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Innovative Ladder Design Offers Easier Combine Access

Sometimes, necessity truly is the mother of invention. For one inventive farmer, an older Massey Ferguson combine's access ladder, with its angled design and sturdy railings, sparked an idea.

"The Massey ladder made climbing up and down much safer than the straight, vertical ladders found on most John Deere models," says Ron McDonald, an Iowa-based farmer.

The insight inspired McDonald to reimagine access for Deere combine operators, many of whom struggle with the factory-installed steps, especially when working behind a 6-row head.

McDonald's solution is the EZ Climb Ladder, a custom-built extension ladder designed to replace Deere's original steeply angled steps with a more farmer-friendly alternative.

The EZ Climb Ladder extends down and backward over the tires toward the rear of the machine. The steps are closely spaced for comfort, and the unit uses the combine's existing mounts, swinging out from a pivot point near the cab. It includes a sturdy standard outside railing and the option of a second inner railing. An additional bottom step

swings up for convenience and is secured by a sturdy latch system for extra support.

What began in McDonald's shop next to a Deere dealership has grown over the past seven or eight years. Today, he produces around 40 ladders annually, with word spreading through social media and satisfied neighbors. The EZ Climb Ladders cover a wide range of Deere models, including the 9400, 9500, STS, 600 and 700 series, and the X9. Even Deere has shown support, occasionally delivering combines to McDonald's shop for installations.

The ladders are welded as a single piece on a custom jig, then sandblasted and powder-coated for durability. Perforated steps and platforms are rated for heavy use, and each ladder is designed to mirror standard Deere equipment.

The EZ Climb Ladders sell for between \$4,000 and \$4,500 and can be picked up at McDonald's shop or shipped anywhere in North America.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Ron McDonald, EZ Climb Ladder, Maquoketa, Iowa (ph 563-357-0813).



"I had a zero-turn I didn't need, so I cut off the front end and extended the frame rails to hold a 4 by 4-ft. plywood sheet," says Colson.

Zero-Turn Feed Buggy

Bobby Colson converted an extra zero-turn mower into a self-propelled feed buggy. He needed a way to deliver feed to his six large quail pens each day.

"I have a ton of feed delivered every month, but at 87 years of age, I didn't want to have to lift buckets of feed into a pickup bed," says Colson. "With the feed buggy, I am lifting the buckets up and down only about 18 in. It's easy to transport the feed to the quail pens."

Quail aren't just a hobby for the former beekeeper. He has 175 laying hens and a three-door freezer he repurposed into a 2,000-egg incubator. At any given time, he has several thousand quail spread across six pens and several brooder houses, all of which require feed.

"I had a zero-turn I didn't need, so I cut off the front end and extended the frame rails to hold a 4 by 4-ft. plywood sheet," says Colson.

"I mounted the old front caster wheels to the front of the extended frame."

Colson used 2 by 2-in. steel tubing for the extension and bolted it to the original frame.

"With the extension in place, it did take me a little time to get used to turning," notes Colson. "I've also found that if I load the weight close to the front end, the drive wheels will spin. If I made another one, I would try to center the load better."

Colson admits he likely won't make a replacement. This version works well enough.

"I just put the buckets on and drive from one pen to the next," he says. "I get lots of comments on it from customers who stop by to pick up quail."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Bobby Colson, 945 Sinkhole Rd., Register, Ga. 30452 (ph 912-515-0294).



Operators can fine-tune elevator tilt and chain speed from the cab, streamlining the feeding process.

New Advances In Multi-Feeder Wagons

Hustler Equipment has raised the bar for multi-feeder wagons with its updated Combi RX2 Series.

"First launched in 2019, the original Combi RX line quickly gained traction among farmers worldwide," says a Hustler promotional release. "Now, with our Series 2, Hustler has responded directly to user feedback, refining its design to meet the needs of today's agricultural operators."

The RX2 is Hustler's latest series, featuring practical upgrades driven by market demand, including a wider machine frame for handling various bale sizes and a redesigned front fence that dramatically improves visibility. An improved access ladder makes it easier to climb in and out for inspection or maintenance.

Among the standout features are new cross-floor chain guides engineered to minimize derailment and a lighter yet stronger pusher blade. The North American RX2 line consists of three models: the tandem-axle-equipped RX148 and RX178, and the RX218, which features a tridem steering-suspension axle. All three use a pusher system to move feed onto the discharge elevator, eliminating the need for gearboxes and frequent adjustments.

The RX2 Series wagons process bales or loose feed of any type or size, with load capacities of 10,000, 14,000 and 17,000 kg, respectively.

"A single joystick in the tractor cab controls the all-hydraulic drive system, with load-sensing capabilities that automatically adjust feed rates for consistency. Operators can fine-tune elevator tilt and chain speed from the joystick, streamlining the feeding process while retaining flexibility," the release explains.

For those seeking data-driven efficiency, the wagon's FeedLink app-based scale system wirelessly connects to smartphones or tablets, eliminating the need for a fixed scale head. Farmers can track both the amount and exact location of feed delivery using integrated geolocation.

The RX2 Series is available now. Interested customers are encouraged to contact their nearest dealer for pricing and availability.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Hustler Equipment, North America, 21725 Hamburg Ave., Lakeville, Minn. 55044 (ph 612-351-4885; sales.na@hustlerequipment.com; www.hustlerequipment.com).



Patch is soft and pliable but hardens into a steel-like material when exposed to UV light.

Patch Covers Problems Fast

GlassSTEEL from Grain Elevator Repair Products is a quick solution for worn or damaged equipment. The UV-cured patch bonds to metal, concrete, plastic and more in just 5 min.

The patch is soft and pliable but hardens into a steel-like material when exposed to UV light. It's FDA-compliant, waterproof, and resistant to chemicals, water and abrasion.

The GlassSTEEL patch works through an easy 5-step process, including UV curing.

It can patch pinholes, rust spots, cracks and more. Prices range from \$20.98 for a 3 by 6-in. patch to \$79.95 for a 9 by 12-in. patch. It's also available in larger-quantity packages.

Grain Elevator Repair Products also

offers a liquid GlassSTEEL version called UV Ceramic Armor. It's recommended for intricate areas and as a grout for tile. It can also be used to create a sloped edge to prevent material buildup. If less than 1/8 in. thick, it hardens to mild steel in about 5 min. under UV light.

UV Ceramic Armor is available in 7 oz. and 24 oz. amounts for \$19.95 and \$59.95, respectively. It can be applied by hand or with an applicator gun (\$49.95).

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Grain Elevator Repair Products, LLC, 3880 Hulén St., Suite 530, Fort Worth, Texas 76107 (ph 817-494-0005; sales@grainelevatorproducts.com; www.grainelevatorproducts.com).