

## Air Wall Cuts Heating Costs In Poultry Barn

"Heating my 400-ft. long poultry barn when I only used about two-thirds of it for little chicks was wasting propane gas and costing me a lot of money," says Jon Steenbeek of Varna, Ont. "To solve the problem I installed an inflatable Smart Air Wall that reduced my propane costs by \$2,300, more than 50 percent."

The air wall is 28 in. wide and easily pressurized to form a tight seal to the floor, walls and ceiling of his poultry barn. Its design, technology and materials is the same as that used on inflatable kids bouncing rings seen at carnivals and fast food play rooms.

Steenbeek imported the wall from Sidijk, a manufacturing company in Holland. It was custom made for his broiler barn, which is 64 ft. wide with a 13 ft. 6 in. high cathedral ceiling. "The wall came packed in a roll so all I had to do was unroll it, install the support tubes, raise the wall to the ceiling with a rope and pulleys, hook up the air blower and turn it on. In half an hour the wall was in place. The blower that inflates the wall runs continually with power from a 1.3 hp motor."

If the power goes out for some reason the ropes will hold the wall in place at the ceiling and keep it from falling on the young chicks. The base of Steenbeek's wall has indentations with covering sleeves so it straddles feeder and watering lines. There are also flaps to keep young chicks from getting underneath.

Steenbeek added two custom features that make his installation especially unique. First he built a wooden plenum at one end of the wall with a door to access the area of his building that's partitioned off. A fan above the plenum vents into the open section and allows him to preheat that section before he removes the wall when the chicks need additional room. He also hired an Amish blacksmith to build a large aluminum reel that will roll up the deflated wall when it needs to be removed. The reel is mounted on rubber wheels with a handle so Steenbeek can pull the 400-lb. wall through a regular sized walkway for storage.

Steenbeek says the original idea for the wall came from a poultry farmer in the Netherlands. The complete setup including the blower, pulleys and sleeves to cover the



Inflatable "air wall" seals off one end of Jon Steenbeek's 400-ft. poultry barn.



Cutouts along bottom of wall fit over feeders and water lines. Steenbeek designed a large aluminum reel that holds deflated wall between uses.



water and feed lines cost about \$15,000. The storage reel cost him about \$1,500. Steenbeek, Varna, Ont., Canada (ph 519 955-4606).

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Jon

## Spiked Collars Give Guard Dogs An Edge

Livestock guard dogs that have to fight off coyote packs and wolves have a better chance of surviving if fitted with a \$45 collar spiked with roofing nails.

"A collar gives a dog a chance to fight off a first or even a second attack while waiting for other dogs to join the fight," explains Kate Howe, co-owner, Coban Collars.

Howe and her husband Bill, owners of 246 Ranch Saddlery, make spiked collars for their own dogs and others.

"There has been a proliferation of predators in recent years. There are way more 'eaters' out there than there used to be," says Howe.

She credits the spread of hybrid Canadian wolves as driving demand. She says the 180-lb. killing machines are much bigger than native wolves and coyotes. Sheep producer friends in Turkey and Spain use spiked collars on all guard dogs and recommended them.

"We run a few sheep and have a small coyote issue, but with the spread of the hybrid wolves, our dogs just don't have enough protection any more," says Howe.

The Coban spiked collars are an attempt to give them quality added protection. The Howes use only the finest saddle leather, heavy-duty saddle buckles and rings for the rest of the collar. Hardware is riveted on and

then stitched for extra strength. Collars are also equipped with bells, with both bells and spikes secured with washers so they won't pull out of the leather in regular use. They have even developed a special "Tag Tuck" design.

"We use a welded steel loop that allows the collar tag end to be tucked under the collar," explains Howe. "This puts the tag out of the reach of the predator and keeps the tag from interfering with the spikes on the collar."

Each collar is personalized for the dog that will wear it. Short hair dogs get collars lined with sheepskin, while heavy-coated dogs get smooth leather. Cost is \$45 plus S&H.

"We need to know neck size, breed of dog, long or short hair, and the age of the dog," says Howe. "Our collars only have about 3 in. of tag, and if you order one when a dog is young, he can outgrow it in a year or two."

While Howe has confidence in their collars, she warns that they won't turn a house dog into a guard dog. By itself, it may not even be enough to protect a trained guard dog from a large hybrid wolf or even a pack of coyotes.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Coban Collars, 246 Ranch Saddlery, 15910 Grass Valley Rd., Winnemucca, Nevada 89445 (ph 775 625-2394; www.cobanollars.com).



Spiked dog collar gives livestock guard dogs a better chance of surviving if they have to fight off coyotes and wolves.



## Stationary Baler Wraps Material Tight

Industrial strength balers from Orkel can compact and wrap almost anything. The Norwegian-made baler takes in loader buckets of material at one end and delivers tightly wrapped bales at the other.

"The Orkel baler makes it possible to store normally bulky materials in less space without inventory or warehousing costs," says Lane Blount, Humdinger Equipment, the North American distributor for Orkel. "We are just beginning to market in North America and believe the individual wrap concept will become popular once the benefits are known."

Orkel balers have proven the nutritional benefits of their compaction and tight wrap on forage and silage for dairy cows. The technology is expected to benefit a wide range of other materials as well, such as distillers dried grains, and biomass.

"The unit will compact most products at a rate of 3:1, but other 'fluffy' products will reach 5:1 compaction," says Blount. "People are used to bulk handling of products, but wrapped bales can be palletized and shipped economically to end users. This opens up

new markets for products that previously were restricted to minimum quantity orders in bulk."

Blount uses the example of a small livestock operation getting feed delivered by bale. It could be transported and stored without loss of integrity. He expects the solid waste industry and other industries to see similar benefits.

Jarl Gjønnes, Orkel Compaction, reports that moisture content often falls during storage. "Fresh wood chips, shavings or sawdust are normally 45 percent moisture, but dry down to 15 to 25 percent over 3 to 6 mos. of storage in wrapped bales," says Gjønnes. "Wet compost or manure dries out after 3 to 4 weeks. Distillers grains and other high moisture materials can be baled and stored without heating. If extremely wet, straw or corn stalks may need to be added to get a well-shaped bale."

The Orkel MC Compactor comes in 3 models. Bales range in size from 33 by 33 in. dia. and length to 45 by 47 in. Hopper sizes range from 3.9 cu. yards to 9.1 cu. yards. Prices range from \$240,000 to \$350,000.



Norwegian-made Orkel baler takes in loader buckets of material at one end and delivers tightly wrapped bales at the other.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Humdinger Equipment, Ltd., 3202 Clovis Rd., Lubbock, Texas 79415 (ph 888 999-4909; info@tana-na.com).