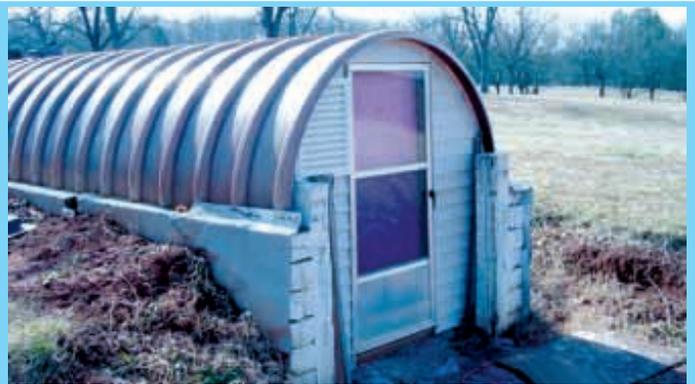




Nicholson cut a 30 by 8-ft. fiberglass storage tank in half lengthwise to make roof for greenhouse. One end was cut off to make an entrance.



Greenhouse stands on block foundation in trench dug into the side of a hill.

Greenhouse Built From Big Fiberglass Fuel Tank

John Nicholson, Jr., Ridgeway, South Carolina, wanted a greenhouse to grow ornamental plants in winter and maybe even a few hydroponic tomatoes.

He had a backhoe, a 30 by 8-ft. fiberglass storage tank, a stack of used railroad ties, and some time on his hands. So he decided to try to build his own greenhouse.

First, he cut the tank in half lengthwise, giving him a 30-ft. long section that was 8 ft. wide and 4 ft. high at the center. That would be the roof. He cut off one end to make an entrance.

Using his backhoe, he dug a trench into the side of a hill, making it wide enough to accommodate the roof and deep enough to give him 8 ft. of head clearance in the center.

To support the roof, he laid railroad tie support walls on the sides. Dirt was backfilled around the side and end walls. The open end was installed in with wood and a storm door installed.

Once he had the greenhouse together, he spread about 6 1/4 tons of crushed rock on the floor and put 14 55-gal. plastic drums full of water inside the building.

Both the rock and water act as heat sinks to soak up heat and keep the greenhouse temperature consistent. "The water drums also serve as supports for my shelving in the greenhouse," Nicholson says. "He buried the lower half of each drum in the ground so heat from underground also helps moderate the interior temperature."

Nicholson got the tank from a friend who installs underground storage tanks. He says it has no gasoline odor. "But you could smell the creosote from the ties. I sprayed a sealer on those to try to keep that from being too strong," he says.

He figures he spent about \$500 on the greenhouse, which took about 80 hours to put together. "The next one would go together faster, since I know how to do it all now," he says.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, John V. Nicholson, Jr., Tuckahoe Farms, 219 Tuckahoe Road, Ridgeway, S.C. 29130 (ph 803 337-8870; E-mail: enicholson@chestertel.com).



He spread crushed rock on floor and put fourteen 55-gal. plastic drums full of water inside building.



Big squirt gun is filled with mineral oil, allowing the Nikkels to spray a cow's chapped udders from a distance.

Oil-Filled Squirt Gun Soothes Chapped Teats

An Alberta couple uses a big squirt gun to treat chapped teats in their cow herd. Rod and Bernadette Nikkel of Pickardville, Alberta, fill the gun with mineral oil and spray chapped udders from a distance.

"We winter calve (in February), and have found that occasionally a cow will develop chapped teats because of nursing calves in cold, windy conditions," Rod says. "If their teats are sore, they will discourage the calf from sucking by kicking them off, and we want the calves to have the best start they can in life. So chapped teats must be treated."

Catching and restraining these cows would put unnecessary stress on them and their calves, not to mention the extra labor required by the operator. Nikkel says the squirt gun works excellent because he can squirt the cow's udder from as far away as 10 ft. Usually, he waits until the cows are eating at the silage bunks to spray them from behind, since they are distracted and this gives him the opportunity to be more thorough.

He says only one treatment is usually necessary.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Rod



Squirt gun is the high capacity kind commonly available at toy stores.

and Bernadette Nikkel, R.R.1, Pickardville, Alberta, Canada TOG 1W0 (ph 780 674-6805).



Bobby Johnson plans to use this caboose as a backwoods cabin. He has other cabooses for sale.

Want To Buy A Caboose?

Looking for an inexpensive cabin or guest house? You might want to look into buying a caboose.

Bobby Johnson tried for years to get his hands on one, and he finally succeeded. In fact, he bought two and he has a line on five more.

The railroads stopped using cabooses a few years ago and they're not being built any more. All the old ones are being sold off.

"If you want one, you have to keep checking and calling around," says Johnson of Webster, Kentucky. "I kept calling a guy for two and a half years. I apologized for bothering him, but I told him I wasn't going to stop."

Johnson's contact came from a friend who worked for a large railroad company. He's planning to use one of the cabooses as a backwoods cabin and he's going to donate another

to his hometown of Emons, Kentucky.

He plans to sell the others for \$10,000 to \$12,000 plus the cost of delivery.

Johnson plans to keep his caboose original. "I'm going to set it up on a short track, get it sandblasted and repaint it," he says. "It has a combination heating and single burner cook stove, an ice chest, clothes storage, two bunk beds and a little porch on the back end."

Getting the caboose to its final resting spot was the tough part. The all-steel exterior and wood interior comes in at around 33 tons. Johnson advises getting a 40-ton forklift/crane to load and unload it. Moving it off the tracks, loading it onto a trailer, and hauling it to the site averaged out at \$1,000 per mile. Much of that cost was in the forklift.

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How To Reach Us

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