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Krazy Ken Has Gone "Nuts"!! Hard-To-Find Chains Found Here

Finding chain for chain-driven farm machinery is getting tougher and tougher as old companies go out of business and new machinery switches to belts or hydraulic drives.

That's why business is booming at Farmchains.com. Owner Ken Novak, self-styled "Krazy Ken, the Farmer's Friend," says customers can order chains from his website, from the catalog or over the phone.

Novak carries gathering chains, precision roller chains, T-Bar and T-Rod chains, agricultural roller chains, and more. He also carries rare chains like steel detachable.

"I have guys calling up looking for chain for 40 to 50-year-old machines," he says. "It was the first real 'ag' chain. I deal direct with the only manufacturer of steel detachable chain left in the world."

Farmchains.com also carries a full line of pintle and engineering class chain used on unloading truck trailers and large forage boxes.

New! Now offering hard-to-find fasteners of all grades. Bulk quantities available, especially the "big" ones.

Contact: Ken Novak, Farmchains.com, P.O. Box 77, Dixon, Ill. 61021 (ph 800 648-5429; fax 815 288-6790; cnsupply@grics.net; www.farmchains.com).

Reader Inquiry No. 98



Glenn Eggmeyer rolls and sells steel roofing, and also makes and sells rolling machines.

Roll Your Own Steel Roofing

When Glenn Eggmeyer went shopping for barn roofing 30 years ago, he unexpectedly discovered a new business to get into. Today he not only rolls and sells steel roofing, but he also makes and sells rolling machines.

"I was building a barn at the time and was amazed how expensive the roofing was," says Eggmeyer. "I found a guy who bought discounted steel and rolled it with a crude roller. It was powered with a Volkswagen motor using wheel rims to make the ribs. He had it set up in a parking lot and was selling roofing like crazy."

Eggmeyer, who farmed at the time, bought the fellow out and got into the business. Over the next 30 years, he cut back on farming and increased his rolled steel business. He also replaced that first machine with new machines he designed himself.

"I found out that steel roofing was more lucrative than crops," says Eggmeyer. "The mark-up depends on the type of raw material you get. Some are real low-priced due to defects, while some may be close to prime steel prices."

The type of defect can differ substantially, he adds. Perhaps a paint roller had a speck on it that in turn left unpainted specs the length of a roll of steel. Rejected for its intended use, it may be severely discounted in price, yet still fine for use as roofing.

"The worst defects are called bell coils," explains Eggmeyer. "When the steel gets rolled up initially, an edge may rub and curl a little on one side, and by the time 6 more inches have been rolled, there is a big lip on one side."

Eggmeyer purchases bell coil rolls at significant discounts. It's labor intensive, but can produce a large profit margin, he adds. In addition to his rolling machines, he also builds and sells machines to slit the

bell coil edge off as it's unrolled.

Another common defect occurs when a coil of material gets out of round. While large commercial equipment may need a coil that fits a standard diameter mandrel, Eggmeyer built a horizontal uncoiler. It pulls steel off that is otherwise prime quality, but won't fit a mandrel.

Eggmeyer sells his steel roller machines for \$20,000 to \$35,000 depending on the coil width and number of ribs to be made, plus options such as hydraulic cut off shears.

Eggmeyer admits that a high volume, commercial, steel rolling machine can roll enough steel to roof a large barn in 10 min., while one of his might take an hour. However, volume comes at a price.

"A commercial roller machine sells for \$100,000 to \$250,000," explains Eggmeyer. "For a small operation, my machines are fast enough. You can roll and cut the roofing for a barn and make decent money even buying prime steel, without getting into secondary."

Eggmeyer builds machines that will corrugate flat metal from 27-in., 41-in. or 48-in. wide coils of 29 ga. (standard for barn roofs) or 26 ga. (commercial strength roofing). He can build machines to roll even 24 ga., but machine and material get costly. One of his latest machines was built to accommodate all Amish gentlemen and uses a 10-hp diesel motor and a manual clutch to power it.

"A lot of people think about getting into the business, but they don't know where to buy the material," says Eggmeyer. "I can provide both the machines and help them get the material to roll."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Steel Depot, P.O. Box 176, Jasper, Mo. 64755 (ph 417 394-2507; steeldepot@live.com).

Reader Inquiry No. 99