

Mini Greenhouse Built From Plastic Tanks

Passersby sometimes wonder if space aliens have landed when they first see Henry Griemann's greenhouse at night. From a distance, the 8-ft. dia. round mini building appears to glow with light from within.

"It's a real conversation piece when it's lit up on the lawn at night," admits Griemann. "You can see it for about a mile."

Constructed from used 1,250-gal. nurse tanks made from thick plastic, the greenhouse is anything but a joke to the Welwyn, Saskatchewan farmer. He built it this past winter and used it to start tomatoes, carrots, radishes and flowers this past spring. He plans to use it again this winter.

"It's good to 15 to 20 degrees below zero," he says. "The neighbors laughed when I put it together, but they have a different tone now."

Set on end, the 8-ft. dia. and 6-ft. long tanks weren't quite big enough to make individual greenhouses. By cutting the top off one tank and the bottom off another and fitting the two together, Griemann was able to fabricate an 8-ft. dia., 9-ft. tall structure.

He reinforced the top with a second sheet of plastic and inserted a U-bolt in the new roof, so he could move the unit with his tractor and bale mover. A piece of 1-in. tubing

from an old bale ring was used to reinforce the joint where the two tanks overlap. He also used the steel tubing to make a frame for a 30-in. wide, 7-ft. tall door. All joints were sealed with tar. An electric heater with thermostat was installed to supplement the heat given off by the brooder lamp inside. The former water inlet is used as a draft control for releasing excess heat out the roof of the greenhouse.

The toughest problem Griemann faced, and the easiest to solve in the end, was shelving. He figured making wood shelves to fit the round curve of the wall would waste a lot of material. Then one day he stumbled across the tank ends that had been cut off and realized he could use those to make the shelving he needed.

"They already had the same curve and a lip for bolting to the sidewall," he notes.

Had the greenhouse idea not worked out, he figured the tanks would have made great calf warmers for early season calving or even ice fishing huts.

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Henry Griemann used a pair of 1,250-gal. plastic nurse tanks to make this 8-ft. dia., 9-ft. tall round mini greenhouse.



Rear axle pivots to lower big splitting table to the ground. Note that there are two separate splitting wedges.

"Monster" Splitter Handles 4-Ft. Dia. Logs

"I haven't found a log yet that it won't split," says Ken Reynolds, Linesville, Pa., about his heavy-duty log splitter that's made out of a length of 24-in. high steel I-beam. The machine measures 14 ft. long and has a 7-in. dia., 5-ft. long splitting cylinder with a capacity of about 65 tons.

Reynolds uses his tractor to pull the splitter, which rides on two big wheels. When parked, the rear axle pivots downward so the splitter rests firmly on the ground.

"We call it the 'Monster'. It'll handle logs up to 4 ft. in diameter," says Reynolds. "There are two wedges on the splitting table. One splits wood into 3-ft. lengths for heating our shop. By removing that wedge we can split 8-ft. lengths to make fence posts," says Reynolds.

A 4-in. dia. hydraulic cylinder on the rear axle raises and lowers the back end of the splitter. A lift platform on one side of the

machine hydraulically raises large chunks onto the splitting table.

"We couldn't be happier with it," says Reynolds. "I used box steel and spindles salvaged off a piece of old equipment to make the pivoting rear axle. The pivoting axle allows the the splitting table to be lowered to a more comfortable working height. The cutting points on the wedges are made from 1-in. wide pieces of steel which I milled to a sharp edge. There are 10-in. wide wings on the back side of the first wedge so that after the wood starts splitting it opens up faster.

"Both cylinders operate off tractor hydraulics. However, the tractor hydraulics don't work quite fast enough for the splitting cylinder so I plan to install a self-contained, high volume hydraulic pump."

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