

“Tail Alarm” Device Texts When Cow Ready To Give Birth

Cows equipped with Moocalls let owners know they are ready to give birth. The device sends text alerts announcing they are likely to calve within the hour. All you need is a cow tame enough to attach the Moocall to her tail.

“The Moocall sensor monitors tail movement 600 times per second,” says Emmet Savage, Moocall, Ltd. “The tail gets very active as the cow starts contractions.”

Savage says the device was developed after a business partner lost a calf about 4 years ago. He had previously noted tail activity as calving neared.

“We spent 4 years verifying that we can predict to within an hour of calving,” says Savage. “The exception is an older cow with a small calf, where the alert may arrive with less than an hour before birth and the calf slips out without difficulty. That is the perfect scenario.”

Normal or difficult births are when the device is most needed. Savage says the device has proven very popular with European breeders who often rely on C-section to deliver large calves from smaller cows.

“With our device, you can always be at the back of the animal when the cow has her calf,” says Savage.

Other devices use temperature changes with probes, but they have been known to cause infections. The Moocall is non-

invasive.

“It straps to the tail,” says Savage. “It comes with a 30-day rechargeable battery and will still text successfully when the battery has only a 15 percent charge.”

Savage says the wireless unit works even in low service situations. The embedded SIM card sends what is called a back-up bundle instead of an actual text. This requires very little signal.

“We’ve had no issues with signals,” says Savage. “It has a roaming function, so if one service provider is too weak, it will find another that is stronger.”

Alerts can be sent to up to 2 numbers. Once registered on the company web page, an operator can assign phone numbers to the device and check signal strength and battery level.

The device also offers a quick visual check. An LED light flashes blue while working, red when in calving mode and amber if the battery is low. A reset button allows the unit to be turned off or set up for the next cow.

“One unit is suggested for every 5 to 6 cows expected to calve in a week, but one user calved 8 cows in a week with one unit,” says Savage. “The number needed depends on the herd size and calving schedule.”

With current cattle prices, a unit can more than pay for itself by preventing a single



Tail-mounted device, called Moocall, sends a text alert when a cow is likely to calve within the hour.



An LED light flashes blue when device is working, red when in calving mode, and amber if the battery is low.

loss. Moocalls are priced at \$424, shipping included. A 15 percent discount applies to multiple orders. Included in the price is one year’s texting and roaming service. Similar to a prepaid phone, an annual service charge of \$185 is required for following years. A 5 percent discount is applied to multiple service plans.

“We are now selling it direct in over 20 countries, including the U.S. and Canada,” says Savage. “We promise delivery within 5 days and offer a 100 percent satisfaction guarantee.”

The company is working on a similar device for horses.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Moocall Ltd., 15 Mount Street, Upper Dublin

2, Ireland (ph 001 353 1 969 6038; www.moocallsensors.com).



Lowell Newman used rubber tracks from old Scorpion snowmobiles to build this mini bulldozer. To add traction he bolted angle irons every 3 in. across the tracks.

Mini Dozer Has Snowmobile Tracks

Lowell Newman’s mini bulldozer pushes, lifts and maneuvers like a full-size dozer - just at a smaller scale.

“Dozers and backhoes have always interested me. I just wanted to see if I could do it. I drew a picture of it and worked out the technical stuff as I went,” says Newman.

The “technical stuff” includes a 12 hp Roper lawn mower expanded and beefed up to accommodate an 18 hp Briggs and Stratton twin cylinder engine; snowmobile tracks from old Scorpion snowmobiles; hydraulic valves from a multi-car hauler; small motors off a Deere combine to drive the tracks; and a 21 gpm hydraulic pump for running everything including the snow blade.

“I thought about making my own tracks, but I like the rubber tracks,” Newman says. He notes the Scorpion tracks don’t have gaps, which is important to keep dirt out. To add traction he bolted angle iron every 3 in. across the tracks.

His biggest challenge was lining up 1/2-in. dia. rods on the drums to fit between the track’s lugs. Newman also built the frame and seat, making room for the battery.

“The upper unit is hinged so I can get



Upper part of bulldozer is hinged, providing access to the hydraulics, drive motor and chains.

to the hydraulics, drive motor and chains,” Newman says.

The 4-ft. snow blade, which came off a pickup, turns right and left and lifts about 16 in. off the ground.

“It works great in dirt and sand, but not as well in 2-in. gravel. It tends to lock up the tracks,” he notes.

It’s ideal for basic jobs in the yard, Newman says, and small enough to load in the back of a pickup.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Lowell Newman, 2071 U.S. Hwy. 68, Urbana, Ohio 43078 (ph 937 653-4098).

“Chopped Chopper” Chips Wood

Dan Jost bought an old forage chopper cheap and then turned it into a wood chipper. All he had to do was chop off a few parts, such as the straight-cut header, and make a simple hopper.

“I got it for only \$25 at an auction,” says Jost. “I was going to salvage it out and had removed enough to see the feeder chains and knives. There was a nearby brush pile, and I decided to see if those knives could handle it. It worked fine, though they were dull. After I sharpened them, it worked even better.”

The IH SC16 chopper was built for straight-cut green chopping or carrying a 1-row corn head or hay pickup. Jost really liked the forward/neutral/reverse transmission. The only problem was it was mounted to the side of the chopper.

“The feeder chains really grab the stems and pull them in,” says Jost. “I decided to make a bar for the front that could change the transmission if needed.”

Jost made use of a pipe that ran across and underneath the cutting chamber. He cut a slightly longer piece of pipe, slipped it through 2 washers, and mounted it inside the first pipe by welding the washers to the pipe ends.

“I took a third piece of pipe, heated it to make two 90-degree angles, and welded the ends of it to the ends of the second pipe to make my hoop bar,” says Jost. “A short length of pipe attached to the hoop bar and the arm of the transmission makes changing direction easy. All I do is push on the hoop bar once to slide it into neutral and twice to put it in reverse.”

Jost says the chipper has come in handy not only to clean up brush, but also making wood chips for landscaping the yard. He directs the chips into a wagon for later use. He added an adjustable spout to direct chips.

“A couple of friends have borrowed it, one to chop up sweet corn stalks and the other to chop up brush for a walking path,” says Jost. “I have an old elm that needs to come down. I plan to blow the chips from its branches into the woods to encourage more mushrooms.”



Dan Jost turned an old pull-type forage chopper into a wood chipper, chopping off the straight-cut header and adding a hopper.



Jost says the chopper/chipper can handle 3 to 4-in. dia. stems. He says it can handle about as much as can be fed in at one time. “Sometimes I have to back the material out and hit it again,” says Jost. “For what it cost, it works great, and my 50 hp Kubota powers it just fine.”

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Dan Jost, 17992 Co. Rd. 49, Richmond, Minn. 56368 (ph 320 980-6176).