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## Aftermarket Beaters Offers More Flow And Durability

The Wildfongs have done it again with their new beater for Deere and Case combines. Like their rock-hard concaves (Vol. 39, No. 2), their beaters are built tougher and designed to be more efficient than OEM equipment.

"Our beaters have a smaller diameter drum than OEM but the same circumference," says Russell Wildfong. "This, along with the hardened steel bars, provides more throat space for debris and increases beater efficiency by 20 percent or more."

Wildfong, with his sister Danielle and his father Rick, farms 9,000 acres in Saskatchewan. That real-world experience helps identify problems with combines and gives them the ultimate testing ground for possible solutions. One such problem was OEM beater design.

"We've had several combine fires caused

by beaters filling up with fine trash," says Wildfong. "When they catch fire, they are incredibly difficult to put out."

Wildfong notes that factory-installed beaters with their small throats seem to be choke points on combines. While underneath one trying to clean it out, he started asking himself what could be done about it. Horsepower wasn't the problem.

"When you pay for 500 hp., why not use it," says Wildfong.

To reduce plugging up with fine debris, they kept the OEM circumference but went with a smaller drum. They also beefed it up.

"We designed a beater using heavy-duty oil field pipe instead of the cheap, light, thin steel pipe used by OEMs," says Wildfong.

"We welded on brackets to bolt on wear plates. The plates beat down rocks and pass the debris through."

Wildfong's design is closed. If a fire does break out, it won't spread like it does in OEM open designs.

Unlike other after-market beater makers, the Wildfongs dynamically balance the beaters.

"We put them in a high-speed balancer and run them at 1,000 rpm's," explains Wildfong. "A combine only runs at 500 rpm's."

He notes that a little vibration from poorly balanced beaters can result in premature bearing failure. "A properly balanced beater should save the bearings," says Wildfong. "They'll last as long as the beater."

The Wildfongs tested out the new design on their own fields first. In 2015 he installed one on his Deere 690, while his dad operated a second 690 with the OEM beater.

"We were harvesting barley when we hit a low spot that was still green," says Wildfong. "My dad's plugged up, but mine went right through it. He was plugged for two to three hours while I kept harvesting."

He points out that a plugged beater often means replacing the drive belt. That can add \$200 to \$300 to the lost time.

"We made a few tweaks to the design and got it where we like it," says Wildfong. "We are farmers and want the absolute best design. I hate getting out of the combine to unplug or fix a problem."

Since first introducing it in 2015, the beater has been priced at \$3,500 (Can.). Wildfong notes that rising costs are making an end-of-year increase necessary.

"The price will be \$4,000 on January 1, except for FARM SHOW readers," says Wildfong. "We will honor the \$3,500 (Can.) price for FARM SHOW readers through the end of January."

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No-Wire universal concaves from Wildfong Enterprises have laid back ledges and a 1-in. opening.

## Farmers Fine-tune Rock Hard Concaves

First introduced in 2014, Wildfong Enterprises' concaves made from armor plate grade steel just got an upgrade in design.

In late November, the company announced new No-Wire Concaves. They are designed to be universal concaves, fitting all crops, but built with corn, soybean and rice customers in mind.

"Our early adopters report the new design can't be beaten by regular wire concaves," says Russel Wildfong, Wildfong Enterprises. "Instead of wires, the concave bars have a ledge that holds up pods, cobs and heads of wheat long enough to get threshed out in front of the crossbars."

He adds that the ledges are laid back to help prevent chewing up corn cobs and straw, which can overload the shoe, causing loss over the chaffer.

"The 1-in. opening between the bars and the ledges practically eliminates rotor loss," says Wildfong.

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The Haybuster from Kramer Manufacturing can handle 4 or 6 round bales at once.

## Processor Handles Up To Six Hay Bales

"When we started building these units, no bale processor carried more than two bales at a time. We decided to build a machine that would carry four to six bales at once to feed up to 300 cows in one trip rather than multiple trips," says James Gokie, owner of Kramer Manufacturing.

These specialized four or six bale processors begin as Haybuster 2660/2665 cutting units pulled straight from the Haybuster Duratec Industries assembly line in N. Dak. From there, they're mounted to Kramer's customized beds.

To load the machine, the bed is lifted at an angle as the operator reverses the tractor into a row of bales. Using hydraulic flow controls matching the tractor speed with the bed's three live chains, the unit slowly pulls bales onto the trailer. To complete the loading, the first bale is pushed into the processor, the bed lowered, and the final bale picked up.

The long trailers feature eight wheels, four on each side with oscillating axles to sup-

port and distribute weight and keep all tires equally on irregular or crown-shaped roads.

"Even on a washboard road, the axles will kind of dance," Gokie says. "The load will be nice and smooth rather than jumping around."

At the feeding area, the processor uses a high-speed rotor and heavy-duty flails to discharge material onto the ground or into bunks.

Kramer Manufacturing has been in business for 87 years and ships equipment internationally to Canada, Russia and Ukraine, in addition to 37 U.S. states. Dealerships are established mainly throughout the Dakotas, Wyo., Kan. and Mont. regions where cattle aren't able to graze through the winter.

The 4-bale processors sell for \$33,000 and 6-bale units for \$33,750 plus S&H.

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## Unload Grain Fast With The Pit Stop

There's no guessing where to stop to unload a trailer or gravity box of grain into a pit or auger if you're using the "Pit Stop". A bright 42 LED light on a tripod turns on when it's perfectly lined up. With a 12-volt battery to power the light and retroreflective sensor, the portable setup can be moved anywhere it's needed.

The Pit Stop is the brainchild of Dewey VanDerPol, a retired master electrician with experience working at grain elevators and fertilizer plants. During harvest, he operates grain carts for farmers, and he often ended up waiting for empty trucks to return.

"Some farmers have up to eight semitrucks and not enough drivers. The trailers are different sizes with different wheelbases," he says. That makes it hard to know exactly where to stop to unload, and it wastes time as drivers are directed to back up or go ahead, or if they are alone, get in and out of the truck multiple times.

With his experience and encouragement from his wife, he invented and makes The Pit Stop, which is easy for producers to set up.

First, park the truck exactly where it needs to unload. Set up the tripod about 6 ft. from the front of the trailer so the driver can see it. Add a strip of reflective tape to the trailer and activate it with the weatherproof sensor. Drive the truck ahead so the rear hopper is lined up and repeat.

Once set up, drivers stop when the light turns on indicating they are in the right position.

"It saves a lot of time," VanDerPol says. "I have three farmers that have gravity boxes, and they use The Pit Stop to help line up wagons. Also, a farmer uses it for unloading



The Pit Stop is an LED light operated from a sensor and reflective strip on a trailer to help with unloading.

silage wagons."

The Minnesota inventor has been selling them for the past three years and had good response at events such as Big Iron in Fargo and Farmfest in Minnesota.

"I sold them for \$345 at Big Iron and my stock was pretty depleted," he notes, adding prices may go up if the part costs go up. The most expensive part is the industrial-grade sensor.

The tripods come in black, red and green, and this winter VanDerPol is working on modifying the tripod so it can be packed in a shorter box to make shipping more feasible.

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