



Mobile Rust Control Business

Bob Lawrie and his son, Greg, started a mobile rust control business 25 years ago that has been so successful they've set up six other operators in their own franchised businesses.

Pro-Fleet Care operators come to the farm to spray a special blend of chemicals for corrosion prevention onto vehicles and equipment. The application penetrates into hard-to-reach seams and crevices, according to Bob.

"We spray the exterior trim, including door handles, mirrors, bumper rails, window trim, and so on," he says. "We believe rust control should protect the entire vehicle, from the undercarriage, fenders, doors, door posts, hood, and trunk all the way up to the roof line. We've established this total process because we know that rust isn't selective."

The company's unique product displaces moisture as it protects and seals. It defies gravity as it creeps in all directions on surfaces, including over tar, wax and previous rust control products that have cracked and left the vehicle exposed. It also protects electrical wiring and components from corrosion, according to Lawrie.

He points out that, in many cases, rust control treatment is only needed once a year, and the equipment owner benefits by increasing his private resale value.

One client, a large Canadian wholesale nursery, says using Pro Fleet Care "is like regularly changing your vehicle's oil. It's a small cost when you compare the extended life of equipment."

Some of Pro-Fleet's clients include tractor refurbishers, body shops owners, school bus operators, trucking fleets, government

agencies, bus lines, farmers, construction companies, car rental agencies, and landscape companies.

"When I started this mobile rust control operation 25 years ago, I thought it would make a great retirement business because I could be my own boss and work the hours I wanted to," Bob says. "As it turns out, I'm especially happy that it lends itself to working with my son."

The investment required to become a franchise operator is in the \$30,000 to \$60,000 (Can.) range. In addition to a turn-key equipment package, this fee guarantees a variety of benefits, including assistance in establishing a client base, two weeks of intensive training, ongoing support, and exclusive protected territories. It also includes a custom accounting and business package, with three months of book keeping.

"There are no ongoing royalties and no costly storefront is required," Bob points out. "This type of business provides low overhead and high profit potential."

Lawrie says the company charges flat rates for various types of vehicles such as \$135 for pickups and \$225 and up for highway trucks.

All of the six franchisees so far are located in Ontario but the Lawries can work with anyone in the U.S. or Canada.

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Fiberglass Gates Flex When Pushed

Bend a wooden gate too far and it'll break. Push a metal gate too far, and it'll bend and stay that way. But push on a Tuff Gate with a pickup and it'll just flex out and back again.

The Tuff Gate Utility Gate is a 6-rail panel made from 1/8-in. thick orange fiberglass. Structural grade rivets and zinc-plated hinges secure it in place. The 4-ft. tall gate is available in 2-ft. increments from 4 ft. to 18 ft. Prices start at \$68.

A heavier-duty model has five rails made from 1/4-in. thick fiberglass with structural grade aluminum rivets. Zinc-plated hinges are also heavy-duty, designed for barnyards, freestall barns, corrals and other confinement areas. The 4 ft. high gate is available in 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14 and 16-ft. lengths. Prices range from \$87 to \$222. Custom lengths are also available.

"Prices vary from dealer to dealer," says

Nolan Snyder of Snyder Gates, LCC. "You can get gates that are cheaper, but for the strength, flexibility and corrosion resistance, these gates are a good value."

Tuff Gates are available from farm supply stores and other dealers, with more to be added. "We are looking for dealers now," says Snyder.

Another advantage of a Tuff Gate is the corrosion and rust proof properties of the fiberglass material they are reconstructed from. Water, mud, and manure have no degrading effects on these gates. This factor alone can increase the lifespan of these gates 2 to 4 times that of a steel gate.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Snyder Gates, LLC, RR 2, Box 375, Highland Rd., Millerstown, Penn. 17062 (ph toll free 877 621-0195; www.tuffgate.com).

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Because it's made from fiberglass, Tuff Gate flexes when pushed.