

# Metal Roofing Catching On Fast For Home Use

By Mick Lane

Farmers have used "tin" roofs for years on barns and sheds but a home with a metal roof is still a rare sight.

That might be about to change, thanks to a variety of new roofing products that give metal roofing the look of conventional shingles or even cedar shakes, slate, or clay tiles.

Metal roofing is normally made from aluminum, steel or copper. Aluminum roofing is usually anodized, which gives it a harder, more durable surface. Steel is usually coated with galvanizing. Copper can be used bare, which allows it to age and discolor naturally.

Metal roofs have a number of important advantages over shingles, says Robert Reinke, owner of Reinke Shakes, Inc., Hebron, Nebraska. His father founded Reinke Shakes in 1976 when he couldn't find the right roofing for buildings for his irrigation equipment company.

"They're lighter than shingles, easy to install and more resistant to weather," he says. "The main advantage is that they're permanent. Once you put on a metal roof, you never have to replace it."

FARM SHOW tracked down a number of metal roofing manufacturers and contractors, and some do an unlimited warranty, although most vary between 20 and 50 years.

"If you take care of the roof, it's feasible that it could still be just as good as new in 150 years," says Mike Chavez, an estimator and design consultant with Metal Sales Manufacturing, Inc., Sellersburg, Indiana. Metal Sales produces a full line of metal siding and roofing products.

"If the color fades after the warranty runs out, or if you just want to change the color of

your roof, it's much easier to clean it and repaint it than it is to re-roof," Reinke notes.

Although metal roofs have been available for residential use for some time, they've recently started catching on in a big way. The number of companies offering metal roofing is increasing. Some familiar old names in the farm building business, like Butler Manufacturing, Chief Industries and Varco-Pruden, have gotten into residential roofing.

A big development recently occurred when Owens-Corning, one of the biggest names in fiberglass and composition shingles, purchased Vail Metal Systems, Inc., a metal roofing company in Edwards, Colorado. Owens-Corning is now marketing the product nationwide.

While metal roofs have a number of advantages over traditional shingle roofing, they have one outstanding disadvantage. Galvanized steel is more expensive than conventional shingles by at least two times. Copper and aluminum are the most expensive, sometimes quoted at five times more than shingles.

Glenn Hechler, manager of ATAS International, Allentown, Pennsylvania, says the high cost needs to be viewed in light of the longer life cycle of metal roofing products. "Once installed properly, you'll never have to replace a metal roof."

If you're inclined to spend the extra money for a roof you'll never have to replace, there are some products you can install yourself and some you'll want a contractor to put on.

Don Shelton, a Lincoln, Nebraska, building contractor, has worked with a number of different styles and has this to say:

"If I were putting a metal roof on my own house, I think I'd go with an interlocking



Photos show examples of metal roofing systems on different houses.

standing seam panel. These go on quickly over clips, with no exposed fasteners. They're easier to install than some roofing products, but since the panels normally run the full length of the roof's slope, they may be harder to handle than shingles. The shingle-size metal panels take a little longer to put into place than regular shingles, but they're lighter and easier to handle. And you need no special skills to install them."

Before you buy metal roofing, be sure you ask about weather resistance. Metal roofs tend to shed snow and ice better than shingles, but ribs, seams and shaping can make a difference. Metal roofs are, for the most part, more resistant to hail than shingles — if the metal is heavy enough and the roofing is properly backed.

Most metal roofing products have been tested for wind resistance, too. If you're in an area where high winds are common, be sure to ask before you buy.

Noise has been a common complaint about metal roofing on farm buildings. However, most contractors and manufacturers say noise is not a problem if you install metal roofing



as you would regular shingles (over a plywood and felt layered deck).

## American Building Components

1011 Ellison Avenue  
Omaha, NE 68110  
800-228-2260  
*Raised rib panels, 16 in. wide. Made of a 29 gauge Zinalume™ steel, coated with Millenium™ 2000 paint system.*

## ATAS International, Inc.

6612 Snowdrift Road  
Allentown, PA 18106  
610-395-8445  
*Anything from standing seam panels to tiles, shingles or shakes in a variety of materials and colors.*

## Berridge Manufacturing Company

1720 Maury Street  
Houston, Texas 77026  
800-669-0009  
www.berridge.com  
*Factory-formed roofing panels, including tile and shake-look products.*

## Where To Buy Metal Roofing

Here's a list of companies that make metal roofing systems.

### Carter Holt Harvey Roofing USA Inc.

773 Bradfield  
Houston, TX 77060  
713-931-4032  
*Clay and shake look-alike products come painted or with natural stone chip coatings which resist fading.*

### CECO Building Systems

P.O. Box 6500  
Columbus, MS 39703  
601-328-6722  
*Three standing seam styles of roofing panels, in 30, 24 and 16 in. widths, made of 24 gauge steel. Also, two types of lap seam screw-down panels.*

### Met-Tile, Inc.

P.O. Box 4268  
Ontario, CA 91761  
800-899-0311  
www.met-tile.com/roof  
*Tile-like panels, 3 ft. wide, in lengths from 2 to 20 ft.*

### Metal Sales Manufacturing Co.

7800 State Road 60  
Sellersburg, IN 47172  
800-999-7777  
*Standard seam panels, installed with concealed fasteners.*

### Owens Corning

1 Owens Corning Parkway  
Toledo, OH 43659  
419-248-6405  
*MiraVista copper and designer shingle panels with the look of a conventional shingle roof.*

### Reinke Shakes Inc.

210 S. 4th  
Hebron, NE 68370  
www.reinkeshakes.com  
*Stucco-embossed .019 gauge aluminum alloy, similar in size to 3-tab composition or asphalt shingles, with prepunched nail holes for easy installation.*

### Union Corrugating Company

P.O. Box 229  
Fayetteville, NC 28302  
910-438-2195  
*Raised rib roofing panels, with 20 year limited paint warranty.*

## "Buried" Greenhouse Heats Itself

Here's a simple idea for anyone in a cold weather climate who's interested in putting up a greenhouse.

Brita and Klaus Kuelken of Fort Assiniboine, Alberta, "buried" the base of their 18 by 24-ft. greenhouse 2 ft. in the ground. Ground heat helps keep the building warm in winter.

In March, they put eight plastic 45-gal. barrels in a line along one wall, covering them with black plastic. The water in the barrels is warmed up by the sun and helps keep the greenhouse from freezing at night.

Although the greenhouse is not large, it produces an amazing amount of produce for the Kuelkens. There are two beds 2 ft. high

and 2 ft. wide inside the greenhouse. They raise spinach, radishes, lettuce, tomatoes, and other vegetables. Some plants are started in the greenhouse and transplanted to the outside garden.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Brita & Klaus Kuelken, Fort Assiniboine, Alberta, Canada.



Base of greenhouse is buried 2 ft. in the ground which helps it warm up faster in the spring. The Kuelkens also put 45-gal. barrels along one wall filled with water. Note raised garden beds.