Developing Countries Farm Radio Network

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**No more flat tires on your wagon or cart**

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Information on this subject area was requested by DCFRN participants in Brazil, Colombia, Dominica, Fiji, Ghana, Guyana, India, Lesotho, Malawi, Papua New Guinea, Philippines,Tanzania, Thailand, and Uganda.

Presenter: Glenn Powell

**Suggested introduction**

We at this radio station are part of a world-wide information network that gathers farming information from developing countries all over the world. It's the Developing Countries Farm Radio Network, sponsored by the Canadian International Development Agency, Massey Ferguson, and the University of Guelph.

Through this Network, we bring you information on ways to increase food supplies for your family, or to sell—ways that other farmers have used successfully.

Today, for you farmers who have problems with flat tires on farm vehicles, we have a solution. Here's Glenn Powell.

**POWELL:** If you have a farm wagon with rubber tires, I'm sure that sometimes you have the same problem other farmers have all over the world—flat tires!

When you have a flat tire on your cart or wagon, perhaps you fix it yourself or maybe you pay someone else to fix it.

Whatever way you do it, special patching material has to be used, the patch must be good enough to hold air from leaking out of the tire or the air valve must be good, and the tire must have air pumped into it.

No matter how you think of it, rubber tires on farm vehicles do require special care all the time, especially when air leaks out of them and they get soft—or worse yet, when they get flat. And of course, a vehicle with flat tires or even with just one tire that's flat is much harder to pull or push than when the tire has lots of air in it. Not only that, using the vehicle when a tire is flat or when it doesn't have enough air in it is bad for the tire and can damage it.

Well, some farmers in Kenya have discovered a very good way to solve the problem of flat tires on farm carts and wagons that are not ever pulled at speeds faster than 15 kilometres an hour (about 10 miles per hour). They're using an idea that engineers in the Food and Agriculture Organization Farm Mechanization Program have developed, and it works very well for them. They simply take the punctured tire off the wheel, fill it full of sawdust and put it back on again. While mounting the tire on the wheel, the sawdust should stay in place a little better if it's slightly damp when you pack it into the empty tire. Using sawdust like this, the Kenyan farmers don't need any inner tube and they don't have to worry about pumping air into the tire any more.

The Kenyan farmers have found that when tires on their farm vehicles are filled with sawdust, they are just as easy to pull as they were when filled with air, and that they never get flat, even if a nail or something like that punctures the tire.

They've also found that when they have sawdust-filled tires on their farm carts, they can quite easily carry weights of up to 500 kilograms (just over 1/2 a ton).

Perhaps you may want to try out this idea next time you have a flat tire on your farm cart or wagon.

Serving Agriculture, the Basic Industry, this is Glenn Powell.