



By developing a system to bend oilfield tubing, Jim Klys and Richard Schmidt came up with a system to construct their own canvas-covered hay sheds and storage buildings.



End walls of hay sheds are covered with slatted wood to increase air circulation. On other buildings, the ends are closed in completely with either tarp, tin or wood.

They Build Hoop Buildings With Recycled Pipe

By developing a system to bend recycled oilfield tubing, Jim Klys and his neighbor, Richard Schmidt, have successfully constructed their own canvas-covered hay sheds and storage buildings. The pair put up five buildings for themselves. They turned out so well they launched a business called Farmer Built Structures.

To bend pipe, the men pound a half-moon pattern of 2 7/8-in. steel fence posts into the ground, and then use a tractor to bend the pipe around the half circle by chaining one end to a fence post and pulling the other end around, using a long sling.

"There's no heating required, but the trick is in how you pull it, in order to get a consistent end product," Klys says. "Ours are such carbon copies that you could cover them with metal siding."

They buy the 2 7/8-in. dia. by 1/4-in. thick welded tubing in bulk. Prices are usually \$25 to \$38 per joint. Lengths vary from 28 to 32 feet, and the men have to sort through it as some will inevitably be thin-walled or soft.

When they're ready to begin putting up the building, the pair drill 12-in. dia. post holes along the shed perimeter which are 3 to 4 ft. deep. Straight sections of 2 7/8-in. upright pipe are driven into the holes a further foot or two, and then they're cemented in, once the above-ground sections are all the same height.

"To make a good hay shed, the uprights should be 6 1/2 ft. above ground and spaced

6 ft. apart," Klys says. "Next, we use 8-in. sections of 2 3/8-in pipe as our connectors to set the arches on top of the uprights. The joints are all welded together and the arch sections have couplers on them that screw together."

One and 3/4-in. dia. pipes are welded every 10 ft. down the length of the building and serve as support ribs. A straight 2 7/8 ridge pole is welded along the top middle.

Klys and the crew installs 12.5-oz. canvas that comes with a 15-year warranty, and pipe pockets that run along each inside horizontal edge.

Using ropes thrown over the top of the building, they pull the canvas over from one side to the other.

Ratchet winches that had been previously welded to the bottom of the perimeter uprights (about 6 in. above ground), are used in combination with seat belting to snug the canvas up tight - but not drum tight. The outside base of the building is sealed up with a skirt made from either dirt or gravel.

"End walls for hay sheds are often made with slatted wood so air can still circulate, but for other purposes, the ends are closed in completely with either tarp, tin or wood," Klys says. "They can also be framed for overhead doors."

The men have built 42-ft. wide and 62-ft. wide sheds. They say 200 ft. is the maximum length that's practical for working with tarps.

"Three stacks of small square bales fit



To make shed's arches, the men pound a half-moon pattern of steel fence posts into the ground, then use a tractor to bend tubing around the half circle.

nicely in a 42-ft. wide shed, leaving room to walk down each side," he says. "The only disadvantage to using recycled materials is that we can't guarantee the engineering. Although there's always a risk that the building could collapse, we've put up over 80 of them now, and have never had any come down."

The custom built sheds cost about \$4.75 per sq. foot to build and take about four days to put up. Klys charges about \$30,000 for a 42 by 150-ft. shed with wooden end walls. About half of this amount is for materials, and the other half for labor.

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Ratchets fitted with seat belt straps are welded to the bottom of uprights to hold canvas snug.

Half Price Planter Parts

Need a custom built 15-row planter? How about just a set of openers? Herb Theesfeld probably has what you need and you'll like his prices.

"We have parts for Deere, Kinze, Deutz Allis, Case IH, Yetter, White and just about anything else that plants corn or beans. Most parts sell for half the cost of new," says Theesfeld. "I buy used planters from dealers and farmers alike, tear them apart, keep the good parts and junk out the rest."

Theesfeld has sold parts to farmers from Germany. His custom built planters are usually sold to farmers closer by.

"We build to fit what the customer wants, from tag-a-long planters to double frame units."

Theesfeld uses all OEM parts, including the 7 by 7-in. square tubes for frames. While he has built some non Deere and Kinze planters, these two brands are the ones he specializes in. Their parts are easiest to come by, he explains.

The market for customized planters is changing, says Theesfeld. As farms get larger, the owners are more likely to buy new, larger equipment. The small to medium sized operator that has been his base is disappearing, he says. However, he notes that new niches are opening up.

"Two-row planters are growing in popularity," says Theesfeld. "The big guys with a 12 or 16-row planter can't take it back in to replant a skip in a row. They are looking for 3-pt. hitch, two-row units. The two-row planters are also popular for wildlife food plots, sweet corn and small farmers."

The parts business is constantly changing, he adds. "We have a lot of Deere 7000 series planter parts, IH 800-900 series and White 6100 Series parts," explains Theesfeld. "You have to keep moving up with planters or you're done."

He adds that you also have to match the customers' needs. "Some guys want parts that are like new, while others can't justify a new



"I have parts for just about anything that plants corn or beans," says Herb Theesfeld. He buys used planters from dealers and farmers, then tears them apart and keeps the good parts while junking the rest.

planter and just want something to get the job done."

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