

He Treats Well Water With Hydrogen Peroxide

Water has often been described as the most neglected ingredient for proper livestock nutrition, but that's not true for pork producer Wayne Neuberger, Klemme, Iowa.

He installed a chlorinator on his well years ago that provides water for his hog buildings and home.

While the chlorine did the job on the water, Neuberger didn't like the idea that you could smell and taste it in the water. Then he heard about a system that injects hydrogen peroxide into the water line.

"Peroxide can do everything chlorine can do when it comes to taking contaminants out of water," he believes. "The big advantage we noticed right away is that it leaves no smell or taste in the water.

Then he found another advantage.

"It wasn't until after I'd switched to peroxide that I found what the chlorine had done to my well," he says. "We'd been using chlorine tablets, dropping them into the well casing. Chlorine is highly corrosive and it actually ate through the steel casing. We had to pull the pump, re-drill the well and replace the casing. When we pulled the pump, it was encrusted in undissolved chlorine from the tablets."

He says the cost was "significant." He had the well deepened, but the water from the lower aquifer had a high sulfur content.

That showed him another advantage of hydrogen peroxide. "Peroxide immediately oxidizes the sulfur, so we have water that's as clean, clear and odorless as fresh spring water. There's also iron oxide in the water

and while the peroxide can't take it out by itself without extra filtration, it keeps it in suspension so it doesn't accumulate and plug waterers," he says.

Neuberger says he's run out of peroxide a couple of times. When that happens, the sulfur smell and taste show up in the water to remind him it's time to get a new supply.

He says you don't need to be a plumber or expert mechanic to install a hydrogen peroxide injection system. "All you need is a squeeze pump to inject it into the water and an electrical wire from the well pump controller to the squeeze pump, so when the well pump comes on the squeeze pump does, too."

After that, he says, the big thing is calibrating the squeeze pump so the right amount of peroxide is injected into the water. Hydrogen peroxide test strips tell you the level you're at. "Once you have it set, that's all there is to it," he says. "I haven't touched the pump since then."

Neuberger has found one more way to use peroxide for his hogs. "I add a little extra to the hog water through the medicator whenever I hear them coughing or suspect they might have a touch of a respiratory infection," he says. "That almost always knocks it out and I seldom use any other medication."

Compared to drugs, peroxide is considerably less expensive. And, while it costs less than a penny per pig more than chlorine for treating water, Neuberger says the fact that it's noncorrosive and not apparent in the water makes it more desirable and probably

more economical in the long run.

Neuberger says he uses Oxy Blast®, the brand of hydrogen peroxide sold by Essential Water Solutions, Inc. Boone, Iowa. He uses a 15 gallon drum of the 34% Oxy Blast every couple of months, or about 90 gallon per year, for both his house and hog operation. Company president, Randy Navratil, says Oxy Blast is purer, more stable, and has a proprietary formula that plain hydrogen peroxide does not. It is available in 5, 15 and 55 gallon drums and 330-gal. totes. They also offer Oxy Blast companion products for water that is hard, high in pH or high in sodium.

Navratil reports that Oxy Blast is not only used for swine operations, but also poultry, beef, and dairy. There currently are hundreds of thousands of hogs, dairy cows, and feedlot cattle, and several million chickens and turkeys, using Oxy Blast through over 7,000 Oxy Blast systems throughout the U.S. and Canada. Producers report that because the water and waterlines are cleaner, the animals also do better.

Essential Water Solutions, Inc. has on staff a consulting veterinarian, water physiologist and they have a water filtration company to round out their services.

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Reader Inquiry No. 56

Teen's Invention May Save Lives

Mason Gahler of Pierz, Minn., may be in high school, but his credentials already include an invention that could save countless lives, a tool he calls the Grain Gyre.

"My idea for the Grain Gyre started in 7th grade when my ag teacher Mrs. Tax showed us a video of a grain bin incident," says Gahler.

Accidents like this cause over 20 fatalities a year. When grain is unloaded from a bin, it flows downwards from the top center, creating a funnel that sucks it down to the conveyor at the bottom. This flowing grain behaves like quicksand and can bury a full-grown adult in under 30 seconds. Getting out can be almost impossible, which is why Gahler's Grain Gyre focuses on preventing farmers from stepping into their silos in the first place.

The Grain Gyre includes an auger at the bottom of the bin that suctions up the grain and transports it back to the center. This pre-

vents air pockets and eliminates the funnel effect, meaning a farmer who steps in won't get sucked to the bottom. And because the crop continuously moves throughout the bin, it tends to dry faster, minimizing the risk of sticking to the sides.

In November 2022, Gahler worked with his father to build a scale model of his idea. "My design has changed a lot since I was in 7th grade; there's been a lot of trial and error," he says. "The final design focuses mostly on unloading your bin and stirring it during the off-season to get clumps off of the bin's walls. When my dad and I finally flipped the model's switch, it did more than I expected it to!"

Gahler is currently working to get his invention patented. Looking toward the future, he plans to get a model of the Gyre built and installed into a grain bin that's getting built in his yard. This will allow for more testing to ensure it lives up to its promises.



Mason Gahler developed his Grain Gyre to move grain in the bin making it less likely for grain entrapment.

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