

“Pillow” Captures Nitrates From Manure Runoff

Manure nitrates in runoff can contaminate surface water. Robert Sharpless of Devon, Pennsylvania, has invented a “filtration pillow” that’s been shown in tests to capture and contain 52 to 55 percent of the nitrogen from hog urine.

He says the absorbent brown “roll” is designed to intercept surface runoff of liquid manure, and remove the nitrogen before it gets into the environment.

“It’s 6 inches in diameter and can be made to any length. It’s made from a biodegradable, woven material that’s commonly used in erosion control applications,” Sharpless says. “It’s filled with an absorbent material that has the ability to capture and contain nitrogen.”

This “filtration pillow” can be used anywhere that excess nitrogen may be a problem, such as around outdoor livestock pens, and manure stockpiling areas. Golf courses are another location where high nitrogen levels are often found.

“It lets farmers take a proactive approach to minimizing environmental effects and possibly helping to avoid government regulatory intervention, including fines,” he says.

The life of the absorbent rolls depends on the particular application and weather conditions.

His company, Robert’s Design, also sells storm drain filtration devices.

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Absorbent “filtration pillow” is designed to intercept surface runoff of liquid manure and remove the nitrogen, before it gets into the environment.

mont Rd., Devon, Penn. 19333 (ph 877 687-7473; email: robert@stormdrains.com; website: www.stormdrains.com).

He Made His Own Septic Tank

“It was simple to make and didn’t cost much at all,” says John Tymchuck, Hortense, Ga., who built his own septic tank.

He first poured 4 by 4-ft. sq. slabs of concrete to form the walls of the 4 by 5-ft. tank. He made tongue and groove sides, then set them into place and poured cement into the joints. The bottom of the tank slopes down to a hole in one wall which leads to a field drain pipe. A 6-in. dia. vertical pipe is used to pump out the tank. Studs on top of the tank walls hold the tank lid in place.

He used a scraper to make a 40-ft. wide by 100-ft. long field drain. The field drain pipe slopes at 1/4 in. drop per 10 ft.

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Tymchuck poured slabs of concrete above ground and then cemented them in place.

Tymchuck, Rt. 2, Box 746-H 1, Browntown Road, Hortense, Ga. 31543 (ph 912 778-5513; email: tymchucks@brconline.net).



David Skornia converted a Deere 95 combine into this cheap but effective forklift. He uses it mainly to load square bale stacks for customers.

Combine Used To Make Forklift

David Skornia of Boyne City, Mich. wanted a cheap, effective and fast way to load square bale stacks for his customers. He modified a Deere 95 combine to fit the bill.

Actually, the combine wasn’t of any use to him until he completely tore it apart and modified the unit to make the new machine.

Skornia used the combine’s engine, hydrostatic drive, cab, steering, wheels and axles, putting them onto a frame that he built out of 4 by 6-in. steel tubing.

“We picked up a used three-stage forklift mast for a couple hundred dollars and attached that to it,” he says. “It’s used to move any type of material, but mainly square bales that are hand-stacked, 50 at a time onto 6 by 8-ft. pallets after coming out of a bale basket. We sell hay to small horse farms, so the forklift is a means of moving the hay into the barn and then picking it back up and loading it onto our customers’ trailers.”

Skornia says he paid \$750 for the old com-

bine, but was able to sell \$250 worth of parts off it that he didn’t need. He had several hydraulic hoses made for the drive system and purchased most of the steel he needed new.

“We’ve used it for several years now and it works very well,” he comments.

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Fast Growing Trees For Shade, Windbreak, Or Privacy

You can grow a 25-ft. tall windbreak in five years with fast-growing trees from Advanced Tree Technology. Mark Bruick, general manager, says their Skyrise Hybrid Salix willow grows 5 to 6 ft. per year.

“The Skyrise is upright with very little drooping, does not produce suckers, and is seedless,” he says. “It works well for erosion control with its massive root system and will grow 50 ft. tall with a spread of 30 feet or more. If you trim the branches on the trunk, it provides quick shade. And, when cut and dried, it burns hot and clean and has a higher BTU content per pound than oak.”

Bruick says fast growing trees like the Skyrise are popular with everyone from large lot owners to farmers. Anyone needing a windbreak or wanting to screen out an eyesore or a neighbor can benefit from the trees.

The Skyrise thrives in a wide range of conditions including very wet soils. It has proven hardy to 30 degrees below zero and is recommended for zones 3 to 8.

An alternative to the Skyrise for zones 5-6, and drier soils, is the Green Rocket hybrid. It’s a cross of a Japanese cedar and a western cedar. It can grow 3 ft. or more per year and reach 30 ft. high with a base 10 to 12-ft. wide.

“It’s our fastest growing evergreen and is nice for smaller lots,” says Bruick. “It will produce a 12 to 15-in. diameter log and is the kind of cedar that can be used for closet lining and shingles.”

In addition to fast growing shade and windbreak trees, the company also offers genetically superior walnut, cherry and oak trees. In the case of the cherry and oak, these hardwoods have been selected for faster and straighter growth.

“We pick the best growers available and maintain a 40-acre plantation of mother trees,” says Bruick.

Prices vary depending on the size and num-



Skyrise Hybrid Salix willow grows 5 to 6 ft. per year. It can be trimmed as a shade tree, as shown here, or planted to form a windbreak.



Cedar hybrid grows 3 ft. or more per year and reaches 30 ft. in height.

ber of trees ordered. A 3-ft. Skyrise is priced at \$11 as is a 16 to 20-in. Green Rocket in a minipot.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Mark Bruick, Advanced Tree Technology, 12818 Edgerton Road, New Haven, Ind. 46774 (ph 260 749-0891 or 888 749-0799; website: www.advancedtree.com).

“How I Stay Warm In My Honda Tractor”

Murray Scea, Campbellford, Ontario, came up with a cheap way to stay warm on his 1998 Honda 1855 tractor during the winter. He bought a canvas cab and adapted it to fit the rollbar cage on the tractor. He also mounted an electric fan on the tractor’s dash that sends heat from the engine into the cab.

“Even on the coldest day I don’t need a coat or gloves,” says Scea.

He paid \$300 for the cab, which was designed for another brand of lawn tractor. It has a zippered door on one side. The cab came mounted on a 1/2-in. pipe frame and was designed to pin to the tractor frame. Scea cut the pins off flush and riveted them to the roll cage and also to the tractor’s frame.

“I couldn’t find a cab that was made for the Honda, but this works great,” says Scea. “One nice thing is that if the cab ever gets torn I can use duct tape to cover the holes, and no one will even notice because it’s made from gray canvas,” says Scea.



Murray Scea adapted a canvas cab to fit the rollbar cage on his 1998 Honda 1855 tractor. It’s the same color as duct tape so it’s easy to patch.

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Combine forklift can be used for any lifting job.