

Palladino's greenhouse is made from 10 arched cattle panels covered by a sheet of 6-mil clear plastic that can be easily replaced as needed.



“Cattle Panel” Greenhouse

“Pre-fab greenhouses can be quite expensive so we worked with stuff we had laying around to make our own,” say Lou and Kathie Palladino, Murphy, N. C., who used cattle fence panels and other materials available at most building supply centers.

“It works great for starting plants in the fall or even growing them all year long. Best of all, it didn't cost much to build,” says Kathie.

The greenhouse measures 40 ft. long, 8 ft. wide, and 6 ft. high at the center. It's made from 10 cattle panels, each measuring 16 ft. long by 4 ft. wide. The arched panels are covered by a sheet of 6-mil clear plastic that can be easily replaced as needed.

To hold the cattle panels in place they used lengths of bent rebar, in the shape of “candy canes”, to hold the edges of the panels. Louis cut the rebar into 18, 24 and 30-in. lengths and then used a vice to bend the tops into the shape of a hook.

They first put hooks in one side of a panel and then bend it up into an arch and put hooks in the other side.

They repeated the procedure with each panel, wiring them together where they meet at 2-ft. intervals and then covering the wire ties with duct tape to keep from tearing the plastic. To hold the plastic away from the rough ends of the panels, they duct-taped a length of 1-in. dia. black plastic tubing over every joint where the panels come together.

The plastic that goes over the top is anchored down on each side with landscape timbers.

Next, to keep the greenhouse from blowing away in high winds they ran rope over the plastic, going back and forth and using the rebar to hold the rope down at every two panels. They also added plastic door covers at both ends. During the summer they add two box fans that hang from the top of the greenhouse. The fans circulate air and keep the heat down.

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Converted pickup has a homemade log splitter on one side and a dump box on back.

“Redneck” Wood Splitter

“I've finally got my firewood-making to the point where it's almost an easy job,” says Jim Boisen, Minong, Wis., who built what he calls a self-propelled “redneck” wood splitter.

The rig is a converted pickup with a homemade log splitter on one side, and a dump box on back. An 8 hp gas engine belt-drives a hydraulic pump that powers the splitter and also raises and lowers the dump box.

He started with a used 1979 Ford F-150 4-WD pickup equipped with a 6-cyl. engine and 4-speed transmission, which he bought for \$500. Mechanically, the pickup was in good shape but the body was rusted away so he stripped it down to the chassis. He removed the lift blocks on the pickup's rear axle to lower the frame about 4 in. Then he mounted the log splitter, and the gas engine that operates it, on a metal platform on the passenger side of the pickup.

The splitter is operated by an 11 gpm hydraulic pump, which drives a 3 1/2-in. dia., 36-in. long hydraulic cylinder. An old portable air tank serves as the

hydraulic oil reservoir.

“The platform is level with the top of the splitter so the split wood never falls to the ground. That makes it easy to pick up and throw into the dump box,” says Boisen.

Boisen had made the dump box years ago from 1/4-in. thick steel, mounting it on a truck. He removed the box from the truck and made hinges for the back part of the pickup chassis. The box is raised and lowered by a pair of big hydraulic cylinders off an old front-end loader.

He used 1/4-in. thick Masonite to build a hood over the pickup engine and had his sister-in-law make decals for it.

“I found the seat in the dump. I moved the pickup's rear bumper to the front, after narrowing it 12 in. on each side. It protects the radiator and provides a hitch on front that makes it easier to park trailers,” notes Boisen.

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Used industrial shelving was used to form trusses and walls on Mark Musser's add-on building. The 5-ft. wide panels are 22 ft. long and are made from 4 by 3 channel iron.

Industrial Shelving Used To Construct Farm Building

Mark Musser, Beecher City, Ill., made use of low-cost, used industrial shelving to expand his machine storage building. The shelving panels were used to form trusses and walls for the add-on building, which measures 22 by 60 ft.

The 5-ft. wide panels are 22 ft. long and made from 4 by 3, 1/4-in. thick channel iron. A series of 1/2-in. dia. holes, spaced 6 in. apart, allow the panels to be easily bolted together.

Musser lag screwed the trusses to the outside wall of the existing building. A series of wooden purlins were then lag bolted to the

metal trusses, with sheet metal roofing bolted over the top. The bottom ends of the sidewall trusses are bolted to concrete footings.

“The shelves were originally used as pallet racking in industrial buildings. They connect together like Tinker toys,” says Musser. “I bought two semi loads of the shelves at a salvage yard, paying \$10 apiece for them. They came complete with all the bolts I needed to do the job.”

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