



## Livestock-Proof Rat Bait Feeder

A do-it-yourself livestock-proof rat and mouse bait "tube" feeder developed at Purdue University can be used inside livestock confinement buildings without posing any danger to livestock.

The "tube-baiter" is a 12-in. long length of PVC pipe with a pair of 2-lb. bait blocks wired inside. A pair of 3/16-in. holes are drilled 2 in. apart through both sides of the pipe to thread a length of 18-ga. wire through the bait blocks to secure them back-to-back at the center of the tube. A 2-in. dia. tube is recommended for mice and a 3-in. dia. tube for rats.

"Tube-baiters can be placed beside pen dividers, between feeders, on wall ledges, on the floor or anywhere rats or mice feed,"

says Bob Corrigan, rodent control specialist. "They work much better than enclosed box-style bait stations because you never have to worry about bait spilling out of the station and livestock eating the bait. The bait is far enough inside the tube that hogs won't be able to reach it, and they can't destroy the tube. Tube-baiters also work great outside because they're safe for pets. Tubes can be used over and over and, if desired, can be nailed or screwed to a wall. A 10-ft. length of 3-in. PVC pipe costs \$13 to \$14 and makes 10 tube-baiters."

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Bob Corrigan, Dept. of Entomology, Purdue University, West Lafayette, Ind. 47907 (ph 317 494-4554).

## "Lampshade" Collar Stops Dog From Chewing Splint

By Heather Smith Thomas

"This past spring our dog, Sport, broke a hind leg when she fell off a jeep load of hay. It was a bad, spiral break just above her hock with many tiny bone fragments. It was going to take at least 6 to 8 weeks to heal," says Heather Smith Thomas who ranches near Salmon, Idaho.

"Our veterinarian put a splint on the leg but the dog kept chewing it, making it difficult to keep the leg immobile and stretched out straight.

"So we rigged up a plastic shield that attaches to her collar. It has slits in it for the collar to slip through so it's held securely in place like a bonnet. It did the job, keeping her from chewing the splint until the bone fragments began to knit together. Once healing began and the leg bone was solid again, we were able to take off the splint and the "lampshade". We kept her confined to a barn stall for a few more weeks to limit her



activity so the leg could finish healing without further injury.

"Now Sport is fine and can run just as fast as ever. We're glad we didn't have to amputate the leg or put her to sleep."

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## Egg Cartons Mark Silage Cuttings In Silo

Hay crop silage can differ considerably from cut to cut and from field to field. You can use plastic egg cartons, chopped into the beginning of each batch of silage, to keep an inventory of a filled silo, according to agronomist Everett D. Thomas in a report in Hoard's Dairyman magazine.

As you ensile the crop from a field, Thomas suggests you jot down the field number, how many tons or loads are ensiled, and the date of the harvest. It can be useful, he says, to have on record that the first 300 tons in the silo was first cut and rest second cut. If you've got any silage left from the previous year you can keep track of that, too.

Thomas runs a batch of polystyrene egg

cartons through the blower and up into the silo chute with the first load or two of silage. The colorful cartons in each layer of silage are easy to spot. The method is much more accurate than counting silo doors because of settling.

Thomas notes that when one layer of silage was treated with a silage inoculant, the egg carton inventory method made it possible to know when the treated silage was reached. He says the method also lets farmers keep track of bad batches of silage that might be of lower quality because of weather or other reasons. Even if there's no problem, he says you'll feel better knowing where that silage is.

## Dairy Farmer Milks 10 Months, Then Takes Vacation

You can net \$36,000 with 60 cows on 60 acres and take a 2-month vacation every year, according to dairy scientist David Zartman at Ohio State University who's set up a research farm promoting the idea of breeding all cows in a herd to freshen in March and April.

The idea is to give dairymen a break from milking in January and February. Zartman got interested in seasonal milking when he spent a year in New Zealand, which he says has the most efficient dairy industry in the world. Farmers there synchronize milking so that cows are at their most productive stage when the maximum amount of forage is available, during summer months. New Zealand style dairying also involves rotational grazing and minimum investment in facilities. Zartman says New Zealand farmers don't measure efficiency in milk per cow. They measure it in cost per hundred-weight.

Zartman's theories are being tested by dairyman Steve Shoemaker with a 30-cow herd (half Holstein and half Jersey) on 42 acres of pasture. Cows in the study are allowed enough pasture (about 3/4 acre) so that they can consume roughly 60 percent of the available forage in a 24-hour period. Then they are moved to new pasture while their yearling daughters are turned into the pasture just grazed by the cows. The heifers

consume about 30 percent more of the forage during the next 24 hrs. Moving the polywire and nylon step-in posts that separate each day's pastures takes Shoemaker only about 15 min. Pasture rest periods range from 15 to 30 days, depending on forage regrowth. In spring, excess forage is cut as hay for winter feeding.

In the first year, the Holsteins averaged 15,154 lbs. of milk and the Jerseys 11,353. In the second year, after pasture quality was improved, the Holsteins averaged 17,865 and the Jerseys 12,458.

The best part of Zartman's system is its low capital requirements. "All you need is a barn, some pasture, a manure spreader, a tractor with a front-end loader, a wagon to haul water, and a pickup and trailer to haul animals. You buy the grain and supplement, and the hay and silage you can have done custom," he says, noting that there are fewer and fewer entry level dairymen because of the high capital cost of getting started and because many young families aren't willing to make the year-round commitment.

Zartman says his research has convinced him a 60-cow herd on 60 acres could net \$36,000 per year.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Dr. David L. Zartman, Dairy Science Dept., OSU, Columbus, Ohio

## Old Hats Stop Killing Frost

"Last year we had a killing frost in south-eastern Iowa in mid-May, which was about a week after we had planted our garden tomato plants," recounts Mrs. Melvin Moeller, West Point, Iowa.

"When I transplant tomatoes from the greenhouse to the garden I always cut out the ends of coffee cans and place them over the plants to prevent wind, sun and cold damage. However, the cans won't prevent frost damage.

"When the forecast called for a killing frost on two consecutive nights, I had to come up with a way to keep the plants from freezing. After some quick thinking, I discovered a box of farm caps my husband had that had been washed over and over and didn't look good anymore. I placed a cap on each can and snapped them shut to fit.

"I was the only gardener in this area who



didn't have to replace tomato plants and, of course, I had lots of spectators. They enjoyed the colorful sight of all those caps in the garden and the free advertising I was giving to feed, seed and fertilizer dealers. Now we've all started saving old caps and coffee cans for use in our gardens."

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## "Half" Tires Work Great For Securing Plastic Tarps

"They're light, easy to handle and they don't trap water," says Merlyn Hilt, St. Francis, Kan., who's discovered that car and pickup tires cut in half work great for securing plastic covers on silage piles.

Merlyn built a patented tire-turning and cutting machine that turns tractor tires into feedbunks by turning them inside out to boost capacity 40%, making them portable and easy to use. "We've recently discovered that car and pickup tires cut in half make excellent anchors for keeping plastic covers from blowing in the wind," says Merlyn, who charges 50 cents per tire for cutting car and pickup tires (steel belted, bias or radial) in half. "Half" tires are placed "smooth outside side down" on the plastic.

You and your neighbors can round up enough tractor and car tires to make it feasible for Merlyn and his machine to come to your neighborhood.



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