

.....“ The trouble started...when beekeepers began reporting sudden colony losses of 30% to 90%. ” see page 30 >>

+ farmstead

Rut to Road

Use your tractor with a couple of attachments to convert that muddy seasonal trail into a hardy, year-round road.

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WHETHER IT'S THE MAIN DRIVEWAY

to your home place or that trail from the hay yard to the feeding pens, with relatively minimal effort you can ensure those passageways will be reliable in all seasons. Entire libraries have been written on building roads, but with a little know-how, some common sense, and a few tools, you can build and maintain quality farm roads.

Siting

Ideally, you'll want your road to avoid serious lows, so when mapping its path, follow a natural ridge if possible. In most cases, however, you'll end up with an occasional low-ground crossing.

Even if you're crossing relatively flat ground, plan to build your road at least several inches above the surrounding soil to prevent it from becoming soggy and soft.

Build It

Once you have the roadway mapped out, equip your tractor with a loader and box blade to scrape away the vegetation and several inches of topsoil along the route. Stockpile that topsoil for other uses around the farm.

Create a shallow ditch on either side of the road, which will help convey water from the road surface during heavy downpours. Use your tractor with the box