,” says John Baker, owner of Gaskets-To-Go. More surprising than the unique nature of Baker’s business is the fact it’s located in the province of Pathum Thani, Thailand. The Minnesota native settled there nearly 25 years ago. His business was born when his cousin in Washington State asked him to source gaskets for old outboard motors that were unavailable in the U.S.

“I asked around and found a couple local suppliers, and things just grew from there,” Baker says. Now he supplies gaskets made of copper, metal reinforced composites, multi-layer steel, felt, embossed steel, rubber and fiber. “No order is too small or too large,”

Baker says enthusiastically. “There are no tooling charges, no set-up charges and no minimum order. We can make gaskets from a drawing, a blueprint, an old gasket, a cardboard template, or even a scan of an old gasket. We can supply gaskets for vintage car, truck, tractor or industrial equipment.”

Baker also produces custom molded and extruded rubber, plastic and bakelite parts. He can also supply springs, stamped or machined parts. Recently he began producing polyglass tail lights for cars and trucks. He says there’s really no limit to the types of parts he can supply. Pricing is given within 2 to 3 days and orders are usually complete for shipping in 2 weeks, although larger quantity and complex orders may take longer. Molded parts require a 200-piece order because of the tooling involved. Shipping costs and



delivery to the customer vary on the mode of transportation.

Baker says he’s tapped into a wealth of manufacturing available in Thailand over the years because he gets unusual requests and “never says no”. He has sourced custom-made automobile pumps built without drawings, made brass covers for dynamos and generators, and produced a head gasket for a 1930’s-era Bamford diesel engine. Other rare requests included multiple gaskets for a Rolls Royce Merlin Mk35 airplane engine, exhaust gaskets for a vintage Lancaster automobile,

and copper sandwich gaskets for a 1930 French Moteurs Berard industrial engine.

Baker says his website provides answers to just about every question customers have about his business, and he’s happy to provide references as needed.

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