



“Stay Dry” Dump Pit Fitted With Sump Pump

Richard Hinds, Springfield, Ill., wanted a drive-over dump pit that he was sure would stay dry. So, when he built his own pit he attached a sump pump to it.

He purchased an old 50-bu. combine grain tank at a salvage yard. He ran two large pieces of channel iron through the upper ends of the tank and attached a 2-ft. dia. piece of heavy pipe to the side of the hopper. The large pipe extends a foot or

so below the hopper and is used to house a sump pump, which clears water out of the bottom of the pit.

A length of auger tubing runs to the bottom of the hopper to empty it. After burying the hopper, Hinds put a steel platform and grid over the top of it.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Richard Hinds, Springfield, Ill. (ph 217 652-2956).

Automatic Feeder For Dairy Cows

By Dee George

Dave Pearson wanted to feed grain to his cows four times a day but he didn't want to go to the barn four times a day. He liked the idea of an automatic feeding system but didn't like the several thousand dollar price tag for a commercial unit.

So, after five years of experimentation and testing, the Hewitt, Minn., farmer finally came up with his own design for a system that automatically feeds his 42 cows at noon and at midnight. He says it's more reliable and less expensive than anything on the market and he can build it inexpensively. For example, he recently built and installed a complete system for a neighbor's 57 cows for under \$2,000.

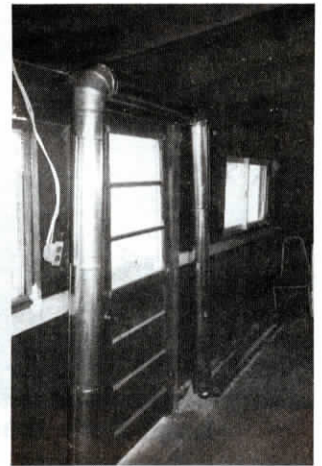
Pearson's feed box system consists of boxes made out of 8-in. dia. pieces of pvc pipe fitted with plywood bottoms. They're held upright by catches connected by steel cable that run up to an electric actuator (the type used to turn satellite dishes). When activated, the actuator lifts the catches that hold the feed boxes upright, allowing them to fall to the side by gravity, dumping their load of feed.

During regular feeding, Pearson puts the boxes back up into place, filling them with a ration of feed as he gives a ration to each cow.

Pearson says he's been pleased with the improved health of his herd, especially with regard to twisted stomach and ketosis. He's also boosted milk production since he started feeding four times a day.

He says one of the trickiest parts of building the system was protecting the feed boxes from the cows. He mounts a protective grille behind each pair of boxes to keep cows away.

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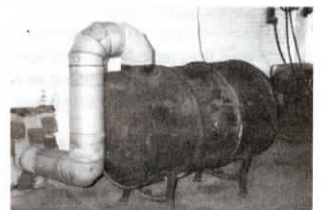
Innovative Wood Shop Heater

If you've got a building you'd like to heat with a wood stove, you'll want to take a look at this innovative setup put together by Keokuk, Iowa farmer Randy Harness.

He wanted to heat both his garage and shop with wood but he didn't have a flue or a good way to move heat between the two buildings. His solution was to use a furnace blower to draw air through about 50 ft. of 6-in. pipe that runs from the stove - which is in the garage - through a wall to the shop and then outside.

The blower sits outside the shop. The flue goes in the intake side of the blower and a vertical pipe with a cap on top is attached to the discharge end. To improve the draw of the blower, Harness covered the other open side of the blower.

"The flue pipe goes from the stove in the garage through the wall and along the floor of the shop. At one point it goes up and over a walk-in door before exiting out



through an outside wall. The heat that radiates off the pipe is enough to heat the shop. Lets me capture heat that would otherwise be lost up the chimney," says Harness.

He says the furnace blower runs for less than 10 cents an hour and will keep a good fire going all night, if needed.

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Fast Way To Unload Bins

"I installed a grain slide door in the side of a grain bin to feed an 8-in. truck loading auger. Lets me load a semi in 30 min.," says Wayne Ladage, Virden, Ill.

"You should only use the idea on bins that are 7 rings or less and you should take the first load out with the bin auger to avoid getting too much weight on the back side of the bin," cautions Ladage.

The open door lets grain dump out faster and with less damage than with a bin unloader. "You can buy sliding doors

at any farm supply store for less than \$20. You just bolt the door in place and then open it up and cut out the hole with a torch.

"It eliminates climbing into the bin to dig down to the door to get the sweep auger into the bin. I also like not having to be in the bin while the auger is running," says Ladage.

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