

Made It Myself Inventions From Hog Producers

The second annual Inventions & Gadgets Contest, held at the World Pork Expo in Des Moines, Iowa, produced several new "made-it-myself" inventions for hog producers. The contest was co-sponsored by National Hog Farmer magazine and the National Pork Producers Council. Our thanks to Dale Miller, National Hog Farmer's managing editor, for his help in pulling together this "best of the show" roundup.

Pen Cleaning Chain

A 9-ft. chain helps keep pig pens clean for Carol Stevens, Fordyce, Neb., who took first place honors for her invention. The chain is welded to a 4 by 4-in. steel plate that's anchored in the center of a concrete finishing pen. As pigs root at the 3/8-in. dia. chain, the back and forth movement provides a sweeping action to "sweep" manure into a flush gutter on the south side of the pen.

The 4 by 4-in. steel plate the chain is attached to is centered between the feeder and the back wall of the pen and between dividers. To install the plate, Stevens drilled two holes in the floor and the plate, using two 3-in. lag bolts to secure the plate to the floor. A high-tensile strength chain is not needed, but the heavier the chain the better, she adds.

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Handy Pig Snatcher

A "pig snatcher" lets Dennis Mattox, Sargent, Neb., easily catch pigs scrambling around in their farrowing crates.

"I usually work alone in the farrowing house and I used to dread trying to catch pigs in crates. Three years ago I built this device and it's made the job much easier," says Mattox.

The "pig snatcher" consists of a steel rod with a handle on one end and two

interlocking arms on the other end - one stationary, the other hinged. When the handle is squeezed, the hinged arm interlocks with the stationary arm, gripping the pig. He made the device long enough to reach the opposite end of the farrowing crate while standing outside.

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Nipple Waterer

Dean Peterson, Hartley, Iowa, made this nipple hog waterer from used tractor tire rims. He welded two tire rims together, then "burned" in two rows of holes 14 and 21 in. above ground level. Then he welded a 1/2-in. pipe coupler in each hole for the nipple waterer. Hoses and clamps were then added as needed.

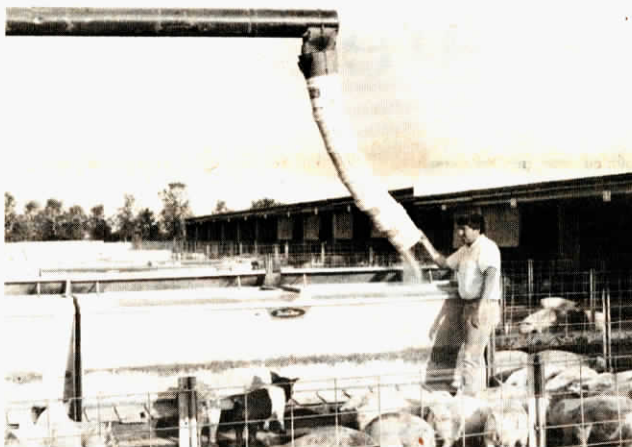
The next step was to cut a 50-gal. barrel into thirds horizontally. One of the three rings was placed inside of the rims and cement was poured between the barrel ring and the tire rims. "This adds weight so the waterer needs no additional anchoring or tie-downs," notes Peterson, who added an electric heater and insulation for cold weather operation.

Each waterer weighs about 500 lbs. "After two years of use in my hog operation, they appear to be indestructible. They're also easy to work on," says Peterson, who has built waterers with up to 20 nipples per unit.

He estimates the total cost for a 16-nipple waterer at \$233.35.

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Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Jeff Grodahl, RR 1, Lytton, Iowa 50561 (ph 712 466-2744).



Flexible Feed Auger Spout

A stack of half a dozen plastic 5-gal. pails makes a dandy flexible feed auger spout when attached to a feed truck auger, says Ted Junker, Parkersburg, Iowa.

"Too much feed was spilled and wasted on windy days. Also, I didn't want feed truck operators climbing in and out of finishing pens," says Junker, who contract finishes about 6,000 feeder pigs each year.

To make the feed auger spout, Junker cut the bottom out of each pail, removed its handle and drilled 1/4-in. dia. holes where the handle used to be. Through

each hole he inserted a bolt, with the head flat on the inside, then used a lock nut on the outside to hold the chain. He connected all six plastic pails together, then added a galvanized pail on top to add rigidity. He looped extra chain over the feed truck auger and used an "S" hook to hold it in place. The spout swings freely in all directions. When taken off the auger, it collapses and takes up the space of a stack of 5-gal. pails.

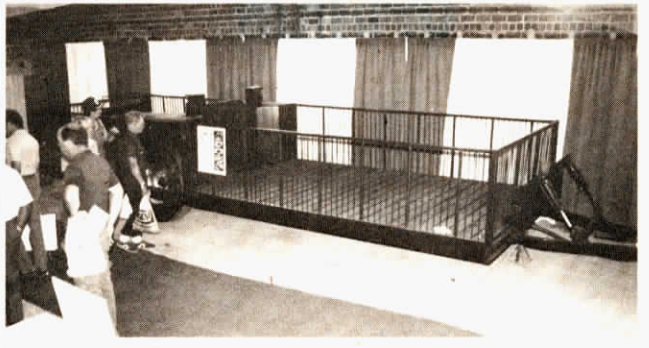
Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Ted Junker, RR 2, Box 100, Parkersburg, Iowa 50665 (ph 319 346-1386).

Hydraulic Trailer

A big 8 by 24-ft. hydraulic trailer lets Jeff Grodahl, Lytton, Iowa, empty an entire pen (up to 50 head of 240-lb. hogs) in one trip.

"It's much larger than most commercial hog trailers, which only go to 6 by 16-ft., and the front and rear of the carrier raise and lower independently," says Grodahl. "We feel hogs always move easier downhill so, when loading, we lower the front end to the ground and keep the back end up toward the building. When unloading, we leave the front end raised and lower the rear end. There's only a 5 to 10 percent grade."

The trailer is raised and lowered by two 3 1/2 by 8-in. hydraulic cylinders in front, and two 3 1/2 by 18-in. cylinders at the rear. Two 20-in., 18-ply used truck tires support the trailer.



Aluminum Pans Chase Birds Away

Aluminum baking pans, with wood lathe nailed and/or glued to the backs for support, make dandy bird reflectors that scare birds away, says Janet Schmitz, Union Grove, Wis.

"We were having problems with barn swallows and various other birds in our finishing barns and around feed bins, and we were concerned about the potential

for spreading disease," says Schmitz. "We hung these bird reflectors over feed bins and from the rafters in the finishing building. The movement caused by air currents and the reflection from the sunlight was very irritating to the birds, which soon left the barn. A side benefit is that the twirling bird reflectors seem to entertain the pigs."

The lightweight aluminum foil 9 by 13-

in. baking pans can often be found on sale at 3 for \$1, says Schmitz. Add the cost of wood lathe, glue, nails and a wire and the total cost for each is likely less than 40 cents, she says.

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