



Stock tank brooders are easy to set up and maintain and offer a clean, safe and temporary home for chickens.

Simple Stock Tank Brooder

“A stock tank brooder is great for controlling climate and providing protection for chicks,” says Greg Wierschke of Clean Chickens and Co.

He points out that a tank keeps the chicks dry even if the area around it gets wet. It also keeps them safe from curious cats, dogs and wild predators alike.

Once the tank is bedded with wood chips and newspaper, Wierschke covers it with chicken wire and uses half a dozen spring clamps to hold it in place. He fixes a heat lamp in place above the wire covering, securing it with a C-clamp.

He suggests giving the chicks up to 12 hrs. before introducing feed and grit. “Our trick for introducing food is to put colored marbles in the feed so they will peck at them and find

the feed,” says Wierschke.

If the temperature drops, he advises using a sheet of cardboard to regulate the temperature in the brooder.

“The stock tank is a clean, safe and temporary home for your chicks,” says Wierschke. “They can be removed as early as 9 days but should be removed by day 18. Wash the tank out with a garden hose and place it upside down until the next batch of chicks is on its way.”

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Heron's ATV modifications include a metal mower hood, plastic barrel fenders, used headlights and a winch-operated bucket.

ATV Modified With “Barrel” Fenders

When Michael Heron of Lloydminster, Sask., retired he bought garden tractors and ATVs in various states of disrepair, parking them in his back yard. A Suzuki King Quad was one of those purchases. It had a good engine but was missing its plastic fenders.

“The plastic for these machines is very expensive if you can even find it,” says Heron. “This quad was 4-WD with tremendous pulling power so I knew it could be useful. It didn't look like much but was functional and I thought I could dress it up.”

Heron replaced the broken hood with a modified metal one from one of his garden tractors. Since he decided it was too costly to replace the fenders with OEM parts, he tried a different and cheaper alternative in the form of an old plastic barrel he had lying around.

“I thought if I could make fenders from

the barrel, they would be as durable as the originals,” he says. “So, I managed to cut it into the right-sized pieces. Then I bolted them onto the frame along with some scavenged headlights. Later, I modified the ATV further to make it even more functional, adding a winch that works a bucket capable of lifting a couple hundred pounds.”

The single operation winch was added to complete all the movements of lifting, lowering and tilting the bucket.

“The hardest part was getting the parts that aren't really supposed to fit, to fit,” Heron says. “I didn't want it to look too amateurish, but I think it came out good.”

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To feed hops into this equipment, telehandlers or extended fork machines are used to load and bring them by the truckload from the fields.

Hop Picking Machines Reduce Labor

For Doug Weathers, owner of Sodbuster Farms, Ore., harvesting his 1,000 plus acres of hops has always been a time-consuming and labor-intensive undertaking.

During a normal harvest season lasting approximately 5 weeks with round-the-clock work shifts, roughly 50 workers manually brought hop bins to three stationary picking and cleaning machines that he'd been using for decades. Hops were hung one at a time to be stripped of cones and leaves. From there, the machines separated the cones from debris before the hops were sent to a kiln or dryer to be dried and preserved before cooling and baling.

Last year, Weathers switched to a newly designed hop picking machine from Kollmar Inc., of Grandview, Wash. To feed hops into this equipment, telehandlers or extended fork machines are used to load and bring them by the truckload from the fields. At the yard, they're dumped into a slightly elevated chain conveyor which carries the bins to a sickle-blade cutter.

“It slices them like a loaf of bread, about 18 in. in length,” says Weathers. “From there, they fall into a machine that rips them

apart without damaging the cones. Then the material goes through a similar process of cleaning and removing the stems and leaves and separating the cones before they go to the dryer. With this machine, I can do the same work with about a third the number of staff.”

Weathers is in the process of removing his three original machines from his buildings and adding a second new hop processor, this time from DK Fab of Woodburn, Ore.

Between the two new unit purchases and installations, Weathers says he'll be spending approximately \$12,000,000 in capital improvements.

“I'll be able to have much more throughput with the two new machines and the work won't be as physically demanding for the staff,” he says. “Plus, I'll save around \$650,000 a year in labor bills during a 5-week harvest period. I'll also be able to pay my help more to run the equipment.”

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Booster Expands Cell Phone Range

If you frequently have a poor cell phone signal when you're on the road, the Wilson Electronics Drive Reach can maximize any available signal for better service.

As a cellular signal booster, it offers a powerful way to connect up smartphones, tablets and other cellular-enabled devices in a connected vehicle.

The standard model covers the entire interior of standard-sized cars or pickups. It can boost up to four cellular devices simultaneously.

Your phone will automatically pick up the boosted signal once the Drive Reach is activated. The device only works within vehicles. Step outside, and you'll lose the amplification. Specialized Drive Reaches are also available for RVs, trucks and semis, fleet vehicles and boats.

Thanks to its increased uplink output, Drive Reach users can access signals up to twice as far from towers as over twice the signal strength. According to Wilson Electronics, it has the highest uplink output of any commercially available vehicle booster.

Each Drive Reach kit includes an amplifier/repeater, a mini magnet mount antenna, a low-profile inside antenna, a power source, and an installation guide.

To install, place the magnetic antenna on the vehicle's roof and run a cable inside. You'll need to use the included adhesive disk to mount it if your roof is aluminum. Place the



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drive reach amplifier under a seat and mount the inside antenna on either the side of a seat or on the dashboard. Connect the antennas to the amplifier, plug in the power source, and you're good to go.

Prices per unit vary based on the model; the standard Drive Reach is available for \$499.

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