



Shelter was made by turning two gravel truck boxes upside down and mounting them at an upward angle on skids. Open end is 6 ft. high; back end 3 1/2 ft. high.

Calf Shelter Made From Truck Box

"I farm in Northern Alberta where we see a lot of 40 degree below zero temperatures. I needed a couple of calf shelters but had trouble justifying the \$800 to \$1,100 price tag for wood shelters that don't last very long," says John Kuefler, High Prairie, Alberta.

"So I bought two old 16-ft. low-sided gravel truck boxes for just \$50 each. I turned them upside down and mounted them at an upward angle on pipe stilts and skids. The open end is about 6 ft. high while the lower

back end is just 3 1/2 ft. high. The angle allows the winter sun to shine all the way in to the back of the shelter.

"I filled in the open sides of the shelter with sheets of plywood painted white. I also painted the inside of each shelter white.

"Total time spent on each shelter was just 10 hours. I can tow them easily from place to place. Total cost per shelter was \$150."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, John Kuefler, Box 571, High Prairie, Alberta T0G 1E0 Canada (ph 403 523-2680).

Pancake Syrup Makes Calves "Lickable"

After hearing about pouring molasses on calves to get mothers to claim them, Yvette Oloff of Persia, Iowa, figured maybe pancake syrup would work just as well.

We had a cow that had lost a calf, so we bought a replacement. It followed the cow around but she wouldn't claim it so we just doused him with syrup. I couldn't believe

how fast it worked."

Oloff says any old syrup will do, whether it's white or dark. She mixes it with water, using a squeeze bottle to squirt it on the calf.

It works every time," she says. "Those cows will really lick those calves. We leave them alone, and it works." (*Iowa Farmer Today*)

Urine Business Booming For Some Horse Breeders

Horse breeders have seen their income skyrocket in recent years thanks to a hot new market for an unusual product - pregnant mare urine, or PMU.

Estrogen is extracted from the urine to treat older women for osteoporosis, heart disease, and short-term symptoms of menopause. It's marketed by Ayerst Organics in Brandon, Manitoba, under the trade name Premarin, the most frequently prescribed medication in North America. That's a trend that's expected to grow as more and more "Baby Boomers" age.

The PMU industry got its start in the Midwest in 1942. There are now nearly 500 producers, most of them in Canada and a few in North Dakota, that contract to provide PMU. There are also about 1,200 names on the company's waiting list to become producers.

"The number of producers increased by 40 percent during 1992 alone," says Norm Luba, Executive Director of the Louisville, Ky.-based North American Equine Ranching Information Council (NAERIC). The group was formed two years ago as a clearinghouse for information on the PMU industry.

Mares are fitted with rubber cups that col-

lect urine. Cups are suspended from the ceiling on pulleys and are drained through tubing into a central collection tank, like a bulk milk tank.

The equipment allows the horses to move freely and lie down in their stalls. The horses are typically turned out for a couple hours of exercise every two weeks and they receive water 18 times a day.

Mares average 125 grams of estrogen during the October-March collection period. Ranchers average \$16 (Canadian) for each gallon of PMU, from which one teaspoon of estrogen can be processed.

Quarter horses are the most common PMU producers, outnumbering draft horses 2 to 1.

Since PMU is a perishable product, ranchers must be within a reasonable transport distance from Ayerst Organic's processing facility, Luba notes, although some of the company's contract ranchers live up to 750 miles away.

"Currently, supply and demand are in balance," he adds.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, NAERIC, P.O. Box 43968, Louisville, Ky. 40253-0968.

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Sprinklers from down spouts are removed and lengths of surplus fire hose attached to each outlet. Water can be diverted directly into gopher burrows.

They Use Pivot Irrigator To "Flood Out" Gophers

By Alan Greenway

Alfalfa growers on two Nevada farms are using their center pivot irrigation systems to solve serious problems with pocket gophers.

Ron and LaVonne Selbach of Amargosa Valley, and Gary Tompkins, Winnemucca, used slightly different methods but got the same results.

In 1995, the Selbachs read an article in *Hay & Forage Grower* magazine about another Nevada grower who rid alfalfa fields of gophers by flooding them out of their burrows using lengths of gated irrigation pipe. They decided there had to be a way to do the same thing with their pivots. So they removed the sprinklers from the down spouts on four pivots and attached lengths of surplus fire hose to each outlet.

The Selbachs turned on the pivots last January and February, with the hoses pouring streams of water onto the ground. Employees walking under the pivots used the hoses to direct water right into gopher burrows.

"The farm dogs proved to be a real asset," says Ron. "One dog caught 22 gophers one morning."

After the dogs left the field, hawks and crows took over, and coyotes worked the fields at night.

"Every gopher that came up got it," LaVonne recalls. "It was quite an interesting sight. It has knocked down the gopher activ-

ity by about 80 percent," she adds. "We did go back and put some poison grain in the holes, and we plan to do some trapping."

After flooding the fields they used a harrow to smooth the ground. "That way, we can set traps wherever we see new mounds."

Last year Tompkins spent about \$98,000 trapping gophers on 1,700 acres of alfalfa. "We had eight trappers and they couldn't keep up. This year we've got three trappers, and they're just hitting the hot spots."

Tompkins' 10 pivots, running 24 hours a day, each took 20 days to make a complete circle. Two pumps pushed a total of 2,000 gallons per minute through each pivot.

"Because we chose to flood the gophers in November and December, our irrigation cost increased by \$13,000 because of the higher electricity rate at that time of year. But the water wasn't wasted because we saturated the soil going into winter. The water was sometimes 4 in. deep on the ground."

The heavy watering caused gopher burrows to collapse. "There would actually be trails of collapsed tunnels in the field."

Tompkins ran the pivots only when temperatures were cold enough for emerging gophers to die from hypothermia.

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