

Tail-Gator makes life a lot easier

Slipping and sliding through winter? Well, it doesn't have to be that way, according to a Brampton man who's selling a revolutionary product called the Tail-Gator.

The Tail-Gator, patented in British Columbia, is a motorized device that slips onto the back of a

pick-up truck and spreads "anything granular," said Andy McCutcheon, of International Trade Marketing in Brampton.

It will spread "salt, fertilizer and any granular material," he says. "People in rural communities could use it for fertilizer and feed."

Tail-Gator weighs about 118 pounds and is about three feet high. It is powered by a four-horsepower air-cooled engine and has a hopper capacity of four cubic feet. It will spread grains from eight to 12 feet, and can spread for 12 to 17 minutes when the gauge is half-open, said Mr. McCutcheon.

And the Tail-Gator has a future. "Presently, we're setting up negotiations with the Canadian Tire Corporation," said Mr. McCutcheon. "We're very optimistic that they'll buy this product."

International Trade Marketing, a distributor of Tail-Gator in Ontario, said Sears and other large corporations have been approached to buy the product.

Customers most likely to buy the Tail-Gator would be regional governments responsible for road safety, large corporations who want to reduce liabilities, landscapers who want to provide "a better service" to their customers, and farmers with "two-mile long driveways," said Mr. McCutcheon.

Golf courses and farm fields could also benefit from the use of the spreader, he said.

The hopper bin of the Tail-Gator

is made of polypropylene, a lightweight synthetic material that resists corrosion. The 1989 Tail-Gator, developed after three years of inventive research, is the second model. It can be operated by one person, unlike the prototype, which took two to manoeuvre.

The Tail-Gator has been safeguarded against little hands being caught, says Mr. McCutcheon. Normal sized-fingers couldn't reach the flinger (the apparatus that quickly turns to rotate the grains) and the flinger is protected by wire mesh, with openings about one inch in diameter.

Painted on every Tail-Gator is a warning sign telling passers-by to "Keep back 15 metres." But Mr. McCutcheon said this sign is only a precautionary measure. The sand or salt would never be thrown that far, he said.

And the Tail-Gator has a safety switch. The steel gate lifts up to disengage the agitator in the hopper, he said.

The Tail-Gator can be attached to any size pick-up, utility trailer, gardening trailer or All-Terrain Vehicle, said Mr. McCutcheon. It could replace the present

method of salting and sanding that includes five-ton trucks that become rusted from exposure to the salt and sand grains.

Mr. McCutcheon is owner of International Trade Marketing in Brampton working with his partner, Jeff Pries. He recently left the Canadian Armed Forces from a base in Petawawa, Ontario after spending time in Iran and Iraq last summer.

Mr. McCutcheon, now in sales, is very optimistic about Tail-Gator.

"The first company who takes it will be the smart company," he said.

Bridges up to par

Two bridges in Halton Hills have been opened to heavy truck traffic once more.

Last summer, the Norval bridge had a five-tonne limit for vehicles placed on it and in 1985, vehicles using the Ballinacree bridge had a limit of eight tonnes placed on them.

Both bridges have now been reconstructed and the Ministry of Transport has now removed the restrictions on the bridges.



The Tail-Gator portable sand spreader is a new device patented by a Canadian inventor.

The Tail-Gator will spread any granular material, and could be useful to farmers.

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