

Help With Straw Bale Construction

If that first little pig had had the good sense to bale his straw, the big bad wolf wouldn't have been able to blow his house down.

If you're interested in learning about straw bale construction, you can get all the information you need at www.ricestraw.com. The site includes house plans (for sale) and photos of impressive straw bale houses and other buildings. There's also a schedule of straw building seminars. You can even order rice straw bales for your house on this site. There are also links to other sites, including www.strawboard.com, where you can find more information on straw board "plywood" which comes in 4 by 8 sheets.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup,



Straw building techniques and other information is provided at the Website www.ricestraw.com.

BioFab, LLC / BaleRaisers, Box 990556, Redding, Calif. 96099 (ph 530 243-4032; toll-free 888-77bales; E-mail: learn@ricestraw.com).

8-Row, 19-In. "Splitter" Planter

Frank and Duane Beelow, Mundelein, Ill., wanted the benefits of a narrow row no-till planter without spending the money for a new one. They already had a Deere 7000 4-row, 38-in. planter so they welded an offset hitch onto it, then bought another used 4-row Deere 7000 planter and hooked it on behind to make a "splitter" planter. It lets them plant 8 rows of 19-in. soybeans. By unhooking the rear planter they can plant 4 rows of 38-in. corn.

To make the hitch they welded two lengths of 4-in. sq. tubing to the planter's main frame and also to the fertilizer bar that goes across the front of the planter. The rear planter simply pins onto the hitch. Hydraulic hoses run from the tractor back to both planters.

"We built it a year ago and used it last year to plant about 300 acres of soybeans, with no problems," says Frank. "We paid \$2,000 for the extra planter and spent about \$300 to build the hitch. It took us about two days to



Frank and Duane Beelow can plant 8 rows of 19-in. soybeans or unhook the rear planter and plant four rows of 38-in. corn.

build the hitch. A new 8-row narrow row planter would've cost at least \$10,000.

"It turns slick on corners. We set up the hydraulics so that the front planter raises up before the back one, so that the back planter stops planting where the front one did.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Frank G. Beelow, 21400 W. Ill. Rt. 60, Mundelein, Ill. 60060 (ph 847 566-8273).



Sign attaches to a piece of pvc pipe that swings freely on steel rod.

Easy Way To Put Up A Sign

Whatever cause or politician you might want to support, here's a nifty way to hang a sign along the road that won't blow over or collapse.

FARM SHOW writer C.F. Marley, Nokomis, Ill., spotted the sign along a road. It uses steel re-rod for uprights at either end

and the cross bar, with hose clamps holding the ends together. Slip a piece of pvc pipe over the crossarm. Then use hose clamps to fasten the sign to the pvc pipe.

When the wind blows, the sign swings out, moving with the wind without blowing over.

Goldfish Keep Cattle Tanks Clean

Goldfish keep cattle watering tanks clean by preventing the build up of algae and consuming other bits of debris, say farmers who've tried it.

It's a somewhat common practice in parts of Europe. The fish eat dust and bits of grain deposited by livestock when they drink,

keeping the water fresh and clean. About 4 to 6 larger fish are needed for a 40-gal. tank.

Cows do not swallow the fish accidentally, say farmers who used the idea for years. Troughs still need cleaning but just not as often. *Farmer's Weekly*

"Neck Tag" ID System

"Our new-style livestock identification tag is safe, visible from great distances, and reusable. We think it's the best livestock ID system on the market for breeding age cattle and horses," says Ron Diekemper, Carlyle, Ill.

The "Agri-ID" tag is a buckled strap that's designed to go around an animal's neck. The strap has four 1 1/2 by 3-in. recessed identification areas for entering a name or numbering system. Each identification area is protected by an acrylic window to keep the information from fading. The windows are held on by a super strong adhesive.

The tags come in four highly visible colors - blue, yellow, orange, and pink. They're made from a material designed to withstand abrasions and outdoor temperature extremes yet still remain flexible.

"They have a lot of advantages over ear tags and other conventional ID systems," says Diekemper, noting that no special tools are needed to attach the neck straps. "We've tested them for 10 years so we know the system works. Unlike ear tags, they can't fall or tear out and no punctures are required to the animal so there's no risk of infection. The numbers are much more readable than they are on conventional tags, and they're in four places so you can see them from just about any angle.

"They work better than ropes or chains which are hard to adjust, can become too loose or too tight, and can be dangerous to the animal. Ankle bracelets get too dirty to read.

"The four different colors let you identify different groups of animals in the pasture or on the range.

"The collar is designed with 50 and 90 degree angles, which use the animal's natural



"Agri-ID" tag is a buckled strap that's designed to go around animal's neck.

bone structure to keep the tag behind the jaw bone and the upper skull bone. As a result, it isn't likely to slip over the animal's head. The angles also allow for air circulation between the tag and animal and allow the tag to float which prevents skin abrasions. The chances of an animal getting 'hung up' are very slim due to this design, but should it happen the safety buckle will release if more than about 150 lbs. of pull are applied on the tag. The tag can then be put back on the animal."

Electronic transponders can be attached to the Agri-ID.

Agri-ID tags sell for \$5.80 apiece which includes S&H. The company also offers an enhanced black carbon marker that's good for marking more than 100 tags. The markers sell for \$3.50 apiece (free when 10 or more tags are ordered).

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Agri-ID L.L.C., 1891 Franklin St., Carlyle, Ill. 62231 (ph 800 544-1239 or 618 594-4199; fax 618 594-4188; E-mail: ron@agri-id.com; Website: www.agri-id.com).

Portable Hopper Made Permanent

Converting a portable grain hopper into a permanently anchored unloading hopper made grain handling a lot easier and neater for Clay City, Ill., farmer Tom Mix.

He anchored the hopper in a cement slab outside his flat storage building. The biggest advantage of the setup is that the concrete makes cleanup faster and easier, with less waste.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Tom Mix, Rt. 2, Clay City, Ill. 62824 (ph 618 676-1065).



Tom Mix anchored a portable grain hopper in a cement slab outside his flat storage building. The concrete pad makes cleanup faster and easier.

Coyote Callers Make Hunting Easier

Whether you want to control coyotes or just have fun calling them, a new coyote "howler" may be just what you need. Coyote callers have come a long way since professional trappers built their own out of cow horns. While you can still buy a hand held mouth blower, there's now a digital option.

"Our CH1 is a hand held mouth blown caller with removable horn and a voice tube with a reed mechanism," says Gerald Stewart, spokesperson for Johnny Stewart Game Calls. "But our 612 comes complete with a battery, playback device, speaker, and a selection of tapes. And the Power Pro is an electronic caller with a collection of components that can be used with any playback device, from a CD or cassette Walkman to an MP3 player. It will boost the

volume from a low input device."

The new unit comes with a collection of 9 CD's with four sound tracks per disc as well as MP3 files. With a touch of a button, a caller can switch from a rabbit distress call to a coyote howl.

Handheld callers start for less than \$5 plus shipping and handling. The more complex electronic units run into the hundreds of dollars depending on components. Bobcat, fox, coyote, raccoon and crow calling kits of four cassettes each are available for \$34.95.

Contact: FARMS HOW Followup, Hunter Specialties Industries, 6000 Huntington Court, N.E., Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52402 (ph 800 728-0321; Website: www.hunterspec.com).