



There's a feed gate at each corner of Wood's 62 by 96-ft. self-feed bale barn. Bales are stored down the center and loaded into feed alleys on either side of building as needed.

COWS EAT THEIR WAY INTO BARN FROM BOTH ENDS

"Self-Feed" Barn For Big Round Bales

By Bill Gergen, Associate Editor

An Indiana farmer, fed up with all the mud and wasted hay around his round bale feeders, decided to build his own "self-feed" hay barn that's equipped with moveable feed gates at each end of the barn.

Everett Wood, of Cross Plains, built the 62-ft. wide, 96-ft. long self-feed barn three years ago for his 200 beef cows and feeder calves. The barn has a concrete floor and holds about 400 round bales. It's divided into three sections - a 16-ft. wide feed alley on each side with 4-ft. high concrete walls, and a 30-ft. wide storage area in the center. The gates, one at each corner of the barn, are mounted on rollers that follow a steel track.

"Nine cows at a time can feed from each gate," says Wood. "Feeding hay inside the barn keeps cattle out of the mud and virtually eliminates waste. Another advantage is that we only have to refill the feed alleys about every 30 days instead of every day or two like we had been doing.

"We use a skid steer loader to clean manure out of the feed alleys every 10 days or so. There's no mud so there's less volume than when we cleaned manure outside.

"Each feed alley holds 80 5 by 7-ft. round bales that weigh about 1,500 lbs. each. We feed 1,500 to 1,800 bales out of the barn each year. We use a front-end loader equipped with a grapple fork to stack bales 5 high in the center storage area. When a feed alley is empty, we use a skid steer loader to move bales from the storage area

to the feed alley, stacking them three high and removing all twine from the bales."

Each feed gate is fitted with hinging brackets at the top so that if cows eat faster on one side or the other, either end of the gate can move forward without damage to the gate.

Rollers mounted at either end of the top, 4-in. dia. pipe on each feed gate ride on top of a pipe that mounts 2 ft. above the 4-ft. high concrete walls on either side of both feed alleys. Wood made the 3-in. dia. rollers out of steel plate.

Each gate's frame and slant bars are made out of steel pipe. A 2-ft. high steel sheet at the bottom of the gate rides about 8 in. above the floor, allowing the gate to pass over weeds and trash that cattle leave.

There's a stationary creep gate on each side of the barn for calves. "That keeps cows from crowding them out of the four gates," says Wood.

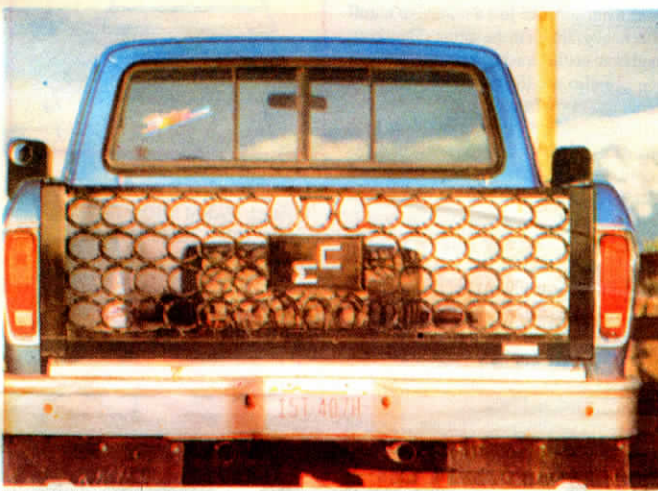
To provide water, Wood mounted a no-freeze waterer on a sloped concrete slab outside the barn. He ran a 4-in. dia. pipe, buried 6 ft. underground, from the waterer to a nearby 2-acre pond. Water moves by gravity to the waterer. A concrete retaining wall keeps the watering area free of mud.

Wood spent a total of \$20,000 to build the self-feed barn.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, A.E. Wood, 7503 So. Co. Rd. 400 E., Cross Plains, Ind. 47017 (ph 812 667-5784).



Cows eat their way into the barn, pushing feed gate ahead of them. Wood stacks bales 3-high in feed alleys with twine strings removed.



Steel plate at center of horseshoe tailgate can be used to display your initials or brand.

ROWS OF HORSESHOES WELDED TOGETHER

"Horseshoe" Tailgate For Farm Pickups

"It really attracts attention," says Jake Wadsworth, a Montana rancher about his pickup tailgates made out of horseshoes. He uses discarded shoes to make both conventional and fifth wheel style endgates.

Each gate consists of rows of steel horseshoes welded together inside a frame built from 1 1/4 in. sq. thick wall steel tubing. A steel plate in the middle can be used to display your ranch brand or initials.

"The open design increases fuel efficiency by 1 1/2 to 2 mpg and even more

when you're pulling a trailer," says Wadsworth.

The tailgate is painted black and fits all American-made pickups. Sells for \$250 without brand, \$300 with brand. The fifth wheel tailgate model is available with a light mounted under the brand that goes on with the pickup headlights. Sells for \$320.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Jake Wadsworth, 889 Dublin Gulch Rd., St. Ignace, Mont. 59865 (ph 406 745-3162).



Gates ride on pipe rails mounted above 4-ft. high concrete sidewalls. Gate hinges on roller bracket so either end of gate can move forward without damage to end of gate.

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