

They Still Build New Wood Stave Silos

"Wood silo and barn restoration. New wood silos for sale."

That's part of an ad we spotted recently in the back of a farm publication. It was placed by a New York firm that continues to do a thriving business repairing old wood stave silos and building new ones.

"As far as I know, we're the only company in the U.S. that still builds wood stave silos for farm feed storage," says Mac Hyney, Hyney & Sons, Fort Plain, N.Y.

The company, founded in 1965, works mostly on-site in New England and Pennsylvania. They have three employees and use a self-propelled crane and a specially designed, hydraulic-operated platform to do the work.

Customers can choose from a number of roofing styles including gambrel, conical, standing seams, wooden shakes, and steel domes. "About half the silos we build are for working farmers, and the rest are for hobby farmers who just want to preserve an existing silo's appearance," says Hyney.

"Wood silos are rarely found any more except in New England, where they're still quite numerous," says Hyney. "Farms here are relatively small, and many have livestock. The biggest wood silo we build measures 20 by 50 ft."

The cost to build a new wood silo is comparable to the cost for a conventional concrete stave silo, he says. But the feed that comes out of a wooden silo is often "sweeter". "It's the same concept used to preserve food in a pickle barrel," says Hyney.

He says some of his customers have tried bunker silos or bagger-type systems but weren't happy with them. "Another advan-



New wood silo under construction.

tage of wood silos is that in cold weather the feed doesn't freeze as much.

"Sadly, a lot of people are buying up small farms and tearing the wood silos down. Others just let them rot."

The company sometimes converts wood silos into homes. "We can make provisions in the hooping to allow for doors or windows at desired locations," says Hyney. "We can furnish the interior floors and install a circular staircase either inside or outside, along with supporting angle irons."

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German-style log peeler removes bark from logs that are used for railing, furniture and log home construction.

Mechanical Post Peeler Gives Drawknife Look

Many people like the look of a log that's been peeled with a drawknife. But few people want to actually do the work. That's why W.B. Benjey Inc., in Alpena, Mich., started selling a German-style log peeler that mechanizes the job.

"It's faster than a drawknife and less labor intensive. You're adding value to your product," says Al Dziesinski, a Benjey engineer.

The peeled logs - usually pine and cedar - are used for railing, furniture and log home construction. The peeler also removes bark off half logs or slabs for siding.

An operator pushes logs through the peeler, which removes the bark and leaves marks that make it appear the log has been drawknife-peeled.

Peelers come with 20, 24 and 32-in. dia. dish cutting heads with 4, 6 or 8 blades. The largest can handle logs from 2 to 12 in. in diameter. The peelers have foot-mounted, fan-cooled electric motors (2, 3 and 5 hp), but can be set up with a gas motor or run off a pto. The frame is made of 7 gauge, 1/4-in. steel, and the blades are made of tool steel for a long, cutting life. A blower discharges the bark out of the way.

Prices range from about \$5,100 to \$13,000, and the peelers have a one-year warranty. They can be purchased direct from the company, which sells a variety of woodworking equipment including peelers for logs up to 24-in. in diameter.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, W.G. Benjey Inc., 2293 Werth Rd., Alpena, Mich. 49707 (ph 800 269-9006; www.benjey.com).



"It took \$85 in parts to turn an old freezer into a dryer, using instructions I found on the internet," says dairy farmer Jared Laca who uses the freezer to dry forage samples.

Turn Your Freezer Into A Dehydrator

Jared Laca uses an old upright freezer to dry forage samples. Because the Fallon, Nevada, dairy farmer pays for his forage based on dry matter, he needs to dry and weigh it. The \$120 electric dryer he previously purchased would only do two samples at a time.

"I needed something to do 40 samples, and I had this old freezer," Laca says. "It took \$85 in parts to turn the freezer into a dryer, using instructions I found on the internet."

Laca installed two 3-in. vents at the bottom of the freezer and cut a hole for a bathroom fan at the top. He wired five porcelain lights with splitters (10 100-watt bulbs) in parallel and connected them to a switch.

Though the dryer heats up to 120 to 130 degrees, the temperature isn't the crucial part.

"It's the air movement that's pulled in from the bottom vents by the bathroom fan," Laca says. "The fan never stops."

He weighs out 100-gram samples on 40 paper plates and places them on the freezer racks. After two days he removes and weighs each plate to determine the dry matter.



He installed two 3-in. vents at bottom of freezer and cut a hole for a bathroom fan at the top.

Laca likes getting the job done all at once, and his forage supplier is happy because he gets paid sooner.

"It was an easy project. It only took about four hours to put together," Laca says.

So far he has only used the dryer for forage, but notes that it should also work as a dehydrator for drying jerky and other foods.

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How To Keep Corral Posts From Rusting

"It's something we do on our ranch to make metal corral posts last longer. It keeps the posts from rusting and is relatively inexpensive to do," says Darol Dickinson, Barnesville, Ohio, who recently sent FARM SHOW photos of a metal corner post set inside a concrete-filled piece of flexible plastic pipe.

The concrete extends about 6 in. above ground, which keeps the post entirely out of any mud, rain water, urine or fecal matter.

"Metal posts rust the fastest right at ground level, where water stands and the acetic acid of livestock fecal material causes a chemical acceleration," says Dickinson. "Underground posts rust, too, but not as fast as at ground level. My post-setting method adds years to the life of a metal pipe corral."

He buys 10-ft. lengths of 4-in. dia. plastic sewer line for about \$5 apiece and cuts them into 14-in. lengths. He digs holes 8 in. deep and sticks the 14-in. sections of sewer pipe into it. He fills the pipes with concrete almost to the top, then pushes the metal posts into the cement. Then he pours more cement into the sewer pipe until it's flush with the top.

"You can also use cardboard tube-type forms used for footings. However, plastic works better because it's cheaper, lasts longer, and looks better."



Metal corner post is set inside a concrete-filled piece of flexible plastic pipe.

"A 10-ft. section of plastic sewer pipe is enough for about eight posts. The plastic actually protects the concrete from getting broken or chipped, which is another advantage."

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