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USING "JUNKED" PIPE CUTS BUILDING COSTS BY 25 PERCENT OR MORE

Farm Buildings Made From Center Pivot Pipe

By Bill Gergen, Associate Editor

You can save thousands of dollars by using center pivot pipe for the framework on almost any farm building, says John Kroenlein, Burlington, Colo., who's started a thriving business that cuts the cost of construction by taking advantage of the wide availability of abandoned center pivot systems.

Kroenlein has put up 30 farm buildings using 6 or 6 5/8-in. dia. steel pipe for trusses and sidewall framing. The buildings are as big as 80 ft. wide and 150 ft. long. "These structures are super strong and have a number of features that make them superior to conventional buildings. Farmers can supply all or part of the pipe. We deduct \$1 per foot from the total cost of the building for pipe that the customer supplies," says Kroenlein, noting that overall savings average about 25 percent.

"Center pivot pipe can be bought fairly cheap and at one time I was a center pivot irrigation dealer so I know where to get it. However, it's getting harder to find because farmers have started saving it as a future source of building material."

He recently sent FARM SHOW photos of a 60 by 120-ft. machine shed with an 18-ft. eave and 17-ft. high, 30-ft. wide double sliding doors that he built for a local farmer. "It took about 3,600 ft. of pipe to make the framework. We used 14-ga. pipe for the trusses and columns and 16-ga. pipe for the roof. The farmer had recently replaced his center pivots so we were able to use about 2,400 ft. of his pipe as purlins to keep the cost down. He spent about \$30,000 for this building which is \$10,000 to \$15,000 less than the cost of a comparable commercial wood frame building. A conventional steel frame building would've cost even more," says Kroenlein.

"The building's 18-ft. sidewalls are about 2 ft. higher than on most conventional



Buildings are as big as 80 ft. wide and 150 ft. long. This 60 by 120-ft. machine shed has an 18-ft. eave and 17-ft. high, 30-ft. wide double sliding doors.

buildings. Farmers are asking for more overhead clearance because their equipment is getting bigger. It costs very little to add more height - about \$220 per foot."

Kroenlein is also proud of the innovative design of the building's big 30-ft. wide sliding doors. "There are bearings along the bottom that run against a guide. The bearings are self-cleaning and do not retain water so they won't seize up in cold weather. Most sliding doors of this size would be hard to move, but this door moves so freely that this farmer's 8-year-old son can open it."

Kroenlein uses steel cable to truss up the purlins, which allows him to space trusses up to 30 ft. apart. "The trusses are more than strong enough to support the 2-ton overhead crane that the farmer plans to install in this building.

"We can also furnish prefabricated frames and supply all materials needed so farmers can put up buildings themselves. We weld steel brackets onto the frames that you set the pipe into which makes it easy to weld to the frame. We also build 30 by 40-ft. garages out of center pivot pipe for about \$5,500."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, John Kroenlein, Box 153, Burlington, Colo. 80807 (ph 719 340-0479).



Sliding doors have bearings along the bottom that run against a guide. Bearings are self-cleaning and don't retain water so they won't seize up in cold weather.



New gopher getter consists of a slender hand-held 36-in. long stainless steel probe that pumps a fumigant down into underground dens.

HIGH-TECH GOPHER KILLER

Gopher Getter Zaps Rodents With Gas

A California company says its new high-tech method of killing gophers, moles, prairie dogs and ground squirrels dead in their dens works better than any other method ever developed. It's been proven 95 percent effective on both ground squirrels and gophers and although it hasn't been tried yet, will likely work just as well on prairie dogs and other burrowing animals, say the developers.

The new gopher getter consists of a slender hand-held 36-in. long stainless steel probe that pumps a fumigant called acrolein down into the underground dens. Acrolein has been registered since 1959 as an aquatic herbicide. It's marketed under the name Magnacide H by Baker Crop Protection Chemicals (BCPC) of Bakersfield, Calif.

"It's more effective than anything else we know of for immediate population knock-down," says BCPC's Dave Blodgett.

Here's how it works. The wand is inserted into a tunnel, then the opening is covered with soil around the wand, and the fumigant injected. The material injects in liquid form, then turns into a gas that's heavier than air so it moves quickly down the tunnels and dens, suffocating the animals as it spreads. It then quickly breaks down.

Rate, pressure and duration of application are electronically controlled by a 12-



After the wand is inserted into a tunnel, the opening is covered with soil and the fumigant is injected.

volt control box. A horn on the box blows when chemical is flowing. The box also counts each treatment. The fumigant comes in a tank and nitrogen gas is used to pressurize the tank and force the substance out through hoses to the probe.

The system itself sells for \$1,200. A 53-gal. tank of fumigant sells for \$1,776 and treats 9,500 holes (18 cents apiece). An 8.2-gal. tank sells for \$371 and treats 1,500 holes (25 cents apiece). (Prices FOB Taft, Calif.).

The fumigant is a restricted use pesticide, meaning training is required for its use.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Baker Performance Chemicals Inc., Baker Crop Protection Chemicals Division, P.O. Box 11192, Bakersfield, Calif. 93389 (ph 805 763-5137, fax 765-6046).



Fuel Tank Shield Reduces Evaporation

Illinois farmer Ed Allsach discovered a low-cost way to keep evaporation to a minimum in his above-ground fuel tank without taking up a lot of space.

If outside temperature is 100°, temperature under the white metal shield is just 60°. Allsach welded 1-ft. long brackets between the tank and metal strips attached to the underside of the sheet metal shield. The shield covers about 2/3rds of the tank.

He also attached a large hose holder on one end of the tank that's made from sections of a 24-in. tractor rim. (Allsach stresses that he made the modification to a brand new tank with no fuel in it. It could be very dangerous to weld onto an older tank that might have fuel residues in it.)

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Allsach Brothers, Mt. Pulaski, Ill. (ph 217 792-3329).