

Old Grain Bins Make Great Pig Shelters

"I had two old grain bins that I wasn't using anymore and got to thinking one day that they sure would make inexpensive shelters for my hogs," says Ontario farmer Eric Hartemink. The smaller 2,000-bu. bin was 14 ft. dia. and 12 1/2 ft. tall. The larger 5,000-bu. bin was 19 ft. dia. and about 14 ft. tall.

Hartemink first tipped the bins on their side and removed the roofs. He cut the corrugated metal bins exactly in half from top to bottom, which produced two half-moon shaped pieces from each bin. He overlapped the pieces from each bin end to end and bolted them together, which produced two quonset roof buildings about 25 ft. long.

"The smaller bin gave me a building 14 ft. wide and the larger one is 19 ft. wide," Hartemink says. He closed off one end of each structure with hinged plywood doors to keep out rain, snow and wind.

Hartemink set and anchored the quonset buildings on 2 by 2 by 4-ft. long cement blocks next to his conventional hog barn. The blocks raise the side walls off the cement floor and provide a ceiling height of 9 ft. in the smaller quonset and 11 ft. in the larger one. Hartemink starts 100 pigs that weigh about 65 lbs. in the smaller building. A month later he moves them into the larger building where they're fed to a finished weight of 260 lbs.

"I bed with plenty of straw so the pigs are comfortable year around," Hartemink says. "In the summer they have a shady place to rest, and I can open the plywood doors for ventilation. In the winter I add more straw so the pigs are out of the wind and cold,"



Eric Hartemink converted 2 old grain bins into inexpensive, "quonset-style" hog shelters. He tipped the bins on their side and removed the roofs, then mounted the roofs on metal posts to create a carport-like shelter that covers his feeders.

Hartemink says.

The slab extends 20 ft. outside the open end of the buildings so pigs have an area for exercise, eating and drinking. Hartemink mounted the original grain bin roofs on metal posts to create a carport-like roof that covers

the feeders. One frost-free drinker is shared by both pens. Runoff from the slabs and roofs goes into a 4 ft. wide gutter that runs across the front of the slab. That empties into a larger pit, which also serves the conventional barn. Hartemink raises about 1,100 hogs a year

in the two shelters and the conventional barn.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Eric Hartemink, 13994 Dorchester Rd., Malahide, Ont., Canada N0L 1B0 (ph 519 765-4121; chartemink@golden.net).

Wireless Water Tank Monitor

It's not available in North America yet, but a new "wireless water monitoring system" from Gallagher – the New Zealand-based fencing company – is already making it easier for farmers "down under" to monitor livestock drinking water. We spotted it in a recent issue of Dairy News, a New Zealand magazine.

The system constantly measures water levels in tanks and ponds and wirelessly transmits the information to a touchscreen display unit mounted in a convenient location, such as a house or farm office. It lets you know about water level problems without having to physically visit the tank or pond.

In addition to constantly measuring water levels, the system can also alert farmers to abnormal water loss caused by problems like broken water pipes or overflowing troughs.

The system uses a sensor to measure water pressure in the tank. Information from the sensor is transmitted via a solar-powered wireless communication unit, mounted on top of the tank, to a wall-mounted or desktop touchscreen display unit located up to 2 1/2 miles away.

Up to 9 tanks can be monitored by one display unit. It stores 30 days of records. The system can even be used to keep track of manure lagoon levels.

Optional equipment for the system includes a wireless pump controller that allows remote control of a pump, and a directional long-range antenna to increase the range of the signal up to 6 miles.

A spokesperson at Gallagher's U.S. distributor said there are no plans at this time to sell the system in North America.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Gallagher Animal Management Systems, 181 Kahikatea Drive, Private Bag 3026, Waikato Mail Centre, Hamilton 3240, New Zealand (freephone 0800 731 500; ph +64 7 838 9800; fax +64 7 838 9801; sales.nz@animal-management.gallagher.co; www.gallagher.co.nz).



System uses a sensor to measure water pressure in tank. Information from the sensor is transmitted via solar-powered wireless communication unit (above) mounted on top of tank, to a desktop touchscreen display unit located up to 2 1/2 miles away.



"Spare Tire" Yardlight

"I wanted to put up a yardlight behind my house, but I didn't want something expensive or permanent. So I used a spare tire and a length of muffler pipe to make it portable," says Leonard Seltzer, Manhattan, Ill.

The yardlight is the old street lamp kind. It sets on top of a 5 1/2-ft. length of 3-in. dia. muffler pipe that's anchored to a 12-in. spare tire. A cord runs to a 110-volt outlet in Seltzer's house.

"It looks nice and does a good job of lighting up the sidewalk behind my house," says Seltzer. "It's also easy to move from place to place. I can unplug the electric cord and roll it wherever I want."

He got the street lamp at an auction. He had a muffler shop flare out the bottom end of the pipe. It fits onto a short metal stub welded to a plate that bolts to the wheel rim. A muffler clamp around the stub holds the pipe securely in place.

"I got the tire for free and paid \$40 for a 10-ft. length of muffler pipe, which I cut down to 5 1/2 ft. The lamp came with a box of stuff that I bought at an auction for \$10," says Seltzer.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Leonard Seltzer, 16040 W. Manhattan Rd., Manhattan, Ill. 60442 (ph 815 478-3578).



Leonard Seltzer used a spare tire and a length of muffler pipe to make this portable yardlight.

How To Reach Us

To submit a "Made It Myself" Story Idea, New Product, Shop Tip, "Best or Worst Buy", or other information, send a note along with photos, drawings and literature, if available. We'll get back to you later if we need more details. Send to: Editor, FARM SHOW, P.O. Box 1029, Lakeville, Minn. 55044 (ph 800 834-9665; fax 952 469-5575); email: editor@farmshow.com. You can also submit information at our website: www.farmshow.com.

To change your address, renew your subscription, take out a new subscription, order videos or books, or for other information regarding your subscription, contact: Circulation Department, FARM SHOW, P.O. Box 1029, Lakeville, Minn. 55044 (ph 800 834-9665; fax 952 469-5575; email: circulation@farmshow.com).