



"Old-fashioned" dairy barn is actually a freestall set-up with room to store 500 big round bales.

DESIGNED FOR EFFICIENT FEEDING AND STORAGE

This Barn's Built To Handle Round Bales

Two Michigan dairymen who've built what may be the dairy barn of the future say the "round bale features" they built into their barn will make feeding and handling round bales no more difficult than slinging loose hay out of a loft.

Brothers John and Mike McCormack, who farm together near Sunfield, say their "old-fashioned looking" new barn is actually a free-stall barn for 80 to 100 cows that has storage in an upper loft for 500 1,500-lbs. round bales.

The first-of-its-kind barn was well on its way to completion when FARM SHOW stopped in to take a look. The two men designed the barn and have done practically all the work themselves over the past three years.

The solidly built barn is unique in that it contains a 40 by 80 ft. loft that's 31 ft. from floor to peak. With room for 500 big bales, the brothers had to design a floor that would support the approximately 375 tons of hay. They solved the problem with solid steel I-beams girders and steel joists on 8-in. centers that they welded to the I-beams. The lower walls that support the loft are all poured concrete that looks like brick from the outside because it was poured in brick imprinted forms.

The loft has a false floor that's located directly above concrete round bale feeders below. A winch to be installed in the loft will be used to remove the false floor and to drop bales down to the feeders.

The barn will be equipped with a double-six herringbone milking parlor, a storage area, and a farm office. The free-stall area is in a separate pole-type building attached to the barn.

"When you're feeding dairy cows you need good storage for hay bales," says Mike. "This barn will take care of everything — we can milk, feed and store hay in it, saving both time and labor."

The brothers have taken their time on the barn, reducing expenses by using some 20,000 board feet of their own homegrown lumber and salvaging steel for the support structure. They've figured everything out as they go along without a blueprint. Mike says they hope to finish the barn by the end of the year.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Mike McCormack, 7924 Musgrove Hwy., Sunfield, Mich. 48890 (ph 517 566-8188).



Once completed, big bales will drop through floor of big bale storage loft into concrete feeders below.



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"Convert-A-Topper"

The new "Convert-A-Cap" pickup topper from S & D Manufacturing, Alto, Mich., retracts with the flick of a wrist to take up just 15 in. of space at the front of the pickup box. This allows you to haul tall loads, dump dirt or other materials into the box with a tractor loader, or hook up to a gooseneck trailer.

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The topper is made of heavy duty vinyl, reinforced with nylon, that maintains its flexibility, yet is tear and fire resistant. The material can be patched, if punctured, and is waterproof and mildew-proof. It comes in nine colors to match just about any pickup.

The Convert-A-Cap is made to fit any pickup, including full-size, short bed trucks, mid-size pickups and minitrucks. It can also be special-designed to fit other farm trucks and flatbeds.

The Convert-A-Cap sells for \$395 for a mid-size S-10 pickup top.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Dave DeVries, S. & D. Manufacturing, 8358-68th St., Alto, Mich. 49302 (ph 616 868-7310).



Topper slides forward for unloading or to haul big loads.

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