

## "Calf/Share" Cow Lease Plan

Harvey Applegate and his sons John and Jim run a beef cattle leasing business in Nebraska that may be unique to the business and is a plan they think might work for other livestock.

The Applegate lease plan, developed by Harvey more than 25 years ago, is unique in that no money ever changes hands between the Applegates and their renters. The renters pay their fee by returning calves to the Applegates.

Here's how the idea works: The Applegates lease cattle out for periods of 3 or 5 years. They send out bred heifers and then each year take 1/3 of the calf crop as payment. The renter keeps 2/3 of the calves. At the end of the lease period, the renters return the cows to the Applegates, who then send the cows to market. The renters have the option of buying the cows or continuing to rent them.

When the Applegates send cattle out they also send along a generous number of bulls as part of the service. If the renter wishes, he can provide his own bulls. The only requirement on the part of the renter is that he have a well-run operation and

that he carry liability insurance.

"If an animal dies and there's a good reason, we replace it at no charge," John Applegate told FARM SHOW, noting that they try to remain flexible when times get rough. When paying "rent", the renter divides the calf crop up into three equal groups and the Applegates then choose one of the groups. The heifers are then bred and leased back out while the steer calves are sold, or traded for more heifers.

The lease program has been extremely successful for the Applegates over the past 25 years although they have had some bad experiences. "One renter went to his banker and put a mortgage on our cattle. We took our cattle back and the banker was stuck," says John.

John Applegate thinks the lease idea might also work well with hogs and other animals. "It's a good deal for both sides. Many young ranchers have gotten their start because of our lease program."

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# FARM SHOW

## "Best Ideas"

**Editor's Note:** Have you got a "best idea" you'd like to share with FARM SHOW readers? It might be a new wrinkle in cropping, livestock, machinery or whatever. Maybe it's still experimental but looks promising. Or, maybe you've already proven it works. We'd like to hear about it. Write to: Best Ideas, c/o FARM SHOW, P.O. Box 704, Lakeville, Minn. 55044.

## All-Terrain "Motorcycle"

When Larry Rauenhorst, Olivia, Minn., needed a vehicle to get up and down his bean fields, he removed the over-sized rubber tires on a 3-wheeler bike and replaced them with narrow motorcycle wheels that let him run through beans up to 10 in. high without doing damage. A side benefit is that the 3-wheeler is also faster and more maneuverable with the narrower tires.

"It runs up to 10 mph faster," says Rauenhorst, noting that the conversion project took him only an afternoon of work. "Even if you don't need it to get through crops, it's a lot cheaper to replace the wide ATC wheels with motorcycle tires when they're worn out."

The first step was to remove the rear wheels and bolt on the new ones. He had to tap into the wheel hub to mount the motorcycle wheels but says that otherwise, there were no problems. Up front, he removed the old 3-wheeler front spindle and installed the entire front spindle assembly from a small motorcycle. "It bolted right into the handlebars and we were able to hook up the front brakes. The only modification up front was to cut the spring down so the front end didn't ride up so high."



## "Snowblower" Silage Blower

Ralph Horsch and his son Tom piled silage on the ground last year when they ran out of room in their silos, and added preservative before covering it tightly. Last spring, when they had room in their silos and wanted to fill them back up, they hit on the idea of using their snowblower to make the job easier.

"We couldn't load covered silage wagons with a tractor loader so we decided to try the snowblower," says Tom, noting that they first contacted the manufacturer of the blower and were told that handling silage wouldn't cause any damage to the blower if they didn't over-

load it. The blower was made by Gruet Mfg., Potter, Wis.

The father-son duo used a tractor loader to move silage off the main pile and out into mini-piles in front of the wagons. Then, they simply backed the snow blower up into the mini-piles and blew them into the covered wagons. They didn't have any trouble with plugging, according to Tom, and they didn't modify the blower in any way. "Our blower isn't much different from most other snowblowers on the market. I think most of them would be able to handle silage in this way," Tom told FARM SHOW.

## Door Knob Fence Splicer

"It'll splice wire better than most wire splicers on the market and you won't get skinned knuckles," says Jimmy Moore, Shelbyville, Ky. He came up with the idea of using an old-style door knob to splice fence. He uses a knob still fitted with the metal shaft that goes through the door. That shaft has two or three holes in it that fas-

ten to the door knob on the other side of the door.

The idea is to stick the ends of the wire to be spliced through the holes. Then you simply turn the knob and twist the wires together. "It'll work on wire of any size. We use it on barbed wire and even on heavy gauge cattle wire. It works so slick you can hardly believe it," says Moore.

