

# Hay Rake

Antique hay rakes can take two basic forms. The earliest hay rakes were hand tools and looked much like a rake with extra space between the teeth. These are still used in some areas of the world. There are also rakes pulled by teams of horses, mules or oxen, and later, rakes pulled by tractors.

Later hay rakes were horse drawn. These were dump rakes; wide, two wheeled machines that had curved iron teeth. They were operated by the farmer from a seat mounted over the rake.

When tractors were introduced to the farm, hay rakes were developed that attached to the back of a tractor. Instead of horses, a tractor pulled the rake. The main part of the rake was made from wood while the wheels and teeth were metal, usually iron or steel. Later rakes were made almost completely from metal. The hay rake was used to collect cut hay into windrows to prepare it to be baled or loaded on a wagon. The hay was fluffed up and turned so that it would dry.

The rake teeth dragged the ground collecting the cut hay. When the teeth were full, they were lifted which left the hay in a pile. More hay was then added to the pile, or windrow with each pass.