



If you're a vegetable grower looking for new or used equipment, a good place to start is Roeters Farm Equipment which specializes in market garden implements. Photos show their potato digger, demulching brush, demulching rake, and harvest cart.

## They Specialize In Market Garden Implements

Roeters Farm Equipment specializes in new and used equipment for vegetable growers, much of it for small to mid-sized market gardeners.

"We are the exclusive dealer for Rusty's Ag Equipment," says Tim Roeters. "It's simple, well-built equipment that works for smaller operators."

He points to Rusty's potato digger as a good example. The simple, one-row, 3-pt. digger has a shoe that can go deep (\$3,800). A slightly extended frame version is equipped with coulters (\$4,250) for cutting weeds and vines. Both feature a pto-powered, 25-in. wide chain roller to shake the dirt from the

potatoes. They can be used on a variety of in-ground vegetables, including sweet potatoes.

Roeters says it is ideal for market gardeners, particularly those who market through the season.

"They can dig half a row, pick it out of the ground, and leave the rest for another day," says Roeters.

Other specialty tools from Rusty's include a demulching brush, a demulching rake, a pedal-powered harvest cart, and a Tiny Till multi tool (\$1,050) with a 5-ft. frame and 9 hi-clearance shanks.

"Rusty's rakes and brushes are a mechanical alternative to hand labor clearing straw

mulch from strawberry beds," explains Roeters. "You don't need a \$100,000 tractor to run them. A subcompact will do it. Most buyers average around 4 acres of strawberries."

The frame (\$3,000) with a hydraulic drive can accommodate either a rake (\$500) or hard and soft brushes (\$900). The brushes work great for removing debris from plastic mulch, according to Roeters.

Rusty's pedal-powered harvest cart (\$2,000) has proven very popular with its buyers, notes Roeters. First introduced by Rusty's founder (Vol. 18, No. 6) more than 26 years ago, it had been discontinued for a time.

The rear wheel track adjusts from 54 to 104 in. centers. The cart has a 16 by 24-in. tray on each side and a 24 by 32-in. tray in front.

"We just reintroduced them," says Roeters. "The specially contoured seat gives you support when sitting, but doesn't get in the way when you bend over to pick. Compression springs on either side let you lean easily to either side."

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## No Freeze Chicken Waterer

an open pipe that the birds can drink out of."

Gutschenritter recently outlined his watering solution in a post to the American Pastured Poultry Producers Association members discussion page (<https://pasturedpoultry.groups.io/g/APPPA>). He agreed to share it with FARM SHOW readers.

His water source is a 100-gal. stock tank on a platform, which he refills by hose as needed. The actual waterer is a 4-in. pvc pipe with the top sliced off to create a trough. Water drains from the tank through a 3/4-in. valve to the end of the pvc pipe.

"The water drains into a hole in the top of a trash can that is sunk into the ground at the end of the pipe," explains Gutschenritter. "A submersible pump in the trash can sends water back to the stock tank through a 1 1/2-in. pvc pipe. The water keeps flowing all day long from the tank to the pipe to the sump bin and back to the tank and so on, all winter long."

Gutschenritter has used the system for 1 1/2 seasons and has fine-tuned it over time. He outlines a few tweaks that keep the water flowing smoothly:

- Insert filters at each stage to prevent the

pump from getting jammed.

- Keep everything rigid so pump vibration doesn't shake anything loose.
- Make a roof over the trough and an impermeable lid over the 100-gal. tank to keep out chicken waste and litter.
- Set the trough above a scratch-free, level surface for the birds to stand on to ensure continued access.

Everything about the system can be adapted to the size of the flock. Gutschenritter notes that the 100-gal. stock tank is enough to water about 1,000 chickens a day. Likewise, the pipe length is a matter of providing adequate access.

Gutschenritter added a 2 by 4 through the former grips of the trash can to brace the pedestal sump pump.

The running water system works for Gutschenritter and his wife, Courtney, as they maintain their layer flock at 3 Brothers Farm. However, he is quick to advocate making any changes needed.

"Get a bigger tank if you don't want to fill so frequently," he says. "Add a heater if you're worried water movement isn't enough."



Submersible pump in trash can (above) sends water back to stock tank. Chickens drink out of a 4-in. pvc pipe with the top sliced off to form a trough.



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Water drains from a 100-gal. stock tank (in background) through a pipe and into a trash can sunk into the ground.

Michael Gutschenritter has a "no freeze" watering system for his chickens, and it requires no added heat. The secret is moving water.

"The water is flowing 24/7, so it can't freeze," explains Gutschenritter. "There is essentially a 2-in. deep river running down

## Solar-Powered Monitor Checks Remote Stock Tanks



Solar-powered Tank Toad uses submersible pressure sensors, or sonar sensors, to measure the water level in remote stock tanks.

Cattlemen will soon have a new way to remotely monitor water levels in stock tanks using their cell phone.

The solar-powered Tank Toad Remote Water Checking System lets you know about water level problems without having to physically visit the tank. It uses submersible pressure sensors, or sonar sensors, to measure the water level in remote stock tanks. It then sends a text message with the information to your cell phone.

"We're gauging the level of interest in the system and hope to market it later this year. We think it's an affordable system that will save ranchers time and money," says Damon Printz, Meadowlark Solutions, Albin, Wyo.

The system comes with a solar panel that hooks up to the "Tank Toad" monitor. A cable with the submersible pressure sensor runs from the monitor down to the bottom of the tank. Alternatively, the sonar sensor mounts on a metal arm that hangs over the tank. "The sonar sensor measures the distance to the water and tells you how empty the tank is," says Printz.

The customer receives an SMS text

message once a day telling him if the water is too high or low. The customer can use the system to inform up to 5 different phone numbers.

"The satellite system will be a little more expensive than a cell phone system, but you avoid the problem of poor cell phone service. As long as the sky is clear you'll always get a connection," says Printz.

Instead of selling hardware, the company plans to rent the monitor for \$400 per year and charge \$30 per month for satellite service. "With this plan, you pay less up front and can pay for service on a month by month basis, without having to commit to a long term contract. We will provide product support and any replacement equipment that's needed," says Printz.

Areas with good cellular coverage may be eligible to use the cellular plan instead of the satellite plan. He says the cellular plan will probably cost about \$100 per year.

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