



## Operating & Maintenance Instructions - Soft Hands Bale Grab





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### Safety information

- Allow only experienced tractor/loader drivers to operate this machine.
- The implement is only suitable for handling round bales of straw, hay or silage.
- Only operate this machine from the tractor/loader seat (work station).
- Lower the implement to the ground and switch off the tractor/loader engine before approaching the working zone of the implement.
- Operate only when bystanders are at a safe distance. Under no circumstances should anybody work underneath or in the near vicinity of a suspended bale.
- Before attempting any maintenance, turn off the tractor/loader engine and release any residual hydraulic pressure to the ram by operating the spool valve in both directions.
- When detached from the tractor/loader the implement should be parked with the bale arms open for greater stability.
- When quick release brackets are fitted to the backplate always use the tractor/loader to lift the implement. If quick release brackets are not fitted the grab can be lifted safely by closing the bale arms, setting the implement on its back with the arms facing upward and attaching a sling through the arms. Always lift slowly to check stability.

### General Overview

The soft hands bale grab is designed to handle round bales up to 1600mm in diameter and 1200kgs in weight. The left or right arm can also be locked off for use in confined areas via a quick release pin housed on the attachment backframe.

**Fitting to tractor/loader** is achieved via appropriate quick release brackets to match your machine type. Any grabs purchased without brackets fitted should have appropriate brackets fitted by a competent person, to ensure any welding work is carried out to an appropriate standard. If in doubt, please ask.

**Pre-Use Checks** should be carried out before the grab is used. Firstly, operate the grab to bleed off any air in hydraulic system, and to check if the operation corresponds to the desired action from the cab, rotate hydraulic hoses in needed to reverse action. It is advisable to check before each period of use, e.g. daily, for any signs of hydraulic oil leakage on hose connections, on the hydraulic cylinder ports and seals. Any leakage, even minor, can effect the grabs ability to properly grip a bale, and could potentially result in a bale slipping out of the grab during use.

**Period Checks** should also be carried out as appropriate. Check hoses and rams for damage and wear. Check pivot pins and any fasteners to ensure they are tight and secure, and ensure any moving points are greased via the grease points provided, such as the main pivot pins and the hydraulic ram pivot points. It is recommended that you open the arms fully on the grab to access the grease points on the main pivot pins from the front of the grab. Close the arms fully for access to the grease points on the ram from the rear. Before accessing any of the grease points, ensure the grab is on flat even ground and is stable, switch off the machine engine and remove the ignition key.

If draining down the ram and hoses, turn off the tractor/loader engine and release any residual pressure. Then use a container and dispose of any fluid in the correct manner.

**To operate** the bale grab, approach a bale with the arms open, and drive slowly forward until the bale is completely inside the grab radius, the bale should contact the rear of the frame. Once engaged, close the arms around the bale, ensuring a firm squeeze is achieved. You can now safely lift the grab and bale. To lift a bale on it's side, follow the same procedure, but articulate the head stock of the tractor/loader and approach the bale from directly overhead. When releasing and stacking bales, ensure that the bale is secure in/on the stack before fully releasing the grab.

Never exceed the rated capacity of the machine or the grab – If in doubt ask!