

Reader Letters

In defense of the MiraHut farrowing units which found themselves on the negative end of a recent FARM SHOW "best buys" report, I don't wish to compare the "positive" vs. "negative" but rather point out that the "negative" would not have occurred had the huts been installed and managed according to the manufacturer's instructions and recommendations.

To begin with, the concrete slab is not "doing it right". That was a short cut to avoid buying the outside pen with a floor made of non-porous material which comes with the hut. That's a big factor in disease control. Secondly, these huts were set level, as opposed to the 8-in. slope recommended by the manufacturer which allows liquid waste to drain away. The pigs will go outside after they are a few days old. Thirdly, the operation spoken of in the article didn't have electricity available to provide water pressure for cleaning, or power for the electrically heated floors inside the huts — another very important factor in saving pigs.

With proper installation and management, many MiraHut owners have actually reduced their labor requirements, as compared to confinement houses, and have practically eliminated disease problems.

There are many, many farmers who, if asked, would put the MiraHut at the top of their "best buy" list.

Stewart McClaskey
Boston, Kty.

I read with interest your "Smorgasbord" column in the November-December issue and was particularly interested in remarks made by Alexander Graham Bell, in 1917, on the production of alcohol and gasohol. Here,

taken from "Gas Power", published by Gas Power Publishing Company, St. Joseph, Mich., are similar comments made nine years earlier in 1906:

"The time is near when the farmer will grow his own power. The coal mines will be unable to compete with the power he will develop from his fields. What is now going to waste will be converted into fuel to operate his gas engines... The sources of alcohol include the white potato of the North, the sweet potato, the yam, white molasses from the sugar cane, the sugar beet, rotten feed and the waste from the stalk of Indian corn. It is safe to say that the sugar and starch which goes to waste in the stalks of Indian corn would make 100 gallons of alcohol per acre. Even at this time companies are being formed to make alcohol out of these waste products for use in the gas engine in the North and the South... It is safe to predict that the use of alcohol by the gas engine will marvelously extend its usefulness and that the farmer will use the gas engine to plow and harvest fields and to do the harvesting and that he will use it to carry his grain to market and to improve his roads."

Charles Klute
Buchanan, Mich.

I was interested to read your article on ring tractor chains in Vol. 4, No. 1. Ring chains have been in use for many years in this part of the country. The chains, shown in your photo, would be for light duty as they have four lugs and the rings are widely spaced. The chains I use have five lugs — 3 forward and 2 for reverse — and the rings almost touch each other.

Once you try them, I'm convinced you will never return to the conven-

tional type again. They are not for the man that overloads his tractor and spins the wheels. On gravel roads or frozen ground, they will give a rough ride. Clogging is no problem unless you are in soft mud. Also, for the safety of the tractor and its driver, they have to be mounted correctly and operated with common sense.

J. Yeats
Cockshire, Quebec
Canada

Noticed your article on the latest new waste oil heaters. I thought you might be interested in the new Sure-Fire unit we are marketing which is manufactured by Solar Dakota in Aberdeen, S. Dak. We have been extremely pleased with its superior performance and trouble-free operation. It produces 100,000 btu's of clean, safe free heat and operates for 24 hours on 15 gal. of waste crankcase oil.

Norman Buckner, President
Solar Dakota, Box 1394
Minot, N. Dak.

I am a subscriber to FARM SHOW Magazine. I almost canceled my subscription to your magazine once because of articles such as the one you have run about the "friction furnace that requires no fuel". Before you provide publicity for some quack invention that defies all the known laws of physics, the least you could do would be to ask for some verification of the claims.

Dan Bugos
Route 1
Alpha, Ill.

I have read your articles on "worst buys", including comments from a South Dakota farmer who runs down his Tasco farrowing building. I was planning on a new farrowing building last spring, so I corresponded with your unhappy farmer about his building. I also asked the Tasco people about the problem. To make a long story short, I purchased a new Tasco farrowing building with a 6 pen nursery. It is 24 by 60 ft. with a cement pit. It was delivered and set on the pit in May, 1979.

I want to let you know that I am happy with my building. I have had a few little things give trouble, but the company fixed them promptly. A district representative of Tasco calls on me regularly to see if everything is okay. I plan to purchase a finishing building from Tasco in the near future. I think the Tasco building is much superior to any others I looked at. The ventilation system is super. I also like the farrowing crates.

Robert Ullom
Route 2
Flandreau, S. Dak.

I have just received my first issue of FARM SHOW. I was very interested in your "best and worst" buy section. Being the owner of an independent tractor repair shop, I see quite often the good and bad features described by your readers. I am impressed with your publication.

Dan Fisher
Ellsworth, Wis.

I would like to compliment you on your publication. I consider it a must for any farmer who intends to stay in business and on top of new developments in agriculture.

Kerry Victor
Rogers, N. Mex.

Don't Miss A Single Issue

Many new subscribers have asked if they can obtain back issues of FARM SHOW. The answer is yes.

We have a limited supply and are offering them on a first come, first served basis. Complete sets of all six FARM SHOW issues published in 1978 are currently available, plus the last four issues published in 1977, except No. 4. We no longer have extra copies of our first two issues for 1977 (Vol. 1, No. 1, and Vol. 1, No. 2, and Vol. 1, No. 4.) Extra copies are available for five of the six issues published in 1979. Copies of the Sept.-Oct. issue (Vol. 3, No. 5) are no longer available.

Send your check for \$1 per copy to: BACK ISSUES, FARM SHOW Magazine, Box 704, Lakeville, Minn. 55044. Make your check payable to "FARM SHOW".

We at one time had a big 4-wheel drive. But we, like a lot of others, could not keep it in the field because of all the grief. At that time, we also had a 4020 Deere with a turbo, which we used to do all our own disking, cultivating and other similar jobs. One day, unfortunately, our 2-wheel drive 4020 broke down. We put the 4-wheel drive on the same jobs, expecting to really keep things moving. That's when we started getting educated about 4-wheelers. The 4-wheel was rated at 145 hp and our 4020 was putting out 120 hp on the pto. So, with these figures in mind, we always thought the 4-wheeler was doing a lot of work. That day, however, the 4-wheeler could not stay with the 4020. The 4-wheeler weighed approximately 22,000 lbs., whereas the 4020 was at 14,000 lbs. Both had duals. We also noted more slippage with the 4-wheeler carrying the same load. Needless to say, we had woke up. That fall, we purchased a 4630 John Deere. That was five years ago.

Now, we have a 4640 Deere, which we do nearly all our work with. Last fall, we decided to try the new 4-wheelers to see if they had changed much from the one we had. With some dealer cooperation, we tried a 2670 Case, 4890 Case and the 8550 Allis.

To make a long story short, the three 4-wheelers got parked and the 4640 was put back to work. I think John Deere has forgotten more about tractors than Allis and Case know put together.

We have come to this equation: For a 4-wheeler to pull the same implement, it must be 50% heavier and have 50% more power than a 2-wheeler. Now we are just waiting for a 250 hp. 2-wheeler to be on the market. But it must read Deere on the hood before we will buy it. The Deere 4630 and 4640 would be our 'best buys'. In the last five years, we have put on over 4,000 hours on them with no major problems.

Richard Huitema
Markesaw, Wis.

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