



Ponzer has caught up to 17 gal. of hoppers in one 30 min. run with his 6-ft. wide catcher.

## COLLECTS "FREE" CHICKEN FEED

# Giant Grasshopper "Catcher" Strictly For The Birds

By Bill Vossler

On his best run last summer, Royce Ponzer, of Anamoose, N. Dak., caught 17 gallons of hoppers in less than an hour.

"To get than many, you've got to hit things right," he says. "The weather has to be right, there has to be hoppers, and they have to be active."

And you have to have a giant-size grasshopper catcher — like the one Ponzer built in his workshop. Made of wood, chipboard and wire netting, it takes a 6 ft. swath, weighs 65 lbs., and attaches to Ponzer's pickup in less than 10 minutes with only two bolts.

During the summer, Ponzer goes "hunting" for hoppers along country roads, field edges and anywhere else there are hoppers. He generally drives 25 or 30 miles to snag an average catch of 8 to 10 gals. of hoppers but has collected up to 17 gals. on a half-hour run. When he gets home, he hoses down the "catch" with cold water "to slow the hoppers down so our chickens and turkeys can catch them before they get away."

The hoppers provide a tasty snack for the

Ponzer family's flock of 20 turkeys and about 200 chickens. "They get all the corn and oats they want so the hoppers are a special treat — kind of like ice cream," Ponzer points out.

This winter, he plans to make a lighter, all-metal grasshopper catcher that will weigh only about 25 lbs. and take a 7.5 ft. swath. He's had inquiries from persons interested in buying custom-built catchers. "I also had a call from a fellow in Kansas City, offering to buy all the sized (1 in. long or larger) grasshoppers I could catch for use as fish bait," Ponzer told FARM SHOW. "Who knows? Maybe what the fish bait market needs is a catcher like this that can collect grasshoppers by the gallon in a matter of minutes."

Ponzer plans to offer "do-it-yourself" blueprints of the all-metal, pickup-mounted grasshopper catcher he hopes to have ready for use next summer.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Royce Ponzer, Box 74, Rt. 1, Anamoose, N. Dak. 58710 (ph 701 465-3612).

## BUYING IN BULK EARNS 10 CENTS/GAL. DISCOUNT

# Farmers Cut Fuel Costs With Railroad Tank Car

"There were a lot of things that we had to consider before installing this 7,910 gal. railroad tank car for above-ground diesel fuel storage, but it's worked out great so far," says Roger Ose, a former partner with brothers Joe and LeRoy in Ose Farms, Thief River Falls, Minn.

Following a train accident near their farm 1.5 years ago, the brothers purchased the 30 ft. long, 8 ft. dia. tank car for \$1,000. It had minimal damage to is 1/4 in. thick sides, which are virtually indestructible by rust or weather. For another \$800, they hauled it to the farm, set it on concrete pillars and hooked up a pump and hoses.

Bulk purchasing of diesel fuel has cut their costs considerably, says Roger. "We shop around for the best price, getting at least a 10 cent/gal. discount for buying a

7,500 gal. semi-load at a time. In the first year of having the tank, we bought three loads of fuel and paid for the unit with the \$2,000 savings."

Getting the tank car to the farm was no problem, says Roger. The railroad company, which had hauled the disabled tank car to a salvage yard in Thief River Falls, used a crane to load the car onto a truck which hauled it to the farm. There, the Ose Brothers used a big tractor and a chain to pull the tank car off the truck and onto the ground. Using a Caterpillar Payloader, they lifted the tank car and placed it on two custom-built pillars spread 20 ft. apart and measuring 2 ft. wide, 8 ft. long and 4 ft. high. "Built-in valves on the underside of the tank car required at least 2.5 ft. of clearance," Roger points out.

## "BUILT TO LAST"

# Concrete Feed Bin First Of Its Kind

It's portable, won't rust and the most durable bulk feed bin on the market," says Howard Ehlers about the concrete bin with a "see-through" plastic top that he and partner Robert Brown of Holstein, Iowa, invented.

Ehlers and Brown formed a new company and are manufacturing and marketing their first-of-its-kind bin. It features a one-piece concrete base and cone standing about 5 ft. high. Above that is a plastic "see-through" top.

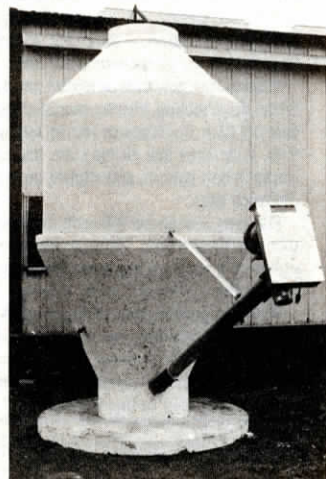
The bin comes in two sizes: a 3 1/2 ton model with a 6 ft. high plastic top, and a 7 ton model with an 11 ft. top. The same one-piece base serves both models and is equipped with a 4 1/4 in. hole to accommodate a 4-in. auger.

The "see-through" top is a real plus, says Ehlers. "Just driving by the farm, the dealer can tell whether or not your bin needs more feed. You never have to climb up the bin to check feed level. In fact, this bin doesn't even have a ladder. There's a rod connected to the door on top, which allows you to open it from the ground."

The concrete cone is laced with 150 lbs. of reinforcing rod with nine bars running parallel to each other within the cone. These are bound together with three circular rods. The base also contains three circular rods.

Concrete width is 3 in. in the cone, 5 in. in the yoke attaching the base and cone, and 4 in. in the base. "There are no weighty side supports and the entire base unit weighs only 3,000 lbs., making it light enough that you can load it onto a truck with a tractor loader," says Ehlers. "And, because the bottom part is one solid piece of concrete, you can set this bin on most surfaces without having to build a base for it."

According to Ehlers, the concrete contains a hardening agent which makes the finished product twice as hard as conventional con-

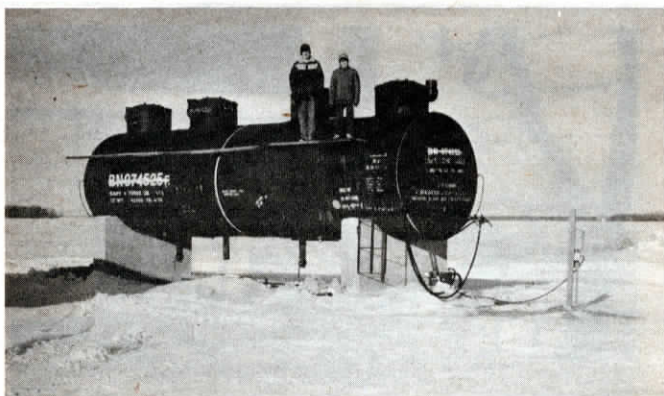


One-piece concrete base and cone stands 5 ft. high.

crete. Tensile strength is 6,000 lbs. In comparison, sidewalk concrete has a 3,000 lb. rating. The concrete sweats to the outside rather than the inside, keeping feed dry. Slope of the cone is 72%, compared to 60% slope in most conventional steel bins. Bridging hasn't been a problem with either commercial or ground feeds, Ehlers points out.

The inner side of the cone is painted with a rubber base, high gloss paint that's moisture resistant and aids feed flow. The outside is coated with a water-base white paint. Costs are \$950 for the 3 1/2 ton model and \$950 for the 7 ton model.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Agri-Farm Supply, Box 27, Holstein, Iowa 51025 (ph 712 368-4856).



The 7,500 gal. tank car sets on two concrete pillars (7 ft. wide, 8 ft. long and 4 ft. high).

The tank car had been equipped with 80 ft. of interior steam pipes which were removed with a cutting torch. To remove fuel, the Ose Brothers installed a pump formerly used to pump liquid fertilizer and pesticides. It's powered by an electric motor. "With this big pump and hoses, and gravity feed, we can pump twice as fast as we could before with underground tanks," says Roger.

He notes that the tank car is "virtually maintenance free. And, because it's above

ground, we can visually inspect it.

"There are a lot of railroad salvage yards with tank cars in good condition. Whenever a train accident has caused stress on the framing and wheel assemblies, there's a higher risk of future accidents so railroad companies sell the cars cheap to salvage yards," explains Roger.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Roger Ose, 6824 10th Ave. S., Minneapolis, Minn. 55423 (ph 612 861-6669).