

Springs Save Fence From Floods

Lawrence Ward gets extra flex in his fence with recycled garage door springs. They give a river front fence enough give to survive most spring floods.

"Every couple years the spring breakup sends ice and water through my four strands of Max 10 wire," explains Ward. "Even though it's high tensile wire, the ice usually takes out a strand or two along with posts. The springs give the wire a better chance to push the ice back into the channel."

Ward's 1,200-ft. stretch of fence is across flat river bottom. Most of the year the electrified wire keeps Ward's Arabian horses off the riverbank. When the frozen river breaks up in the spring, the fence has to deal with chunks of ice as big as a Volkswagen and 10 ft. high.

"I attached a long garage door spring at the end of each wire," says Ward. "The wire is strung through insulators on the back sides of the posts so it can move and stretch along the entire length of the 1,200 ft."

While nothing stops the trees, if the wire can give enough, it holds the ice until the river starts to go down, pulling the ice with it. With luck, Ward figures most years the fence will still be there.

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Recycled garage door springs are attached to high tensile fence wire. During spring floods, the springs stretch to keep ice chunks from breaking wires.

Vacuum Plucker Pulls Feathers With Steel Discs

Imagine how easy and clean plucking would be if you could just vacuum the feathers off a chicken or duck. The new British-designed and built "pluka" feather plucker does just that, with the help of nine spinning stainless steel discs that grip the feathers and pull with the help of the vacuum's suction.

As far as designer Andrew Kennedy knows, it's the only vacuum plucker on the market. Typically, mechanical pluckers use rubber fingers and water with a centrifugal blower.

"Those machines are messy," Kennedy says. "Our vacuum feather collector system has a three-stage, 0.5 micron filter. This means it can be operated without any dust or debris escaping onto surfaces or into lungs."

The model P71 comes with a wall-mounted cyclonic vacuum with a powerful 1.3 hp motor and clear, flexible tubing to suction the feathers from the plucker. Feathers fall into a bag for easy disposal. The plucker mounts on a powder-coated steel tripod and is powered by its own 1/2-hp motor.

It plucks all types of domestic and wildfowl, Kennedy says, from chickens and turkeys to snipe, ducks and geese. A video that shows a duck plucked in less than 3 min. can be seen at www.farmshow.com.

Currently available overseas, Kennedy plans to sell to the U.S. through his website and to set up U.S. distributors in 2012. The P71 sells for \$999 (plus shipping). The P7 model, which requires the buyer to furnish the vacuum, costs \$799 (plus shipping).

"Customers like that it's lightweight and easy to move about," Kennedy says.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Dixi



Spinning stainless steel discs pull feathers and the vacuum sucks them away.



Feathers fall into a bag for easy disposal.

Product Design Ltd., Prospect House, 148 Laurence St., York, U.K. YO10 3EB (ph 011 44 113 2161357; www.pluka.co.uk).



Easy Pluck mounts inside a 55-gal. plastic barrel, which catches all the feathers. Unit is driven by a 3/8-in. power drill.

Poultry Plucker Bags Up Feathers

Rod Whitehead makes plucking ducks and other game birds easy. At half the price of most commercial pluckers, his Easy Pluck is ideal for hunting shacks or backyard chicken producers. It mounts inside a 55-gal. plastic barrel.

"When I was in high school, I worked at a game preserve and would pluck up to 100 ducks a night. There was always a mess to clean up," recalls Whitehead. "I designed the Easy Pluck so the barrel would catch all the feathers."

Whitehead keeps costs down by driving his plucker with a 3/8-in. power drill. The user also provides 2 55-gal. plastic barrels. The Easy Pluck mounts in an opening cut in a topless barrel. That barrel sits topless side down over a second topless barrel.

"When you're setting up, just put a garbage bag inside and over the lip of the bottom barrel and set the barrel with the plucker over it," explains Whitehead. "The higher barrel lets you pluck the feathers off birds without bending over. When you're finished, just remove the top barrel, close up the bag and remove it."

The Easy Pluck consists of a 9-in. dia. plucking drum with 28 fingers, bearing blocks, hardware and a mounting fixture for attaching the plucker. Also enclosed is a template for cutting the correct opening in a drum, and a short bungee cord for securing the power drill. It's priced at \$125.

The Easy Pluck CP Kit has longer, flexible fingers that won't tear the skin on

thinner-skinned game birds like pheasant, quail and ruffed grouse. Its driveshaft can accommodate an electric motor as well as the power drill. It's priced at \$195.

You can see a video of the Easy Pluck at www.farmshow.com.

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