

Fransgard Winch Model V-3507



Troy Tarbell and Firewood Harvesting

Troy Tarbell is a fourth generation resident on a property in North Springfield which had been purchased by his forebears back in 1918. Active as a farm until Troy's boyhood years, the 80-acre property now serves him as a source of firewood and sawlogs and as a site for the woods work that he obviously enjoys. Troy has two farm tractors, both of which exhibit the appearance of machinery well maintained, as I might expect from a mechanic and machine operator such as Troy. But upon my arrival we left the 50-hp John Deere behind and traveled out into the woodlot with his 16-year-old Ford 28-hp tractor. Attached to the back was a Fransgard V-3507 tractor winch.

Troy harvests about eight cords of firewood yearly, selling six and burning two in the relatively new house that he built on the family property. On this day, however, he had a hitch of saw logs to bring out. Part of his woodland is former pastureland, long since taken over by white pine, some of which has been badly deformed by weevils. Troy is a good land steward and is gradually improving the property.

The Fransgard winch has two pulleys for the skidding cable, one being an optional add-on. With a light tractor such as Troy's it is always best to align the machine with the direction of pull; a small tractor is not stable enough as a support for a heavy sideways pull. Because it is not always possible to place the tractor in an ideal position, the top pulley swivels sideways and has extra support. An advantage of a high pulley such as this, perched on top of the winch

The woodlot operator or weekend logger should not be without one—a practical and versatile well-built winch mounted on the back of his tractor. The amount of labor is reduced, the land receives a kinder treatment, and, of utmost importance, safer operation is possible. Part-time loggers often use farm-style tractors with power in the 25–50-hp range so the limitations of this type of machine require a properly designed winch for efficient operation.

There are a number of rugged tractor winches on the market that are quite versatile and not extremely expensive. Most are made to quickly attach onto a 3-point hitch, to operate on a PTO, and to easily remove and store when not in use.

One of the well-established winch manufacturers on the market is Fransgard, a Denmark company that has created a good net-

work of dealers and parts suppliers in the U.S. A few months ago, Fransgard came out with a new winch model designed for tractors in the 25–50-hp range with some improved features for use on lighter-weight tractors. The model is designated the V-3507.

I was able to arrange visits with a couple of users located in Vermont.

SPECS

Fransgard Tractor Winch – Model-3507

Weight	408 lbs.
Height (w/protection screen)	5 ft. 1 in.
Protection screen	28 in. x 41 in.
Top pulley height	at 51 in.
Lower pulley height	at 19.3 in.
Dozer blade	19 in. x 50 in.
PTO attachment height	at 19.3 in.
3-point linkage	Category 1
Pulling power	7,275 lbs.
Cable drum capacity	
diameter	5/16 in.
length	150 ft.
recommended length	130 ft.
Pulling speed per second (at 540 rpm)	2 ft. to 5 ft.
Tractor power	
minimum	25 hp/hk,
maximum	45 hp/hk
Price	\$3,785 (plus freight)

Manufacturer: Fransgard A/S North America

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Manufacturer's Comments: The V-3507, one of several models available for all sizes of tractors, is a fine example of our dedication to meeting our market's demands. It is ideally suited to fit the larger compact tractors that have become so popular in recent years. These tractors have higher ground clearance and are thus well-suited for forestry work. With over 25 years of market experience, Fransgard is continuously improving its position as the number one brand of forestry winches in North America. We not only strive for quality but safety is our first and foremost preoccupation. There are no optional protective screens on Fransgard winches—they are included!



Troy Tarbell and his Fransgard winch pull a log out of a wet area, powered by his 28-hp Ford tractor.

frame and over 4 feet above ground level, is the decreased resistance given the log being skidded and thus less damage to the land. Having a longer distance between the top pulley and the cable drum also allows for smoother spooling of the cable.

The use of a pulley on top of the frame will, of course, put downward pressure on the winch frame and tend to dig the bottom blade into the ground, helping the tractor not to slide. However, with a light tractor such as Troy's, a heavy pull will tend to lift the

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A hitch of logs is released at the sawmill.



The blade of the winch is used to nudge the log along the ground-level log deck at the sawmill.

front end of the machine. So, for heavier pulls, the V-3507 winch has the option of installing a lower winch, located about 19 inches above ground level. This winch is also on a swivel and can be easily swung into place over the cable. The addition of this optional winch is certainly recommended.

As with other makes of tractor winches, the Fransgard has a locking latch on the cable drum to prevent the log from sliding backwards and a handle which can easily release the latch if necessary. A bracket on the cable drum provides tension on the drum in order to prevent unspooling when pulling out the cable.

I followed Troy as he chained a couple of logs onto the tow bar of the winch and headed for his small sawmill. He has a Turner mill which he purchased seven years ago and now uses to saw 30–50 MBF yearly. It's a small mill with a 20-foot deck, capable of handling logs up to 30 inches in diameter and powered by a 13-hp Honda motor. Troy loves the mill and couldn't say enough good things

about it. He praised the height indicator and the design of operating the band saw on rubber surface wheels for better tension. As he said, "the parts are simple and I can buy or make replacement parts quite easily."

Troy left me with the impression of an ambitious woodlot owner who enjoys using and caring for the land. His machinery is well maintained, protected from the weather, and looks almost new despite a few years of use.



Albert Wood uses the rope control for safe operation.

Albert Wood and the Sugar Bush Dilemma

Then there is Albert Wood of Randolph, Vermont. For many years Albert had a good quality-control position working for a leading furniture manufacturer with a factory in Randolph. He planned to continue with the company until his retirement years; planned, that is, until the company discovered that furniture could be made cheaper in China and closed the plant. Now Albert drives a community bus and finds that he has a couple of free days per week for working in his sugar bush and woodlot.

His house is the only structure left of the old family farm; the once large acreage is now reduced to about 35 acres. Included in the property is a 25-acre sugar bush, which Albert has nurtured and

developed for years. Stretched across the hillside are at least 10,000 feet of sap line, strung out to about 3,500 taps. Production annually runs about 350 gallons of maple syrup.

Removing unwanted and unhealthy material from the wooded area keeps him as busy as he wants to be during his available time. He cuts no saw logs, just firewood, harvesting about 20 cords yearly for his home and his son's. However, harvesting wood in a sugar bush presents some unique problems. The sap lines are left permanently attached to the trees, not far off of the ground, so the use of machinery is obviously limited. Given these circumstances, Albert saw the need to employ the use of a winch that would attach to his tractor.

In the spring of 2008 Albert fol-



The log is chained to a notch on the draw bar of the winch.

lowed a recommendation and purchased a Fransgard model V-3507. His small New Holland tractor only generates 27 hp at the PTO, but is able to handle this winch quite well. I was with him as he

pulled out a couple of low-grade tree stems and described the effectiveness of the Fransgard winch for skidding out logs underneath the sap lines.

Albert has also discovered a number of practical applications for the blade at the base of the winch frame. In addition to stacking the firewood logs, he uses it to smooth out rough spots in the woods road and to improve the ditches along the town road.

Both of these operators agreed that the Fransgard V-3507 is a very practical tool for their woodlot activities, requires minimal service, and is easy to work on. ■

Bill Gove is retired from a forestry career with private industry and with state government as a wood utilization specialist and lives in Williamstown, Vermont. He is a regular contributor and is the author of several books on the history of railroading and logging.



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