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Weather 8 January 19:33 pm

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Precipitation: 3.1 Min Temp: 8  
Wind Speed: 11 Max Temp: 10



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## Cold-weather kit for chilly winters

David Cousins  
Friday 07 January 2011 14:29

The current run of snowy, icy winters is prompting farm machinery makers and importers to start offering snow-blowers, snowploughs and other cold weather equipment again. David Cousins checks out some of the latest kit.

### Broadwater snow plough



Suffolk firm **Broadwater Machinery** used to make snow blowers in the mid 1980s but production stopped when local authorities (the major buyers of such equipment, even though the machines are usually kept and operated by farmers and contractors) ceased investing in them.

But after a run of bad winters, plus pressure on local authorities to start investing in snow-clearing equipment again, it has now started bringing in Swedish-made **Trejon** blowers.

High tooling costs and the up-and-down nature of demand for such equipment meant it didn't make sense to build them in-house, says the firm's James Stearn.

Moreover, the Trejon machines are rugged performers.

They come in front- and rear-mounted form and will throw the snow a distance of 5-20m from the machine. The mechanism is not too different from a forage harvester, with a cross auger feeding snow to a centre fan that blasts it out of the chute.

Working widths go from 1.9m (requiring about 70hp) to 2.45m (needing 110hp) and they can be powered by 540 or 1000rpm at the pto. The height of the machine's leading edge can be altered to suit the conditions. Costs start at about £6000.

### Frost-Free Nose Pump



Could harsher UK winters mean we need to take a leaf out of the book of colder countries? In Alberta, Canada, livestock farmers Jim and Jackie Anderson designed the **Frost-Free Nose Pump** back in 2002 to provide cattle with water even when temperatures go down to -40C.

The system uses the naturally higher temperature of water at depth to keep the drinker operating. Each time the cow pushes the nose lever, the piston pump dispenses 0.5 litres of fresh water.

There is some installation involved. You need to get a contractor to auger out a 20ft deep, 24in diameter culvert to get to the groundwater. Then a liner is inserted and a small trough placed above it. The design prevents backwash of contaminated water and the cows apparently take to the system easily. Each pump provides enough water for 100 head of cattle.

The equipment costs Can\$1295 (roughly £840), but once

it's installed there are no energy costs.

As yet, there's no official importer, but systems have been installed in northern Europe.

### Quad-X ATV snow ploughs



Northern Ireland-based manufacturer **Quad-X** says it now has snowploughs designed to fit most ATVs, plus wider models to suit utility vehicles. Its Supermount mounting system fixes to the underside of the quad and can be used with a number of different Quad-X attachments.

Quick-release clips allow the snow plough to be fitted or removed in under 10 seconds, while the blade can be angled left/right and can be lifted up high. It is also spring loaded to cushion collisions with obstacles and has adjustable skids and a replaceable two-sided blade to protect the plough.

Quad-X also sells 60-litre and 350-litre capacity salt spreaders. The 60-litre model can fit to the rear rack of an ATV or be mounted on a 50mm towball. It is powered by a 12V motor and

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property

stainless steel parts and a plastic hopper give protection from corrosion. Cost is £1139 for the 300kg salt spreader and £239 for the snowplough.

#### HeatMat PipeGuard



The PipeGuard from West Sussex firm [HeatMat](#) is a self-contained heater that can be easily fitted to the outside of any water pipe to make sure it doesn't freeze during cold periods.

The units come in ready-made lengths from 0.7m to 45m and are zip-tied in place before

being covered with the appropriate insulation. They include a frost protection thermostat to ensure they only heat up when required and are they are said to normally cost no more than 50p/m to run each year.

They are particularly suited to protecting water pipes in outbuildings, pipes supplying external taps or water troughs and drainage pipes, says the company. A PipeGuard unit for a 10m pipe would cost around £70 and they are available from most electrical wholesalers.

#### Broadwood ATV snow ploughs



[Broadwood International](#) is now selling the US CycleCountry range of snow ploughs for ATVs and utility vehicles. These are made from a durable steel construction with a 75mm reversible wear strip along the bottom of the plough. Three widths are offered – ATV users can choose between 1.37m or 1.52m, while users of utility vehicles such as Kubota RTVs and Kawasaki Mules get the 1.82m version.

The company says it also offers manual lifts, winches, brackets and extension arms to fit virtually any machine on the market.

#### Maxigrip Tyre Studs

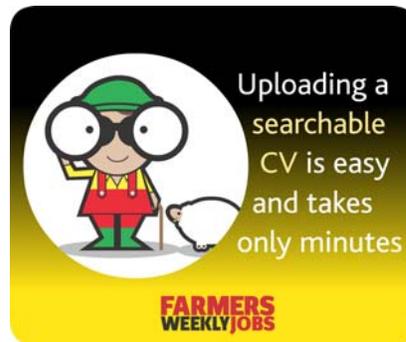


Paul Hodgkinson of [Conservation Crafts](#), who began importing Swedish-made [Maxigrip](#) tyre studs this time last year, reports strong demand from farmers and other rural dwellers looking to maintain grip in some of the iciest conditions for decades.

The studs screw into boots and tyres, leaving a tungsten carbide head sitting 3mm proud of the tyre. The result is much better grip in slippery conditions, he says, without doing any damage to road or yard surfaces.

Mr Hodgkinson says he has sold several thousand sets of studs for boots and several hundred for car, pick-up, and tractor tyres this winter.

Typical costs are £18 for a set of 25 HM11 studs for boots, £29 for a set of 50 for boots (50 gives more grip than 25), £114 for a set of 200 studs for a car or pick-up, £132 for a bigger pick-up or small tractor and £147 for a set for a big hp tractor.



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