



"We graze 25 sheep in the pen and move it two or three times a day, never taking the sheep out of the pen," says Jeff Ennis.

Portable Sheep Grazing Pen

"My wife raises organic lambs to sell at the market in our local town. Building permanent fences on our property wasn't an immediate option," says Jeff Ennis. "I thought a portable, self-contained sheep grazing pen would be the fastest way to take advantage of our unfenced acres so I designed and built my own system. It works great."



Folded for transport, the portable pen is 8 ft. wide by 45 ft. long.

The 6-panel unit has two tires on each end and sled runners on the outer corners. It's heavier than Ennis had expected when building it. He estimates that it weighs somewhere around 5,000 or 6,000 lbs. It slides on the skids when moving it in the field so it doesn't have to be lifted.

Ennis pulls the pen from one grazing spot to the next with a tractor or pickup.

"I used railroad iron for the 30-ft. arch, which is a span that's 7 ft. above the ground and ties the front wheels to the back wheels. When it's in transport mode for the road, the arch holds the weight of the folded panels, which hang on two moveable hooks on each side. Most of the rest of the materials I used were just scrap steel I had on hand," Ennis says.

"Because of the arch, there's nothing on the ground that you can trip on, and nothing to hit your head on. One person can set it up for grazing in 15 minutes."

He explains that four of the six panels are flexible; they can twist 30° and flex vertically 60° with no interference. He made them this way because of the uneven ground they'd be used on. Instead of using a pin hinge, he sawed big chain links in half and welded them to the end of the pipe to allow them to flex.

When it's folded up for transport, the rig is 8 ft. wide by 45 ft. long. When it's expanded, it's in an octagon shape, approximately 27 ft. across.

Ennis stretches a 12 by 16-ft. tarp across the middle of the span to provide the sheep with shade.

The pen also has a fold-down, fold-out loading chute on the back of it. The chute has flip-up sides. There's also a "man gate" on the back side, next to the loading chute.

"I have a 55-gal. water barrel with a miniature stock trough on the front. It has a float valve so they have water on demand, anywhere they are. I've got a 255-gal. water tank in the back of a pickup and that's my nurse truck," Ennis says. "We graze 25 sheep in the pen and move them two or three times a day, never taking the sheep out of the pen. You only move it the length of itself. Immediately, when you start moving ahead, they all rush to the front to get to the green grass that's coming."

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Log grids work like giant cattle gates to keep livestock out of ponds and other waterways.

Log Barrier Keeps Cows Out Of Creek

Norm and Cindy Bilyea of Granton, Ontario say their log barriers protect ponds and waterways from damage by cattle. It's a simple alternative to traditional fencing, which isn't suitable in low-lying areas that flood intermittently.

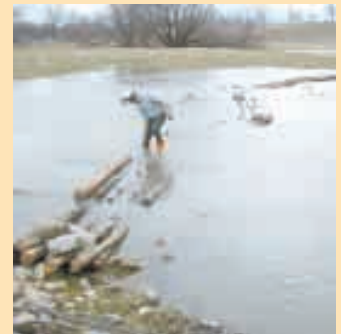
The couple is part of a conservation pilot project set up by the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority.

Conservation officer Craig Merkle and his crew made log grids by placing two large cedar logs on the ground, and laying five 4 to 6-in. dia. by 15-ft. long posts crosswise on top.

Cattle won't step between the logs, which is what they'd have to do to negotiate their way across to the water. Since this is a work in progress, a true test of the barriers won't be possible until total access to the creek is blocked. Currently, cattle can still access the creek in other locations, so Merkle can't be 100 percent sure the log barriers will work, but he's optimistic.

"The barrier logs were salvaged from a thinning project at a nearby Conservation Area," Cindy Bilyea says. "To prevent the structure from shifting when there's high water, they pounded in two homemade duck-bill anchor cables next to each section. Whenever possible, they put nearby rocks on top as weights, too."

The Bilyeas also plan to build a low-level



Log barrier works well in low-lying areas which sometimes flood. Cows won't step between the logs.

cattle crossing, with gates at either end, and install cement slabs across a shallow spot in the creek to form an erosion-free path for moving cattle. When the project is complete, two mechanical nose pumps will draw water from the creek, in shaded areas away from the banks.

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Rolling Screen "Porch" Follows The Breeze

If you like the idea of sitting outside to read or do crafts but don't like getting eaten alive by bugs, you might like Ken Voigt's 4-ft. rolling screen "porch." The Wausau, Wis. man made it at the suggestion of his daughter, Jamie.

"One nice thing about this project is that almost anybody can build one with a minimum of tools," he says.

"You could make it any size you want and it's easy to move because it's so light. I used pine for the frame with steel brackets at the corners to hold it rigid. It's covered with fiberglass screen with the edges dragging on the ground to seal it. There's no floor." Plastic wheels and two handles make it portable.

"You can move it to the best shade and breeze and sit and read a book in peace. No bugs can bother you," he says.

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Jamie Voigt enjoys reading in the 4-ft. sq. portable "porch" her father built.

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