

Castration Device Helps Work On Older Calves

Loran Bokenfohr likes to wait as long as possible to castrate his bull calves so he can take full advantage of their natural growth hormones. The problem with that approach is that it's harder to get the job done on the bigger and stronger animals.

So the Busby, Alberta, farmer designed a device to restrain and position animals for easy and safe access. It looks like the frame of a wheelbarrow and is simply rolled in under the back of the animal, spreading its legs and holding them apart.

Bokenfohr made a pair of wheels by cutting the edges off truck rims. He welded them to 7-ft. long sections of 1 by 2-in. steel tubing. An 8-in. section of tubing runs crosswise between the arms. He ran an "all thread" bolt through and put two nuts on each end, leaving enough play in the bolts so he can open the handles.

"The crosswise tubing separates and stabilizes the side arms and if I were doing it over again, I would make it at least 4 in. longer," he says.

To use the device, Bokenfohr puts a calf in a runway headgate and then slides the device underneath the animal from the back, between the back legs. He then pushes a bar through the wheels from the side of the runway to hold them up and slips the two handles through a couple of twine loops to hold them in place, wide open.

Now the animal is ready to be castrated, with knife or bands.

"I've found that this system works best on calves weighing about 500 lbs., but I have used it on up to 850-lb. animals," Bokenfohr says. "It works good because the bars aren't just holding their legs from kicking you, but they are actually lifting the calf a bit and when their footing is less secure, they don't kick at all."

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Handles on device are tied to corral panels while animal is worked on.



Device is simply rolled in under the back of the animal, spreading its legs and holding them apart.



Cochrane came up with two different back scratcher designs. This one hangs between two pine trees at an angle, allowing cattle to rub their backs and scratch their heads.

Street Sweeper Brooms Make Nifty Back Scratchers

By Barbara Minton

"They just rub and rub and rub," says Carl Cochrane of Rose Lake, Idaho, about the cow back scratchers he created out of street sweeper brooms for his 140 head of beef cattle on his 400-acre ranch.

Cochrane asked state staff if he could have their old rollers. They gave him two rollers to experiment with. He came up with two different back scratcher designs.

The most popular scratcher hangs between two large pine trees at an angle. This way, the cattle and the smaller calves can reach the roller and rub their backs and scratch their heads, Cochrane says.

The other scratcher on another section of his ranch is put on a pole standing up so the cows can scratch their sides.

He says the bristle brooms make ideal back scratchers because they're not too sharp and not too soft.

"At times, the cattle line up and wait to scratch their backs," he says.

Ask him why he built a back scratcher for his cows and he says, "I want my cows to be happy. Happy cows eat more, especially if



This model is put on a pole standing up so cows can scratch their sides.

they are not fighting flies."

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Mini Ferris Wheel Is A "Business On Wheels"

The "Folkerts Kidaround" ferris wheel is a small portable ride that retired farmer Cornie Folkerts of Inwood, Iowa, patented and now builds for sale.

"I saw what was happening in our small rural communities. They'd have a celebration of some kind and need to hire in some rides, but no one was too excited about bringing in the seedy carnival operators," Folkerts says.

The Kidaround holds 18 to 24 riders at a time and has six completely enclosed, screen-covered seats, each of which holds three to four children. It stands about 20 ft. high when in operation, and runs on 110-volt current.

"I did a lot of engineering to allow it to run on a 25 to 35 amp outlet. It can be completely set up and ready to run in about 20 to 30 minutes, including the fence that is required by law to surround the ride," Folkerts says. "Also, when you want to shut down and go home, it hydraulically folds down. There are no tools required for set up or take down."

The rig weighs only 4,500 lbs. and can be towed by a 1/2-ton pickup.

"All of its features have safety in mind and

there have been no hurt children since it began," he adds. "Some of the semi-retired farmers out there are absolutely ideal operators of this kind of business. They understand children and enjoy doing it."

Folkerts himself only operates his ride locally now, since he promises the people who buy them that he won't infringe on their business.

"I once gave 8,500 rides in 10 days at a job where I was hired by a company to give free rides. I remember in particular that there were three high school-aged girls who rode 57 times each," Folkerts says. "I once gave 1,200 rides in one day for \$2 each, although nowadays people are charging \$3 per ride."

The Kidaround is classed as a kiddie ride, but he says it is popular with all ages. He sells them for \$36,500. So far, he has built 12 units, nine of which have been sold.

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Ferris wheel holds 18 to 24 riders at a time and has six completely enclosed, screen-covered seats, each of which holds three to four children. It runs on 110-volt current.



Unit hydraulically folds down for transport. No tools are required for either setup or take down.