"Tire Door" Keeps Heat In Hog Barn

"Tire doors" installed across the open doorways of Ron Holubar's hog finishing barn solved health problems caused by drafty conditions inside the barn.

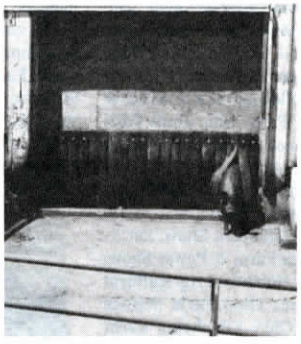
The Solon, Iowa, farmer uses a linoleum knife to cut the sidewalls off bias ply tires, leaving 6-in. wide tire strips that he cuts in half so they're 3-ft. long. He bolts the strips side by side across a 2 by 6 board that he lag bolts underneath a sheet of plywood that covers the upper two thirds of the door. The plywood is hinged at the top so he can swing the plywood sheet up and hook it, leaving enough room to get in with his skid loader to clean out the pen. The tire strips, which just barely scrape the ground, swing freely back and forth as hogs go in and out between them.

"They keep heat in and drafts out and are maintenance-free," says Holubar, who has built six "tire doors" so far. "Hogs chew on the tires, but they're practically indestructible and absorb all the punishment hogs can give them. I built the first one seven years ago and it still works great. I take them off in summer."

Holubar drills two 5/16-in. holes into each tire strip and drills 1/4-in. holes in the 2 by 6 board to match. He uses 1/4-in. carriage bolts to fasten the strips in place.

"Radial tires are too difficult to cut. Wide implement tires won't work because the tread is too thick and tends to curl up," notes Holubar.

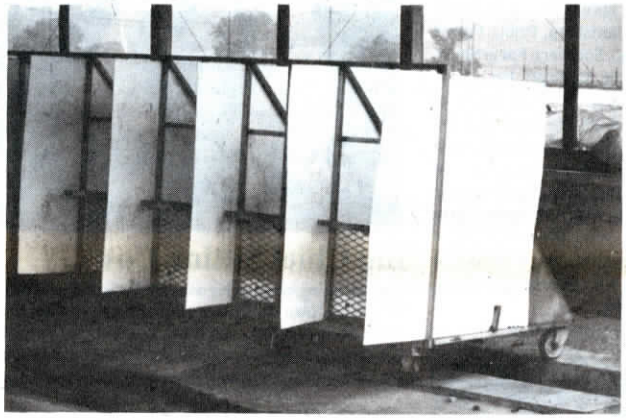
Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Ron Holubar, Rt. 4, Solon, Iowa 52333 (ph 319 644-2965).

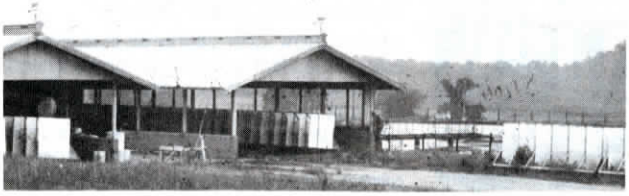


"Made It Myself"

Some of the best new products we hear about are "made it myself" innovations born in farmers' workshops. If you've got a new invention or favorite gadget you're proud of, we'd like to hear about it. Send along a photo or two, and a description of what it is and how it works. Is it being manufactured commercially? If so, where can interested farmers buy it? Are you looking for manufacturers, dealers or distributors? (Send to: FARM SHOW, Box 1029, Lakeville, Minn. 55044)

Harold M. Johnson, Editorial Director





"Wheel-Out" Calf Pens

Cleaning out calf pens is a much easier job for Winford and Janie Little, Eatonton, Ga., since they built "wheel-out" calf pens for their open-sided pole barn. The pens roll along steel tracks embedded in concrete.

The 2 by 4-ft. pens are mounted on stainless steel frames and have easy-to-clean polyvinyl sides. The front two thirds of the floor in each pen is expanded metal covered by rubber cow mats while the back third is parlor grate positioned directly over the barn's 24 by 18 in. flush gutters. There are four rows of 30-pen sections inside the 120-calf barn.

"They have eliminated many of the disease problems usually associated with calf barns," says Winford. "We had been raising calves outside, but it was miserable working in cold weather. We still get cold in the winter, but not wet. Calves in confinement need to be kept as clean as possible to reduce the chance of disease. Whenever we want to clean the pens we simply roll them out and use a scrubber and steam cleaner to disinfect them. The nonporous polyvinyl sides clean off easily. We leave them in the sun as long as we can until we need them again. The pens have helped reduce our calf death losses to less than 5%. We keep calves in the pens until they're two months old."

A pair of concrete runways for each 30-pen section extends 30 ft. outside the barn. A 3 by 3-in. track made from galvanized angle iron is embedded in one side of each pair of runways. The wheels on that side of each pen are grooved to follow the track. The other side of each pen is equipped with caster wheels that simply roll freely along the flat concrete. One person can pull out an entire 30-section unit. The wheels can be greased. The front side of each pen is equipped with feed pail holders.

Little spent $175 to $200 per pen to build the rolling units.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Winford Little, P.O. Box 583, Eatonton, Ga. 31024 (ph 404 485-4547).

Home-built Feed Mixer Wagon

Gerald Schultz, Success, Sask., built his own 150-bu. pto-operated feed mixer wagon and equipped it with a weigh scale that allows him to economically mix different feed ingredients.

Schultz patterned the wagon after a neighbor's feed mixer and built it with the help of neighbor Dean Smith. The wagon is equipped with 3 mixing augers and a side-unload feed conveyor made from a cleated rubber belt.

"At the time I built my feed mixer wagon I couldn't find a used one that suited me and a new one of comparable size would have cost $18,000 to $20,000," says Schultz. "It took a long time to build and turned out to be a fairly expensive project at about $8,000, including $2,400 for the scales. However, it allows me to make more economical rations and better use of all sorts of feedstuffs such as wheat and oat chaff, ground alfalfa, kochia, straw, rolled oats, and so on. My mixer wagon allows me to mix the poor feed and good feed together to form a balanced ration for growing calves or fattening cattle."

He used 3 by 6-in. rectangular steel tubing to build the frame and welded stub axles onto it equipped with 15 in. implement tires. He fashioned the tapered sides of the 10-ft. long wagon out of 14-ga. sheet metal and the bottom from 10 ga. sheet metal. He installed three 2-ft. long weigh bars between the frame and the tank, mounted a 12-volt battery on the frame to operate the scale, and installed a digital readout on front.

One mixing auger mounts at the bottom of the wagon and two more above it on each side. The bottom auger pulls feed into the middle of the wagon. The top augers push feed toward the front and rear. Schultz made the augers from 4-in. dia. pipe with 22 in. dia. flighting.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Gerald Schultz, Box 59, Success, Sask., Canada S0N 2R0 (ph 306 773-6860).