

Anderson bought chicken plucker fingers and mounted them on a pipe, powered by an electric motor.



## \$60 Chicken Plucker Works Great

Jean Anderson's \$60 chicken plucker paid for itself the first time she had chickens to butcher. Feather removal takes a fraction of the time it did pre-plucker.

"I can strip the feathers from a chicken in no more than 40 seconds," says Anderson. "I can even pluck the feathers from a turkey on it, but I have to hold the turkey up above the table. With chickens, I just slide the bird across the table."

Anderson had no farming experience before moving to the country with her husband some years ago. She started raising chickens by accident when her sister offered her 25 chicks free with 100 lbs. of chicken feed. When the chicks were dropped off, there were 50.

"My sister thought they were so cute that she bought an extra batch," says Anderson.

Eight weeks later, they weren't so cute and plucking them by hand wasn't fun. She didn't have enough birds to justify buying a \$300 to \$400 chicken plucker. But when Anderson saw chicken plucker fingers in the NASCO catalog, she figured she could make her own.

"I rounded up some old wood, an electric motor and a piece of pipe," says Anderson. "I had to buy some end caps for the pipe and some threaded rod, but the fingers were the most expensive parts."

Anderson center drilled the pipe caps to accept the threaded rod. She used T nuts with three setscrews on the inside of the caps and double nuts on the outside to secure the pipe to the rod.

"Once I had the position right for a pulley on the end of the threaded rod, I filed down the rod a bit to secure the pulley," says Anderson.

She bored out existing holes in the drain-pipe to mount the fingers, alternating three fingers in one row with four in the next. The entire drum was mounted on the wooden table with a pair of pillow block bearings.

The 49-in. table is the perfect height for

## Molded Plastic Signs Made To Last

EverMark Signs make it simple to post your property quickly, thanks to clips that attach to T-posts and adapt easily to other types of posts.

"The clips are molded as part of the sign," says Steven Branscom, operations manager for Evermark, Inc. The lettering and color graphics are also part of the high-density polyethylene plastic mold. That design process along with a UV-protectant, allows the signs to be sold with a 7 to 10-year warranty against fading or cracking.

"They are lightweight - 1/3 lb. - but will withstand 80 mph winds when horizontal," Branscom says.

At \$5.95 the 5 by 12-in. signs come with a big variety of standard phrases - "No Hunting," "For Sale," "Private Drive," etc. Blank signs cost \$3.95, and come in a variety of colors, including the purple signs recognized as "No Trespassing" signs in several Mid-west states.

Custom signs are available with company logos and artwork, with metallic, fluorescent, holographic and other options.

"They're 100 percent recyclable and made in the U.S. out of 70 percent recycled material," Branscom says. "The farm and ranch industry is our biggest customer base, but we are also growing in urban settings and



EverMark Signs are sold with a 7 to 10-year warranty against fading or cracking (left). Molded-in clips on back quickly attach to T-posts and also other types of posts.

other industries."

For example, Evermark donated 1,000 address signs to Greensburg, Kansas, to help people find their way around town after it was destroyed by a 2007 tornado.

Check out the company's website for local dealers, or to ask about ordering custom signs.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, EverMark Inc., 421 W. 1<sup>st</sup> Ave, Suite D, Hutchinson, Kansas 67501 (ph 620 669-9228; www.evermarkings.com).

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operating the plucker. "You want to be comfortable holding the bird in front of you without bending over," says Anderson. "I used Formica for the top so it's easy to clean. I also put a shelf in underneath the plucker to catch the feathers and water."

Anderson used metal flashing for the shelf, mounting it at an angle so water would drain away from the operator.

The motor she had on hand had multiple pulleys on it, so she was able to slow the speed. "If it goes too fast, you'll tear up the bird," says Anderson.

To prepare the chickens for the plucker, Anderson dips them in hot water to scald them (she uses a turkey fryer). She's also figured out a way to speed the butchering process, which is good, as she's tripled the size of her broiler flock.

"I get volunteers to help by offering them some chickens if they'll come and help pluck, clean and pack," she says. "With a few friends, we can process 150 birds in four hours."

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