Plastic bags cost $3.50 each and cover big bales up to 6 ft. in dia.

Bags can be folded and left untied, or the ends can be tied.

"FEED IT LIKE YOU BALED IT"

Plastic Bags for Big Bales

"If you want to feed it like you baled it, then Bag-It!"

So says Joe Lawless, Jr., of Plastic Forage Savers, marketer of new Bag-It plastic bags for big bales. Individual bags, made of 4 mil black plastic, cost $3.50 each and cover any bale up to 6 ft. in dia.

When should bales be bagged?

It's a case of waiting until the baled hay has had a chance to go through a "sweat" and is dry, but hopefully, not waiting so long it gets rained on. "I personally wouldn't wait any longer to bag than my confidence in the weather forecasts," says Lawless, who generally recommends bagging about a week after baling. "Some condensation may occur on the top of bagged bales if the hay was baled a little on the wet side, he explains. "However, this condensation appears to cause little or no spoilage. The plastic seems to absorb enough solar heat to dry off and eliminate this moisture without spoilage."

Should the bags be tied?

"We generally leave them untied since there's very little spoilage on the ends, even on unbagged bales," answers Lawless. "It takes two men only a minute or two to bag and wrap a big bale. One man can do it but it's faster with two."

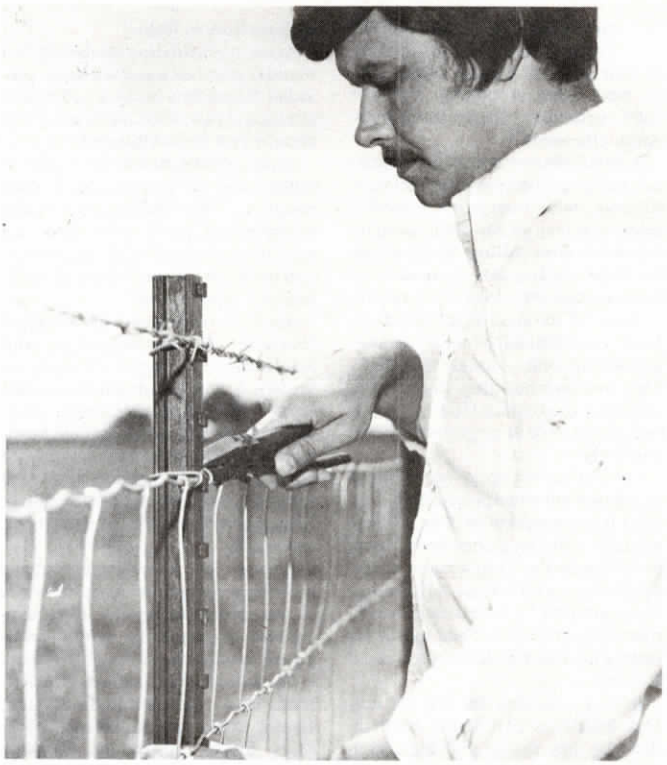
Does bagged hay sell for a premium?

"So far, I don't know of any bagged bales that have been sold," he told FARM SHOW. "The top producers are the first to try to do a more efficient job. When a livestock producer proves to himself the value of bagging, he'll require his hay suppliers to provide him with big bales in bags."

On a 1,250 lb. bale, priced at $80 per ton, 15% loss pencils out to $7.50 — versus $3.50 for the price of a plastic bag. (They come ten in a roll, priced at $35 per roll.) Lawless thinks 15% would be a conservative estimate of the spoilage loss in unprotected big bales. "If you check unprotected bales closely, you'll find more spoilage on one side than the other, and very little at either end. There's a good reason for this," says Lawless, who cites this illustration:

"Take a slick-paper magazine of 200 or so pages, roll it up and tie it with the same degree of pressure as hay compressed in a bale. Now, if you were to slowly pour water on the very top, which side would shed the least amount of water — the one with the ends of the pages turned down, or up? Works the same way when rain falls on a rolled up bale of hay. One side sheds less moisture than the other."

For more details, including dealer inquiries, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Plastic Forage Savers, Joe Lawless, Jr., Box 187, Jacksonville, Ill. 62650 (ph. 217 673-3931).



Poly Posts drive with conventional T-post driver and accept standard clips.

CHEAPER THAN STEEL POSTS

New Fence Posts Made of Plastic

"So far as we know, it's the first and only all-plastic fence post on the market like it," says W.J. Kemerer, general manager of USS Molded Plastic Products, a division of U.S. Steel.

All-plastic Poly Posts 10 to 15% less than comparable length steel posts, yet weigh one-third less (10 posts weigh 24 lbs.) The won't rot, rust or corrode and never need painting. They flex in all directions under stress and spring back into position, thus preventing leaning fences.

"We tested 49 different formulas in coming up with one that met our requirements for a rugged, dependable farm fence post," explains Kemerer. He notes that one requirement was ability to withstand a simulated "hot" and "cold" weather test.

Cold test: Individual posts were chilled to 0°, the anchor end (about 18 in. long) stepped on, and the top end raised 4.5 ft. to see if the posts would snap.

Hot test: Posts were exposed to a temperature of 140° for 24 hours, then tested to see if they were still rigid enough to be driven into the ground.

Poly Posts, available in standard 5½, 6 and 6½ ft. lengths, can be driven with a conventional "T" steel post driver. They accept standard clips for barbed and woven wire. "Because they're made of nonconductive material, they're also self-insulating for electric fencing, saving you 15 or 20 cents per post on the cost of insulators," explains Kemerer. He adds that the molded-on lugs, anchor plate and color (solid black) are all integral parts of the post.

For more details, including the name of your nearest source of supply, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, USS Molded Plastic Products, Division of U.S. Steel, 600 Grant St., Pittsburg, Pa. 15230. (ph. 412 433-1121).