



View from lower end of silo shows plastic-covered silage with bales on top.



View from upper end shows equipment parked under silo roof, on top of silage.

Multi-Purpose “Covered” Bunk Silo

A covered bunk silo can be used for more than just storing silage, says Mike Dwyer, Holland Patent, N.Y., who built a 30 by 80-ft. bunk silo with 8-ft. high concrete walls.

He put a Cover-All fabric roof over the silo. Then he extended the concrete sides up another 4 ft. with sheets of plywood.

“We load it up with haylage in the spring and summer, covering it for the summer with

plastic,” says Dwyer. “At the end of the summer, we pull the cover off and add corn silage and then cover that. The bunker is set into a hill so we drive into the upper level to store hay bales and farm equipment on top of the silage. The cover protects us from rain and snow when filling the silo and also when pulling feed out. And because we park equipment and put bales on top, we don’t have to

use tires to hold down the plastic cover. As we empty out the silage and haylage, we can move equipment and bales down to the lower level as needed.

“The plywood sides protect the canvas, keeping silage and bales from contact.

“The covered bunk is also a good place to work on equipment during the summer. It

keeps us out of the hot sun or rain.

“Total cost of the silo and Cover-All was less than \$40,000. It’s been a very useful and economical addition to our operation.”

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One end of feeder is placed up against an electric fence that surrounds Owen's feedlot, allowing him to slide in bales from outside the feedlot without ever getting off the tractor.

“Slide-In” Bale Feeder

John Owen, Madison, Ind., didn’t want to drive into his feedlot or onto muddy pastures to place big round bales in individual bale feeders. So he used treated wood to make a 3-bale “slide-in” feeder that solves the problem.

“One end of the bale feeder is placed up against an electric fence that surrounds the feedlot, so I can slide in bales from outside the feedlot without ever getting off the tractor. I never have to open a gate or drive onto muddy ground,” says Owen. “I load the bales using the tractor’s 3-pt. hitch and push one bale with another until all three bales are in.”

The feeder measures 16 ft. long by 6 ft. wide and has angled wooden sides made from 2 by 4’s spaced 2 ft. apart. The 5 by 6-ft. bales that Owen uses slide on a pair of 4 by 6-in. rails, which have wooden planks screwed onto their inside edges at an angle to reduce friction. An H-framed pair of metal legs at

each end of the feeder are used to anchor it to the feedlot’s concrete pad. The legs are made from 4-in. sq. tubing. Owen welded a square plate onto the bottom of each leg, then anchored the plate to the concrete.

The bottom of the feeder is lined with left-over metal roofing to keep hay from falling onto the ground. Skirting on both sides of the feeder also catches loose hay.

“I built it last fall and use it in my small cow calf operation. It works great,” says Owen. “We have a pretty destructive bull in our herd of 20 cows, so I screwed metal reinforcing rods onto both sides for extra support. Also, I may put a roof over the feeder to make it weather-proof.”

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Feeder has angled wooden sides made from 2 by 4's spaced 2 ft. apart. Skirting on both sides of feeder catches loose hay.



Giant staples are made out of 1/2-in. dia. steel rod salvaged from old silo hoops.

Giant “Staples” Make Pipe Fencing Easy

If you’ve ever tried to make a fence out of steel pipe, chances are you had to get your welder out to do the work. David Neufeld, Waverly, Kansas, found a way to work with pipe that requires only a cordless drill, a 3-lb. hammer, and a metal bench.

Neufeld makes giant staples out of 1/2-in. dia. steel rod that he salvages from old silo hoops. He takes a 14-in. length of rod, bevels the ends slightly all around the edges, and then bends it into a U-shape so it’s about 6 in. long - and wide enough to fit over whatever pipe he’s using.

To insert the staple, he uses a 1/2-in. spade bit to drill two holes the width of the staple, gradually flaring the holes out about 3/4 in. He makes the holes as deep as the staples will go. The beveled edges on the ends of the rod allow the rods to slip into the holes. The flaring out of the holes pulls out the sides of the staples, which helps clamp them tightly



Staple is made from a 14-in. length of rod bent into a U-shape.

in place. “I’ve used this idea for several years now and the pipes have stayed tightly in place, whether on tree trunks or on wood fence posts,” says Neufeld, adding that he uses a “cheapy” Harbor Freight metal bender to bend the rods into staples.

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