

Feeder Makes Chicken Chores Easier

By Lydia Noyes, Contributing Editor
Riverbend Resources of West Bridgewater, Mass., is helping backyard poultry owners simplify one of the messiest parts of chicken keeping: daily feeding and watering.

The company was founded by Erik Diedrichsen, an inventor, veteran and entrepreneur whose path to poultry products began almost by accident.

"About 20 years ago, I met the girl of my dreams," says Diedrichsen. "We settled down and started our family just outside Boston. My mother-in-law worked at an elementary school that hatched chicks for the students, and one day she asked if we were interested in taking them. I knew absolutely nothing about chickens, but reluctantly agreed."

That first small flock included five hens and one rooster. Before long, the Diedrichsen family's backyard life had expanded well beyond chickens. Dogs, cats, bees, maple syruping, gardens and even goats became part of the family's small homestead.

Like many backyard chicken owners, Diedrichsen quickly learned that the animals were enjoyable, but the chores could be messy. Feeders spilled. Rain got in. Chickens scratched feed all over the ground. Rodents found the leftovers. Waterers needed constant attention.

Then, in 2020, while his trade show exhibit business was largely shut down due to COVID, Diedrichsen noticed that the family's homemade chicken feeder had broken.

"I remember thinking, 'Why don't they make a kit for this?'" he says. "Then I realized there really was no 'they.' If I wanted it, I was probably going to have to make it myself."

That idea became the Poultry Pro Feeder, a simple yet highly practical feeder-port kit that lets chicken owners turn almost any plastic container, bucket or barrel into a weather-resistant poultry feeder. The design helps keep feed inside the container, where it stays cleaner and drier, while reducing waste, mess and rodent access.

Unlike many traditional feeders that leave feed exposed to wind, rain, scratching and spillage, the Poultry Pro Feeder is designed for real-world backyard use. It installs quickly, includes the required hole saw, and works with containers customers may already own.

"There really wasn't anything like it available when we started," says Diedrichsen. "Now feeder ports have become another standard way of feeding chickens. That's been exciting to see, but it also reminds us that we created the original product and did the hard work to bring it to market."

The product has since won multiple awards, appeared on "Shark Tank," and helped establish Riverbend Resources as an innovation-driven company in the backyard poultry market.

The company has also expanded beyond feeding with the Poultry Pro Waterer, which attaches to a standard 5-gal bucket and can connect directly to a garden hose for easier filling. The waterer is designed to increase capacity, simplify cleaning and transport, and provide antimicrobial protection to help reduce algae growth. Both products are designed for backyard chicken owners, homesteaders, and small to medium farms seeking practical tools without complicated installation.

"Our goal has always been simple," says Diedrichsen. "We want to make caring for animals easier, cleaner and more enjoyable. These products came from our own backyard and our own frustrations, so we understand the customer because we are the customer."

Both the Poultry Pro Feeder and the Poultry Pro Waterer have an MSRP of \$29.95.

"What started with chickens has grown into something much bigger," says Diedrichsen. "We're building a line of smart, practical products for people who love animals and



Feeder-port kit allows chicken owners to turn almost any plastic container, bucket or barrel into a weather-resistant poultry feeder.

want to spend less time fighting messy chores and more time enjoying them."

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Wireless Leak Detection Prevents Water Damage

General Electric's SmartHQ™ Home Leak Detection Kit provides round-the-clock monitoring and instant alerts to help protect your home from water damage.

"This innovative leak detection system provides early warning when water reaches one of the sensor's detection probes," says Wendy Treinen of GE Appliance Public Relations. "The sensor communicates with a connected gateway, which sends an alert through a SmartHQ app so the user can investigate and respond."

The gateway can support up to five sensors, each of which can be placed near common water-risk areas, such as under sinks, beside water heaters, near washing machines, toilets, refrigerators or HVAC drain pans. The system is designed for straightforward, user-installable setup.

"No plumbing modifications, specialized wiring or professional installation are required," says Treinen. "The user plugs in the gateway, connects it to a 2.4 GHz Wi-

Fi network through the SmartHQ app, and places the battery-powered sensors in the areas they want to monitor."

Maintenance is minimal, and each sensor uses two AAA batteries that typically last about 3 years under normal operating conditions.

The leak sensors are designed to work with both the SmartHQ Home and the SmartHQ Management systems.

"The core function remains to detect water and notify the user," says Treinen. "Our SmartHQ Home is designed primarily for individual homeowners, while SmartHQ Management is designed for property managers who need centralized visibility across multiple units or properties."

"They can monitor leak alerts centrally and turn an alert into an assigned maintenance task. The sensors aren't appliance-specific. They can be placed near water sources regardless of the appliance or plumbing fixture brand, making them useful in homes

and properties with different equipment."

Bluetooth capability lets it seamlessly integrate with the GE Appliances SmartHQ Home app and Management software. In this way, the equipment aims to keep home and property owners aware of potential issues as early as possible.

"The greatest value of leak detection is time," says Treinen. "A sensor cannot repair the source of a leak, but it can shorten the time between water appearing and someone becoming aware of it. Earlier warnings help users respond before the problems become severe."

Customer reviews indicate the equipment works as promised, and buyers are generally happy with the sensors, noting that they're surprisingly easy to install and use and that the "water on" alerts work as intended. Many found the system continued working for multiple years after purchase.

The SmartHQ Leak Detection kit with three sensors costs \$99 and is available on



Gateway can support up to five sensors, each of which can be placed near common water-risk areas, such as under sinks, beside water heaters, near washing machines, toilets, refrigerators or HVAC drain pans.

the GE Appliances website and on Amazon.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, GE Appliances (www.geappliances.com).



Neogenyx Fuels, in conjunction with Adams Land & Cattle, a beef feedlot in Broken Bow, Neb., is building a large anaerobic manure digestion system to produce biogas and pipeline-quality renewable natural gas.

Feedlot To Convert Cattle Manure Into Renewable Natural Gas

Adams Land & Cattle (ALCC) of Broken Bow, Neb., is partnering with Neogenyx Fuels on a \$200 million project to build a first-of-a-kind anaerobic manure digestion system. The facility will process manure from ALCC's lots to produce biogas, which will then be upgraded to pipeline-quality renewable natural gas (RNG). The upgrading process will remove impurities such as moisture and carbon dioxide. Byproduct solids will be converted into livestock bedding and organic

nitrogen fertilizer.

The facility is being built on 40 acres near the ALCC south lot. It includes eight anaerobic digesters capable of generating more than 4,400 standard cubic feet of biogas per minute. When complete, the facility is expected to produce about 1.2 million Btu of RNG annually. About 1 1/2 to 2 lbs of dry manure are needed to produce 1 lb of RNG, so many tons of manure will be used.

Abram Babcock, CEO of ALCC, says the

new facility will significantly reduce the number of trucks hauling manure away from their facility. Instead, they'll deliver it to the digesters. One byproduct is organic nitrogen fertilizer that local farmers can use to replace synthetic nitrogen. Liquid fertilizer from the process can be applied through pivot irrigators, knifed into the ground, or applied by strip tillage.

The project marks Neogenyx's first renewable energy initiative in the agricultural market. The operation will employ eight to nine people, including three engineers. It could reduce CO2 emissions around the feedlot by approximately 63,700 metric tons annually.

The digester project is another in a long line of improvements ALCC has made since Russ and Angenette Adams incorporated their business in 1973. They've always been an innovative company focused on cattle comfort and efficiency.

In the 1980s, they adopted larger, more cattle-friendly bunks to improve feeding efficiency. In 2000, Bill Adams designed an automated system that sorts cattle 11 ways without mixing lot numbers. That system is now patented as Revoro and collects information used to make feeding and handling decisions for every animal. ALCC also built verification alleyways that use an electronic

identification system and proprietary software to verify every animal leaving their yards.

Before implementing the digester project, ALCC tested and installed 1.5 million sq ft of roller compacted concrete (RCC) in pens holding about 12,000 head of cattle. Babcock says RCC is a mixture of concrete, cement powder and aggregate. It's delivered at about 8% moisture, compared with traditional concrete at 30%. A dozer levels the concrete to 7 in. thick, then it's roller compacted to 6 in. It's the same strength as regular concrete but with a rougher finish.

RCC eliminates mud in wet feedlot conditions, simplifies pen maintenance, and is easy to install on a 1% to 1 1/2% grade. Cattle show improved health and cleanliness, with better feed conversion. There's also considerably less dust and odor. Having RCC lots allows ALCC to collect pure manure without the 40% to 50% dirt normally collected when manure is removed from dirt lots.

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