



Rubber boards are already being installed as floors in livestock and equipment trailers.

STRONGER THAN OAK

Rubber Boards Made From Used Tires

How about this — new “stronger than oak” rubber boards made out of old tires that you can saw, nail into and do anything else you ordinarily do with wood boards.

“We expect them to be used anywhere wood deteriorates because of moisture or manure acids, such as in barns or on the floors of livestock trailers,” says Joe Contestabile, marketing manager for Entek Corp. of America, Dallas, Texas.

Old tires are chopped up and blended with a small amount of herculon fiber and fiberglass, then extruded under pressure into rubber boards. Although the boards weigh about the same as oak, Contestabile says they withstand nearly twice as much weight without breaking. Rubber boards don't expand or contract. And, because they withstand deterioration from moisture or manure acids, have a much longer expected life. They also have a higher insulating value than wood, he notes.

“We're finding that our new rubber boards are especially popular for flooring in livestock trailers where wood floors often rot out, causing animals to fall through and break or injure their legs. Rubber is also more durable and less slippery than wood,” Contestabile points out. His company already is selling boards to manufacturers for use as original equipment in livestock trailers.

At present, tongue and grooved rubber boards are being offered in one standard size for thickness (1 1/4 in.) and width (11-3/16 in.), and in whatever length the customer desires. The company plans to have rubber boards in a wide variety of thicknesses and widths available in the near future. Cost for the new rubber boards runs about twice the cost of similar size oak boards.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Entek Corp. of America, P.O. Box 61048, Dallas, Texas 75261 (ph 214 258-2800).

On-Farm Loans For Youth

One way for young people to find out if they really want to get into farming is to let them get into debt and then, by their own sweat, try to get out. The problem is that unless Mom and Dad help, most youngsters can't get conventional loans.

Under a program run by the Farmer's Home Administration, however, youth aged 10 to 21 can borrow funds to run their own farm, or off-farm projects. They must qualify for the loan on their own merits. Parent's finances are not even considered.

“The money can be used for livestock, feed, machinery and nearly anything else,” says Jim Walker, a loan officer in Washington, D.C. “Some loans have been used to buy tools to open a mechanics shop, others to buy a baler or swather for setting up a custom operation, and still others to buy sewing machines to open a sewing shop.”

More than 1,000 “Youth Loans” were awarded in fiscal 1980, averaging about \$4,900 a piece. Walker estimates that the average age of participants is around 17. “Younger applicants often do not require loans because projects are smaller, but we do get applications from all ages,” he notes. Maximum payback period is seven years. Current interest rates run at about 10 1/2%.

It takes from two to six months for loan applications to go through, depending on current demand at local FmHA offices.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Youth Loans, Production Loan Division, Farmers Home Administration, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250 (ph 202 447-2288).



Anderson mounts a smaller steel wheel in front. It spins faster than the rear, helping pull the tractor ahead in mud.

“THEY'LL OUTPERFORM FLOTATION TIRES IN MUD,” SAYS MANUFACTURER

Steel Mud Wheels Walk In Water

“Dryland” farmers who think they know how to handle mud may want to take a long look at these narrow steel wheels which one manufacturer, who serves rice farmers and other making their living farming in mud, is now offering as the answer to negotiating sticky situations.

“Using flotation tires in mud is a mistake,” says Allan Marquart of Anderson Manufacturing, Inc., in Eagle Lake, Tex. “The idea has been to use flotation to stay on top. What happens, unfortunately, is that the wheels push out soft mud on top till they hit material firm enough to support the equipment. As a result, tires are constantly trying to climb out of a rut, wasting horsepower and leaving a mess.”

Anderson wheels narrow to a slim 1 1/2-in. tread that cuts resistance to forward movement. In mud, they knife downward until they hit hardpan or until downward pressure of equipment is equalled by return pressure of mud against the wheels. Cleats on the side of the wheels also help to move equipment forward.

“A key feature involves mounting a smaller wheel in front. That wheel spins slightly faster than the rear wheel, pulling the tractor ahead. On dry ground, though, the front drive must be disengaged,” explains Marquart.

“The tires were primarily designed for field work in rice paddies. However, the narrow tread is ideal for draining small flooded pothole areas in fields, or to cut through levees for draining.”

The idea of using narrow steel wheels in mud is not completely untested since similar wheels have been used on specially designed tractors on large California and Gulf Coast rice fields. Marquart says Anderson Manufacturing is the first company to adapt the idea to conventional trac-



Steel mud wheels narrow to a slim 1 1/2 in. tread that cuts forward resistance.

tors. So far, steel wheels have been designed only for the 20 to 40 hp. foreign and domestic 4-wheel drive tractors.

Marquart says there has been some interest in using the wheels for inter-seeding a second crop, such as soybeans, into a standing crop. He doubts, however, that the currently available models, mounted on smaller tractors, could pull the necessary equipment. “We're working on larger wheels to fit the big 4-wheel and 2-wheel drive tractors that may make those alternative uses possible,” he told FARM SHOW.

A set of four steel wheels of 4 and 5-ft. dia. sells for \$1,791.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Anderson Manufacturing, Inc., P.O. Box 245, Eagle Lake, Tex. 77434 (ph 713 234-3533).