

Fool-Proof "Scare Crow"

How do you keep birds and animals out of your sweet corn or strawberry patch? Hundreds of remedies have been prescribed, but here's one that really worked for a Wisconsin gardener this year.

Randy Rubenzer, a high school student who lives near Chippewa Falls, put together a bird-scaring device with an old plastic can, a stool, and a 5-in. aluminum pie plate.

The can had a crack at the bottom which caused a slow drip of water. Randy regulated the opening with a piece of tape to let a drop fall every second or two. He set the can on a stool in

the middle of the strawberry patch and placed the aluminum pie plate upside down so the drops would fall on it.

The simple device produces a steady "plunk, plunk" which echoes through the garden and scares birds and animals away. The canful of water lasts about four days before it needs to be refilled.

The bird-scaring device worked well for the small strawberry patch and Randy is convinced that several of them placed throughout a larger garden or field would do the job on a larger scale.

Ohio Farmer Finds Many Uses For Helicopter

When people in Ohio's Hardin County hear something overhead, they don't need to ask if it's a bird or a plane or Superman. They know it's probably Max Heilman cruising around in his helicopter.

Heilman, who is president of the Ohio Pork Council, says he had flown airplanes and was ready to try something different when he became interested in helicopters.

"The helicopter is more useful to me than an airplane. I use it for short trips around the state, it is more applicable to my farming needs and it doesn't need an airfield to land, which really cuts down on car rentals and taxis," he explains.

The helicopter travels at 140 miles per hour and gets about eight miles to a gallon of Jet-A fuel. "My helicopter has a gas turbine engine and runs on a fuel which is mostly kerosene. It weighs 1,600 pounds when empty and is fully loaded at 3,000 pounds which includes fuel, driver and passengers."

Around his farm, which is 950 tillable acres of corn, soybeans and wheat plus a farrow-to-finish hog operation, Heilman uses the helicopter to spray crops.

"I have a spray rig with a 40-foot boom. There is a 140 gallon tank which attaches to the belly of the craft which can be used for liquid fertilizers, insecticides and herbicides."

"It is a lot faster than spraying on the ground and one advantage is that you can spray over the tops of growing crops which is a little difficult to do on the ground after the crops are up," he says. He also flies over his crops after they are planted to spot check for fertilizer deficiencies.

Also, the helicopter is equipped with a lifting hook which

has a lifting capacity of 1,000 pounds.

Being a stockholder in the Robinson Seed Corn Company, Heilman has used the helicopter on some seed corn test plots on his farm and at various other locations. At the time of pollination, he flies over the crops to help the cross pollination.

In addition to uses on the farm, Heilman uses the helicopter to fly to various meetings he must attend for the Pork Producers Council, as a member of the Hardin County Farm Bureau board, and to pick-up repair parts for machinery on the farm.

"It is a lot faster to fly to get a repair part when you need it than it is to drive and waste all that time on the road," he says.

"Landing a helicopter takes less space than an airplane. The only thing you need is enough clearance for the blades. I land the helicopter on a self-propelled trailer," he says.

The trailer which Heilman designed resembles a wooden skid equipped with wheels, batteries and tongue. When he moves the helicopter in or out of the hanger, he flips a switch on the trailer, takes hold of the tongue and guides the trailer loaded with the helicopter.

Last winter Heilman could have been a real lifesaver for many when the blizzard struck Ohio. However, at that time the helicopter was in Columbus having a new radio installed. "I'm not sure whether I'm glad or sad I didn't have the helicopter at that time. I got calls from all over the state asking me to give them a helping hand. It would have been a pretty busy time," he says.

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FARM SHOW

Best Ideas

Got a "best idea" you'd like to share with FARM SHOW readers — a new wrinkle in cropping, livestock, machinery or whatever? Maybe it's still experimental but looks promising. Or, maybe you've already taken the idea beyond the experimental stage. We'd like to hear about it. Write to: Best Ideas, c/o FARM SHOW, 8500 210 St., Lakeville, Minn. 55044.

Harold M. Johnson, Editor



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