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Reader Inquiry No. 164

## Portable Canopy Provides Instant Shade For Livestock

"Blazing sunshine and excessive heat are a serious problem for livestock producers who graze their animals," says Wisconsin beef producer Vince Hundt. He and his business partners, Guthrie Knapp and Peter Bergquist, came up with a simple solution called The Shade Haven. It's a 1,120 sq. ft. portable canopy that sets up in minutes and provides livestock with a shady spot on pasture that can be easily moved around.

"Hot days can stress livestock," says Hundt. "If they're beef cattle excessive heat cuts down on their rate of gain. If they're dairy cattle, their milk production suffers."

The Shade Haven is ideal for livestock producers who use rotational grazing in open fields. The 40-ft. dia. canopy is made of black polyethylene shade cloth. It's 80 percent solid and 20 percent perforated. "The black color absorbs sunlight and radiates it upward, creating a light breeze under the canopy with temperatures about 20 degrees cooler than in the direct sunlight," Hundt says. "It works like a giant oak tree that moves wherever you need it."

Hundt and his business partners, who have a background in engineering and architecture, developed a prototype 2 years

ago, refined the design last year, and sold initial production units in 2013. "I used it first on my own farm," says Hundt. "The cattle spent time under it whenever the sun was shining from May through September." The canopy is large enough to provide shade for 50 to 60 mature animals at one time. It's built like a large Chinese fan, supported by tubular trusses and a tripod that's mounted on a tricycle transport. The canopy lays completely flat when it's open, about 10 ft. off the ground, Hundt says. The Shade Haven can easily withstand winds up to 35 miles an hour when deployed. "If there's a big thunderstorm headed your way, it only takes a few minutes to fold the canopy and secure it.

Hundt says the portability of The Shade Haven is a very important selling point. An ATV can easily pull the device from one



Portable 40-ft. dia. canopy is made of black poly shade cloth. It sets up in minutes and is easy to move.

location to another. "Moving The Shade Haven in a paddock helps with nutrient distribution. In the shade, the cattle will naturally apply more manure in one spot, or if you've got a problem area with weeds, they'll grind those down with their hooves," Hundt says.

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