



By Steve Travichevich of The Free Press

With farm help scarce, Mac Watson figures he might as well get the most out of machines, such as producing bales of hay weighing about 1,200 pounds and 5½ feet in

diameter. The Elgin County cow-calf operator decided this year to completely mechanize his haying operation. He finds the operation saves a lot of work.

Haymaker

*The new way to bale hay
Starting now in this community*

Machine saves time, labor

Free Press St. Thomas Bureau

ST. THOMAS — Farmer Mac Watson of RR 2, St. Thomas, decided this year to put his money where his hay is.

He went all mechanical in harvesting hay for his Yarmouth Township cow-calf operation and bought a baler that forms huge round bales weighing 1,200 to 1,500 pounds each.

"The baler, along with other machines, saves a lot of work," he said Monday after finishing baling on 100 acres at a Southwold Township farm at Middlemarch.

"I have no worry about having help during the hay harvest either," he said.

The machine can bale about 50 acres of hay in a day, and leaves the heavy bales, which run about 5½ feet in diameter and 5½ feet long, in the field.

He leaves many of the bales in the field and says they shed water like "a thatched roof."

"I don't even have to worry about help in hauling the bales inside the barns, or possibly having a barn fire from spontaneous hay combustion," said Mr. Watson.

It's not difficult getting farm help to drive machines, but for the more difficult jobs of loading hay on wagons and into barns, it is, he said.

Mr. Watson tried the round baler last year and decided it was worth the investment.

If he does move some bales from field to barn, he drives a fork-lift attachment mounted on a tractor, into the huge bale, and lifts it on or off a wagon.

Cattle can nibble away at bales left in the fields even during the winter, said Mr. Watson.

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