Torrice installed underground "invisible fence" around orchard, then turned 6 dogs loose inside fenced area, each equipped with special collar fitted with a radio receiver.

FARMER ELMINATED DAMAGE TO 122 ACRES OF FRUIT TREES WITH "INVISIBLE FENCE"

"Foolproof Way" To Keep Deer Out Of Farm Crops

"We were experiencing $10,000 to $15,000 worth of damage to fruit trees every year. Sometimes in the winter we'd see 90 to 100 deer in the orchard at a time," says John Torrice, Oswego, New York. He considered many different solutions to his rapidly increasing deer problem before finally hitting on what he says is a cheap, foolproof way to "totally eliminate" crop loss from deer and other pest animals.

Torrice simply installed an underground "Invisible Fence" around 122 acres of fruit trees and then turned 6 dogs loose inside the fenced area, each equipped with a special collar fitted with a radio receiver. Invisible Fence, which was invented several years ago, consists of a wire buried a few inches below ground that transmits a radio signal all along its length. When a dog fitted with a radio receiver collar approaches the underground wire, he receives a high-pitched audible signal. If he continues on he gets a mild shock.

"Dogs and deer are natural enemies. Wherever dogs roam free, deer stay away. The problem is that it's difficult to keep dogs in a defined area and also, in New York State, it's illegal to let dogs roam free in deer habitat. But if you fence in your property, the fenced-in area is no longer considered deer habitat and you can allow dogs to wander freely within the confines. According to our state officials, Invisible Fence does constitute a legal fence," says Torrice.

"The great thing about using Invisible Fence is that there's nothing above ground. No gates, nothing to maintain, and nothing to block sight lines or get in the way of equipment. It's also relatively inexpensive compared to erecting the type of fence you would need to keep deer out."

Torrice started experimenting with his idea three years ago. He contacted the Invisible Fence Co. (355 Phoenixville Pike, Malvern, Penn. 19355 ph 800 538-3647 or 215 651-0999) to see if their system, which is primarily designed to keep dogs in a yard-sized area, would work to fence in a large farm field. He learned that it would if he used heavier-gauge wire, which would lower resistance for the electric transmitter, and a small booster unit.

Subsoiler shank mounted on tractor 3-pt. is used to bury wire underground.

He first tried the idea around a 100-acre field. He buried #8 stranded copper wire a few inches deep using a subsoiler shank mounted on a tractor 3-pt. "You only have to bury it deep enough to get it out of the way. We added some metal to the sides of the shank and mount a spool of wire above it that feeds wire down behind the shank. We were able to put in about 1,500 ft. of wire an hour."

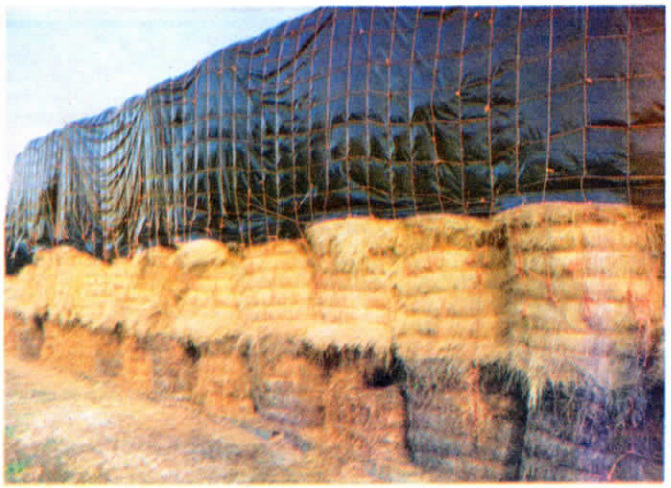
Once the wire was in the ground, he hooked it up to the radio transmitter and turned two dogs loose in the field fitted with radio collars. No electricity flows through the wire - only a harmless radio signal. Torrice says once dogs learn where the fence boundaries are, they stay well away from it to avoid getting a shock.

During the first season of use, Torrice learned that 100 acres was too big an area for two dogs to cover, especially on his wooded, rolling terrain which cut down on visibility. Rather than put more dogs into the same fenced-in area, he split it into two separate plots of 60 and 40 acres and put two dogs - he uses Huskies because they can easily handle deep snow in the winter - in each plot. He says the dogs have kept the two plots deer-free for the past couple years with no damage problems at all. Last year, he fenced in another 22-acre field across a road (he ran wire through a pipe under the road) and put two dogs in that field as well. All three fenced-in plots are powered by the one transmitter.

Torrice says that in addition to deer, the dogs keep out raccoons, rodents, woodchucks, and other pest animals. The dogs sleep in kennels and are fed by automatic feeders and waters which he only has to fill every few days.

"I think 2 dogs are about right for a 50 to 60 acre field but if you have flat, open ground you might be able to increase the area. We not sure yet how big an area you could cover with a single transmitter," says Torrice, noting that he's now working with engineers at Cornell University to come up with some figures on the capacity of the system. "In all, I've spent just $4,000 on the system. The only maintenance is to replace the batteries in the dog collars every 3 or 4 months at a cost of about $35 a year. Using THHN coated wire, the system should have at least a 20-year life."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, John Torrice, RD 7, Box 287, Oswego, N.Y. 13126 (ph 315 342-3793).



Burt uses big bale twine to make 50 by 100-ft. nets that keep plastic covers on stacks of round bales.

Baler Twine "Net" Helps Cover Big Bales

A big "net" made out of baler twine helps Joe Burt, Flora, Ill., keep plastic covers on stacks of big round bales. He's used the idea for four years with good results.

Burt says the net keeps plastic sheets flat on the bales, reducing wind damage and keeping moisture out of the stack.

Burt uses No. 4800 big bale twine to make the 50 by 100 ft. nets. He first lay out lengths of twine lenghthwise 1 ft. apart, and then lays down crosspieces, also 1 ft. apart. He stakes down the ends of each piece of twine as it's laid out.

Once the twine is in place, he uses vice grips to fasten small "J-clamps" (used for poultry netting and purchased from a local farm supply store) to each joint where the twine intersects.

Burt says he puts round bales in stacks that are just one bale wide to eliminate crevices on top where water can puddle.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Joe Burt, Rt. 1, Box 232, Flora, Ill. 62839 (ph 618 662-4040).

The 5,000-watt generator is belt-driven off tractor's side pulley.

Tractor-Mounted "Go Anywhere" Generator

This tractor-mounted generator makes it easy to take electric power to anywhere on the farm, say Clarence and Charles Goodall, Sidell, Ill.

They mounted the 5,000-watt unit on a bracket at the front of a Farmall H, driving it with two belts off the tractor's side pulley. They used a Farmall because the reliable old tractor always starts.

Originally, the generator was pto-driven as part of a portable grain drying setup. When the men changed their drying system, they decided to make use of the generator for emergency standby and other general use around the farm. By mounting the unit on the front of the tractor, they were able to leave the rear end of the tractor free. Also, the generator is always ready to go at a moment's notice.

The generator platform on front of the tractor slides back and forth to tighten the drive belt. The men fit a double V-pulley to the tractor's belt pulley to match the pulley on the generator.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Clarence & Charles Goodall, Rt. 2, Box 84, Sidell, Ill. 61876.