Photo left, elevated position for adjustable, truck-mounted platform showing a worker pruning a tree in a citrus orchard. Arrow points to crank used to wind cable within telescoping pipe supports.

Photo right, shows down-position of the truck-mounted platform. Waist-high guard rail may be hinged to fold down, or made detachable to allow clearance and reduce wind resistance on the highway.

TRUCK-MOUNTED PLATFORM ELEVATES ORCHARD WORKERS

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THE TRUCK-MOUNTED, adjustable platform shown in photos was developed for use in spraying, pruning, and harvesting of small-scale plots. It might also be adapted to a number of other farm operations. A hundred-gallon spray rig can be carried in the bed of the truck plus a generator for electricity or a pump to supply hydraulic pressure. This low-cost unit was designed for a half-ton pickup and with slight modifications will fit almost all makes. It also can be modified for use on tractors or trailers.

The platform consists of a 2-ft-wide catwalk of expanded steel flooring extending the width of the truck bed. The framework is built of angle iron and steel pipe. Supporting legs are two diameters of steel pipe, one sliding inside the other so the platform can be raised as needed. The lifting mechanism consists of cables attached to the bottom of the inside pipe and running up through the pipe to a shaft attached near the top of the outside pipe. Rotation of the shaft by means of a detachable crank (see arrow on photos) winds up the cable and raises the platform. The shaft should be equipped with a safety ratchet which prevents backlash of the handle in the event that it slips from the operator's hands. Holes drilled at intervals through both pipes allow insertion of blocking bolts to hold the platform at the desired height. The waist-high guard rail should be hinged to allow it to be folded down when not in use, or it may be detachable—to allow clearance in passing under service station overhangs, etc. The platform is of welded construction, but is bolted to the bed and frame of the truck so that it may be removed when not in use or for a change of trucks.

Roadability of the truck was not materially affected with the railing of the platform removed. With the railing in place, enough drag results so that gas mileage is affected at highway speeds. Made strong enough and bolted to the frame of the truck, the body of the platform might offer added protection as a roll-bar to occupants of the cab in the event of an accident. Cost of materials to build the prototype shown in the photo totaled about $115.

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