



Matthew Buvala says his Fence Cart makes moving bulky 4-ft. electric fence netting an easy job.



As cart is pulled, the netting slips off the cart tangle-free and ready to be raised.

Cart Makes Setting Up Net Fence Easy

It took six prototypes, but the work was worth it, says Matthew Buvala about his Buvala Fence Cart. His patent-pending invention saves him time and labor every time he moves fence for his rotational grazing poultry operation.

The retired Navy veteran started raising chickens in 2001 in Pepin, Wis. He appreciated the concept of rotational grazing, but hated moving the bulky 4-ft. electric fence netting each week.

"This cart is such a labor-saving thing.

You're not carrying the fence around and getting it tangled up," Buvala says.

It took trial and error to get the right dimensions and angles, he says. His cart is made of square tubing, with 20-in. tires in the back and a swivel castor in the front. The fence cart can be pulled by hand or with an ATV.

Put the first post of the fence in the ground and secure it on top to another post. As the cart is pulled, the netting slips off the cart tangle-free and ready to be raised.

To put the fence back on the cart, lay the fence on the ground and start at the end, so that the castor wheel runs down the middle of the fence. Pull it forward a couple of posts at a time and slip the posts on the arms of the cart.

The cart holds two rolls of 160-ft. netting with standard posts.

"This works great for anybody that does rotational grazing for sheep, goats, chickens or small cattle," Buvala says. He recently learned that it's a great help for farmers with

disabilities. He adds that he can also have a wider version built for 6-ft. deer netting.

The carts are manufactured at a local shop, Pepin Farm Implements. Buvala sells them for \$479 plus shipping. Check out his website to view videos of how the cart works manually and behind an ATV.

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Russell Casperson used the drum off a portable cement mixer to build this electric-powered, 6 cubic yard composter.

Giant Composter Made From Old Cement Mixer

Rather than use a pitchfork to turn compost material in a stationary bin, Russell Casperson built an electric-powered, 6 cubic yard composter from the drum of a portable cement mixer. His monster drum is turned by a single phase, 3/4 hp electric motor.

"I've been a gardener for nearly 48 years, which I really enjoy, but making compost was never one of my favorite jobs," Russell says. "My brother heard about an old 1949 cab-over Kenworth cement mixer for sale, so we bought it. I wanted the mixer, and he wanted the truck."

Casperson located a logging truck chassis and wheels at a local salvage yard to mount the drum. Now it sits in the tall grass of his back yard, convenient to his large vegetable garden. To rotate the drum he connected the electric motor to two 60:1 reduction gears. That reduces the 1,700 rpm output of the motor to a snail's pace, rotating the drum once every 2 1/2 min.

"It's the perfect speed to mix all the stuff I put in there," Russell says. "I throw in about 1,500 lbs. of hay, maybe 300 lbs. of fish scraps from a local processor, and add a few pails of nitrogen." The motor is set on a timer so it churns only at night. That way the

odor doesn't bother the neighbors.

Russell's back yard compost cooks for about 6 mos. He empties the big tub by reversing the rotation and the paddles lift it out the back into his loader bucket or a trailer. He spreads the contents about 4 to 6 in. deep on his garden, then tills it in for a lush, fertile seedbed.

"The compost smells real sweet when it's done and boy does it grow vegetables," Russell says. "The beets are about double the size that people normally grow, potatoes are huge and delicious, and carrots are very sweet."

The only tell tale sign of what the compost is made of are a few spines from large halibut carcasses or a partial skull from a really big salmon.

Asked if the mixture smells during the composting process, Russell says "at first some of the neighbors complained, so I run the mixer only at night. The game department came out once and thought I was baiting bear, but I showed them I was just making garden compost."

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Company Restores Gas Tanks To Like-New Condition

Gas Tank Renu dealer Mike Tesch of Shakopee, Minn., says restoring gas tanks on antique and older tractors is a growing business. He's worked on tanks for Allis Chalmers, Farmall, Fordson and several other old tractors.

"The process Gas Tank Renu uses to restore truck, car and tractor tanks is considerably more involved and technical than radiator repair," Tesch says. "That's because of the chemicals used and the 400-degree oven used to blast tanks back to bare metal."

Typically the tanks that need restoring have varnish buildup and leaks. Tanks are first flushed, then baked in Tesch's 10-ft. wide oven before being sand-blasted inside and out. Repairs are done with welding or soldering, and finally tanks are sealed with a polyvinyl coating. "Baking the coating on is the key," Tesch says.

Tesch's dealership was started by his parents and Tesch has owned and operated the business since 2008. The dealership has restored tanks as small as 1 gal. and as large as 150 gal. The maximum size that can be restored is limited by the gauge of the metal and the capacity of his oven, he says.

The cost to restore a gas tank depends on time and materials needed. A ballpark

estimate can be given up front, and a tighter price given once the tank has been sandblasted. Some tanks can be restored in one day, while others require 3 to 4 days of work.

Restored tanks are guaranteed for 2 years for 3/4-ton vehicle and larger tanks, and lifetime for tanks from less than 3/4-ton vehicles. The Gas Tank Renu process works on both gas and diesel tanks. Tanks needing repair are generally delivered or shipped to Tesch's dealership, he says.

"My folks ran a service station and radiator-repair business and they added this service in 1990 because it seemed like it would be a good fit," Tesch says. "It's turned into a very good business."

The Gas Tank Renu-USA business was started in Michigan in 1988 and has grown to 65 dealers in the U.S. and Canada - the largest unified system of repairing fuel tanks in North America, according to the company website.

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Any shape or size gas tank from 1 to 150 gal. can be restored to "like new" condition with the Gas Tank Renu process, says dealer Mike Tesch.