

He Built His Own Low Cost “Towable” Irrigation System

By Bill Gergen,
Senior Editor

“It’s more cost efficient than any portable irrigation system on the market,” says Doug Bryan, Rhome, Texas, about the portable irrigation system he built that can be pulled around by any utility vehicle.

Bryan has a cow-calf operation and uses the system to irrigate his 30-acre pasture. He designed the irrigation system in order to recycle the water he uses in his catfish and shrimp farming operation.

The system consists of nine caster-wheeled steel towers spaced about 40 ft. apart. Each tower is equipped with a nozzle on top that’s about 4 ft. off the ground. The towers carry a 4-in. dia., heavy duty poly pipe via metal braces clamped onto the pipe. A small pipe runs vertically from the poly pipe up to each nozzle.

A length of “fire hose” flat pipe is connected to one end of the poly pipe. The other end of the flat pipe hooks up to any one of a series of spigots lined up at one end of the field and spaced 135 ft. apart. Water is piped underground to the spigots via a submersible pump in a small lake. (pumps 300 gal. 9 sprinklers built so only using 90 gal. so wouldn’t take near that big a pump to run it.)

To move the towers to a new location, Bryan turns off the pump and unhooks the flat hose from the poly pipe, then chains one of the end towers to his ATV and moves the system. Then he hooks the flat hose up to a new spigot.

“I looked at commercial pod-type systems before building my own system. I like my system better because it’s less expensive and because it uses a much bigger pipe which produces more volume,” he says. “Pod-type systems use only a 1 1/2-in. dia. hose. My



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system delivers much more water at greater pressure and will cover an area four times larger in the same time.”

He built the towers himself out of 2 by 3-in. rectangular tubing. The towers ride on wheelbarrow wheels, which he converted to swivel so that they’ll pull in any direction. He bought the poly pipe from a local supplier. He says his total cost was less than \$4,000.

He went into the shrimp farming business two years ago and raises the shrimp in three 1-acre ponds. That’s why he got the idea for the system.

“I have to drain the ponds to harvest the shrimp. I had been draining the water into a small lake where I raise catfish, but the lake isn’t big enough to contain all the water. I didn’t want to waste the water by diverting the excess water into a creek, especially because we’re in a severe drought. Another benefit is that shrimp water has a lot of feed and fertilizer in it which is good for the grass,” he notes.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Doug Bryan, 820 County Road 4430, Rhome, Texas 76078 (ph 940 627-6376 ; cell 940 393-6653; whipper2004@earthlink.net).



A length of “fire hose” hooks up to any one of a series of spigots lined up along one end of field.



Powered by any commercial gas-fueled leaf blower, the Kwik Kleen double-chambered seed vacuum makes it easy to clean out seed boxes in drills and planters.

Seed Vacuum Makes Drill Clean-Out Fast

You’ll save time and seed with Norman Forsberg’s Kwik Kleen double-chambered seed vacuum that makes it easy to clean out seed boxes in drills or planters. Powered by any commercial gasoline-fueled leaf blower, seed is sucked out in seconds.

“You can use the suction from a leaf blower just by itself, but by the time the seed goes through the blower, it has turned into hog feed,” says Forsberg. “I realized I needed a double chambered box to collect the seed before it hit the blower.”

Forsberg designed a box with a chamber for the leaf blower to set in. The second chamber has a connection for a vacuum hose and serves as collection point for the seed. A screen separates the two.

“When the collection chamber is packed full, the blower shuts off,” explains Forsberg. “When I open the top door on the chamber, it automatically opens a trap door at the bottom of the chamber and the grain drops through.”

Forsberg designed the box to be hung from the back of a truck or wagon, directly over the auger feed. As the seed drops into the auger, it can be returned to the wagon or truck box or a separate container.

“For smaller amounts of seed, the box can be mounted on a portable stand in the back of a pickup over a tub,” says Forsberg.

Either way it’s mounted, the Kwik Kleen does a thorough job of cleaning out grain drill seed boxes. “It even cleans out the seed cup, which is almost impossible to do by hand,” says Forsberg.

The unit weighs less than 20 lbs. without the leaf blower and moves approximately a cubic foot of material per minute. The Kwik Kleen is priced at \$200 retail, not including the leaf blower and vacuum hose.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Norman Forsberg Equipment, 403 S. High St., Pratt, Kansas 67124 (ph 620 672-3636; vernf66@sbcglobal.net).



Metal shopping carts can easily be converted to large traps for catching varmints, says Jeff Biskup.

Shopping Carts Make Good Varmint Trap

Metal shopping carts that have outlived their usefulness in stores can easily be converted to large traps for catching wild pigs, raccoon, skunk, possum and the like.

“I’ve made two varmint traps from old shopping carts,” says Jeff Biskup of Bay City, Texas. “It takes me only about two hours to make a trap and involves very little welding. I’ve been using the traps for about a year to catch all kinds of pest animals, especially feral hogs that root up my pasture. I catch the small ones, up to 25 pounds and about 15 inches tall. The cages are very strong.”

The idea for the traps came to Biskup while he gazed at two shopping carts on offer at a garage sale. After paying \$5 for each, he brought the carts home, removed the wheels, and welded an expanded metal top onto each basket.

“The basket sits up off the ground almost an inch because of the bars on the bottom where the wheels used to be,” he says. “The back of the cart has a hinged door below the handle, and by using a pry bar, I inverted that door so, instead of it pushing up inside the basket, it now opens to the outside of the

cart.” Biskup moved the child’s seat to the floor in the front of the basket, turning it into his tripping mechanism. He added a 24-in. section of 1/4-in. rod (actually a temporary electric fence post), to connect the tripping mechanism to the hinged door at the back. Next, he welded a small piece of steel to the door for extra weight, since gravity causes the tripped door to fall closed. Biskup also mounted two small self-catching gate latches to prevent escapes.

Lastly, he added a “lifting” handle on the top of the basket so the trap could be safely moved with a live animal inside.

“I didn’t have to purchase anything except for about \$15 worth of metal,” Biskup points out. “I bait the traps at night with tuna, sardines or corn, and when the animal steps on the tripping mechanism, it releases the rod which holds the hinged door up. The door comes down behind them and they’re caught.”

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Jeff Biskup, 6148 FM 2431 W, Bay City, Texas 77414 (jcbiskup@awesomenet.net).