

New Ag Plastic Chases Critters Away

A new additive for plastic wrap and bags keeps rodents, birds and raccoons away from hay, silage and grain. The specially treated plastic keeps grain and forage in top condition.

"Once rodents, birds or raccoons break through plastic wraps and bags, other animals are attracted to the smell," says Elizabeth Omet of Protexia Agrirepel.

When farmers near the company's headquarters in France reported losing 30 to 40 percent of their bales each season due to bird punctures and resulting mold, company researchers started looking for a solution.

"We found an organic product that can be added during the plastic extrusion process that repels problem animals, birds and bugs," says Omet.

The product called Combirepel is an additive in the plastic making process. It has a life span of 2 years in the plastic and doesn't transfer into the environment. It is a non-toxic, environmentally safe repellent made from essential oils and other natural ingredients. By repelling the pests, it teaches them to stay away, creating a no-

pest zone.

Protexia has introduced Agrirepel in 8 countries, including the U.S. and Canada. Despite being told the North American market was only interested in the lowest cost, Omet says premium priced Agrirepel is being well received. Initially, sales were direct to the farmer, but retailers and distributors are now showing interest.

"People in the dairy industry tell us the Agrirepel-protected silage and hay is higher quality," says Omet. "The cows are producing more milk and are healthier with fewer foot and skin problems because they aren't eating moldy feed."

She notes that an Agrirepel grain bag can cost as much as a dollar more per foot than non-repellent bags. "When you can lose tens of thousands of dollars to spoilage, doesn't it make sense to spend more to protect it?" she asks. "A wrapped 3 by 4 by 7-ft. bale can be worth \$200. With Agrirepel, you not only protect it for seldom more than a dollar more per bale, but you spend less time checking for damage and trying to repair it."



Agrirepel is a specially treated plastic wrap that keeps rodents and birds away from hay, silage and grain.

Omet points out that while the protective bale wrap can be more expensive per foot, actual cost can be less. Agrirepel is made from the highest quality, virgin LDPE (low-density polyethylene) and is coated with an adhesive that seals tighter and doesn't unwind in the wind.

"Our customers report using fewer wraps than they would without the repellent and adhesive," says Omet. "Many use 8 to 10

wraps and as many as 12 trying to keep animals out. With Agrirepel, you only need 6 wraps per bale."

Omet says the company is looking for distributors and dealers in North America.

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Diverter Sucks Dust From Deere "S" Series Combines

"Deere's 'S' series combines have more problems with dust than most other combines on the market. That's why we just introduced a new feederhouse dust diverter designed specially for them," says Tim Johnson, inventor and manufacturer about his hydraulic-powered, add-on attachment that requires no permanent modification to install.

The diverter mounts directly over the feederhouse door and directs and discharges dust down both sides of the feederhouse. The field ahead of the operator is in plain sight, dust-free.

The dust diverter is fitted with 2 fans, one on each end, that suck dust off the return chain and flow it out down onto the ground through a pair of 14 by 24-in. discharge boxes. The fans are powered by reel hydraulics but don't affect operation of the reel.

"The vision of the operator improves tremendously, especially under extremely dusty conditions. The discharge boxes get

the dust down close to the ground so it doesn't bother your vision even on a windy day," says Johnson. "The diverter virtually eliminates problems with dirty windshields, radiators, cab and engine filters, reducing overall maintenance on the machine. You can operate at night without having to guess where you're going, and you won't have to climb up on the feederhouse to clean the windows.

"Our conventional dust diverters have just one hydraulic motor and fan, but Deere's newer S series combines have a particularly bad dust problem," says Johnson. "The accelerator that feeds the combine's rotor creates a lot of dust, and there's nothing to keep the cleaning fans from pushing it out the front. The problem only gets worse as the head size increases, and some farmers are using heads up to 45 ft. wide."

The diverter housing clamps onto the feederhouse cover using metal rods fitted with a knob on top and "duck feet" at the bottom. No drilling is required.



Hydraulic-powered dust diverter for Deere "S" series combines mounts directly over the feederhouse door, discharging dust down both sides.

"The entire unit is made of aluminum so each unit only weighs about 25 lbs., including the motor," notes Johnson.

Retails for \$5,995.

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Rolling Water Tank For Pastured Cows

Jeremy Stilson brings water to his cows using a home-built water wagon that lets his herd keep grazing instead of walking home for water.

"Before the water wagon, we had alleyways, and the cattle had to walk quite a way to get water," says Stilson. "Now they stay in the pasture and spread their manure there, not in an alleyway."

Stilson bought a used 10-ton Deere running gear for \$500. He built a bed out of two 16-ft., 6 by 8-in. railroad ties topped by 1-in. oak boards.

"I mounted four 175-gal. totes on the bed with oak 2 by 4's around them to anchor them in place so they don't shift," says Stilson. "The 4 totes plumbed together act as a baffle so the weight doesn't shift as much when I move the wagon."

He used converters on the tote valves to connect them with 2-in. pvc pipe. A valve at the end of the pipe connects it to the rear mounted stock tank.

"I used 3/4-in. steel tubing to make a shelf

that I welded to the back axle," says Stilson. "I set the stock tank on it and surrounded it with treated 2 by 12's so the cattle can't push it around."

Initially Stilson filled the totes from ditches and ponds using a trash pump. However, residue collected in the tanks, and the resulting algae plugged valves.

"Now we fill it at the farmstead and tow it to the herd," says Stilson. "As long as we use clean water, we have no problems."

The only thing that limits use of the tank is freezing temperatures. Stilson usually drains the totes in December.

"It takes a heavy frost to get the tanks to freeze, but we hang it up by January," he says. "I just take the main valve off and the line is empty. At that point, we pull the herd back to a winter paddock with a heated waterer."

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Home-built water wagon supports four 175-gal. totes plumbed together with a 2-in. pvc pipe. Cattle drink out of a rear-mounted stock tank.