

Low-Cost Roller Knocks Over Stalks

John Janing didn't want to snap stalks off, but just push them over. So he built a stalk roller that does just that. Best of all, it was low cost and easy to build.

"I was going to try planting beans across the corn rows, but didn't want the old corn stalks to tear up my tires," says Janing. "I needed a roller, but I didn't want to make a big investment."

Janing came up with a roller that attaches to the front of his Deere 8100 planter tractor. The stalk roller is actually a pair of rollers made from 8-in. well stem. Each roller hangs down in the path of the wheels. To help ensure that they roll rather than drag (and smear the surface if it's wet), Janing welded 1-in. angle iron in a slightly spiraling design around the rollers.

Each roller mounts on bearings within its own frame. Arms on those frames end in yokes that pin to stubs hanging down from an old 4 by 4-in. cultivator toolbar.

"The arm hinges let the rollers float over the surface," explains Janing.

To mount the toolbar, he used a 3/4-in. steel tank mount he picked up at an auction that fits the 8100. The toolbar hinges to the mount. A hydraulic cylinder is attached between the mount and a steel plate on the toolbar. Lengths of angle iron extend out from the toolbar and connect with the hinged rollers by chains.

"When the angle irons are parallel with the ground, the rollers are in contact with the ground and rolling the stalks," explains Janing. "When the cylinder extends, it rotates the toolbar on the mount. This lifts the angle irons to a more vertical position to raise the rollers off the ground for transport."

At the time, Janing was in transition between no tractor guidance and an RTK guidance system. He tried cross row planting for a couple years before switching to off row planting. With RTK, planting just 4 to 5 in. from the old row, he wasn't driving on stalks and didn't need the roller. However, it still comes in handy.

"Last year I mounted it on a newer model



John Janing's home-built stalk roller uses a pair of rollers to push stalks over without snapping them off.

tractor, just because it had new tires on it," says Janing. "It still does the job, and it was low cost."

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"Weed Resistance" Boosts Sales For Weed Wiper

Rob Smucker says his father invented the Super Sponge weed wiper back in 1983 as a way to apply herbicide to tall weeds without spraying. Over the years the wipe-on applicator has sold well, primarily to organic farmers, but Smucker says today's herbicide-resistant weeds have caused conventional farmers to reach back in time for the 32 year-old technology.

"We've sold more Super Sponges this summer because of 'super weeds' like Roundup-resistant pig weed, Palmer Amaranth and giant ragweeds," Smucker says. "Farmers can mount the 30-in. long sponges on any size spray boom. They'll work with an ATV, a small tractor with a loader, or a 4-wheeler. The Super Sponge will selectively treat trouble spots with a hard hitting contact herbicide without harming the crop," Smucker says. "The smaller booms are

especially great for treating small patches of resistant weeds in cotton, small grain, peanuts and soybeans."

Smucker says the Super Sponge uses less chemical than a comparable-sized spray boom. "Pressurized liquid infuses the 3-in. dia. Super Sponge quickly when it's turned on and doesn't drain or drip liquid onto the preferred crop when the pressure is turned off," Smucker says. "The wicking action of the weed stem and head rubbing against the sponge applies an ample amount of herbicide to kill tall and fast-growing problem weeds quickly."

The Super Sponge is made of durable, industrial strength material. Its patented gravity-feed system delivers precision metering for even application and consistent coverage. Sponges 30 in. long can be mounted side-by-side to fit any length



Super Sponge weed wiper rolls herbicides on tall weeds above the crop canopy. Today's Roundup-resistant weeds are boosting its popularity.

boom. Smucker says the company sells the product through a dealer network in the U.S. and Canada. Locate the nearest dealer and respective pricing by checking the company website.

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Cement Foam Insulates And Fireproofs Any Building

"It's the only foam insulation on the planet that is 100 percent fireproof," says Bill Szabo, about AirKrete® Greensulation. "It's mineral based, containing magnesium oxide cement, a refractory cement, which is the primary ingredient in firebrick."

The injection foam requires a cavity to fill – either through holes drilled through the outside walls of an existing building or with mesh on new buildings. But unlike other foams, Szabo says AirKrete is nontoxic and does not contain formaldehyde, asbestos or other volatile chemicals. As a bonus, AirKrete scrubs CO2 out of the air.

The ultra light cement injection foam was patented in 1987 and recently repatented with advanced application equipment. AirKrete dealers throughout the U.S., in Canada and overseas use the equipment to inject the shaving cream-like foam into walls, ceilings and floors. It's non-expanding, mold-resistant and a desiccant so rodents and insects don't like it.

AirKrete stops air filtration, but is not a structural foam, Szabo says. He describes it as "fossilized soap bubbles."

While those bubbles don't provide strength, they do deaden sound, which is useful for sound studios, nightclubs and residential areas. Its fireproofing quality makes it suitable for meeting firewall codes for businesses and homes.

AirKrete is also a great option for old farm houses and buildings, Szabo points out. "It fireproofs and insulates."

The cost of insulating with AirKrete is more expensive initially than traditional fibrous insulations, but has a payback of energy savings in less than seven years and is more effective, Szabo says.

In addition to interest in the Northeast and Midwest, customers in the South are recognizing that insulating reduces cooling costs. California customers appreciate AirKrete for its fireproofing.

For videos and information about local dealers or how to become a dealer, check out the AirKrete website.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, AirKrete, P.O. Box 380, Weedsport, N.Y. 13166 (ph 315 834-6609; www.airkrete.com, info@airkrete.com).



AirKrete Greensulation is a shaving cream-like foam that can be injected into walls, ceilings and floors. It's said to be a great option for old farm houses and buildings because it fireproofs and insulates at the same time.