

New innovation offers economical watering option for livestock

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By Lisa Wolna

It is said that necessity is the mother of invention - and saving money is almost as big a motivator.

When Jim and Jackie Anderson of Rimbey were looking for ways to develop a water source for their 170 head herd of cattle on two quarters of prime grazing land both factors played a significant role.

"We had four quarters of land and two quarters had no power but were good grazing land," Jim explained. "We were thinking we should do something about power."

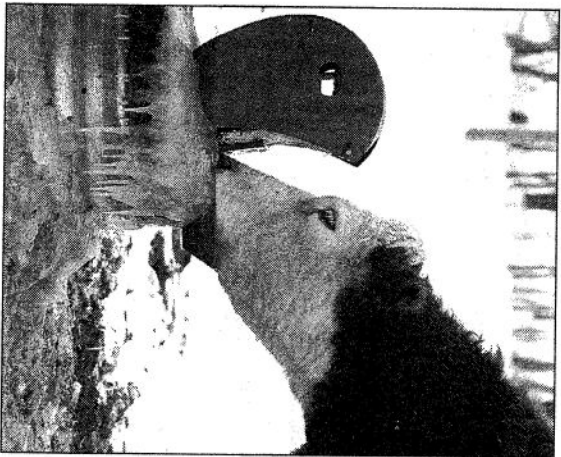
A little research uncovered it would cost the couple \$6,000 to bring power from the border of the quarter to its centre, another \$2,000 to drill a well and as much again to make it a functional watering site.

"We were going to salvage some (use) off that quarter but then give all the profits to Utilicorp — it didn't make sense," Jim said, adding ongoing power bills would add to the already expensive prospect.

Determined to find another option, Jim started building on an idea shared by a farming friend named Walter Diehl of Bowden, Alberta.

With Diehl's blessings, Jim and Jackie started doing research and developing the idea of a watering hole where cattle could pump their own water.

Basically, the pump draws water simi-



Cattle, by nature, are curious creatures and it doesn't take them long to figure out how to use the nosepumps.

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"We also wanted to improve the environmental aspect of it...so the water didn't wash back (into the well)," Jackie added.

There are two basic installation options with the frost free nosepumps. The first is by digging a well. "That's what we have done on our farm," Jim said.

He explained a 30-inch diameter hole was drilled until a water aquifer was hit. A 24-inch culvert was then installed

source.

"It's ideal for a remote location where there's no power and no heat," Jackie said.

"There is a lot of grass potential (in the countryside) that's not being utilized," Jim added. "Without water our forage is so controlled."

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properly, even the coldest weather shouldn't hinder its operation.

In four consecutive days of minus 40 degree weather the Andersons haven't had to do anything more than chip away at water droplets splashed by their eager cattle during a drink.

"In the three winters we've had it we've never had a day without water," Jackie said.

For more information call the Andersons at 1-866-843-6744, or check out their web page at www.frost-freenosepumps.com



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...the way old-fashioned hand pumps used to but instead of an up and down motion, water is drawn by the cattle pushing a lever with her nose horizontally.

"Jim took the original idea and did a lot of work adapting it," Jackie said.

In September of 1999 the Andersons installed their first frost free nosepump on one of their vacant quarter sections. The next year they installed two more nosepumps in two different locations, and last year they added a fourth.

"That greatly increased our grazing flexibility and our grazing options," Jim said.

It cost the Andersons between \$2,000 and \$3,500 to install each of their nosepumps. The cost of the package sold by the Andersons is \$975 plus GST. The balance of the costs include the culvert, trenching and underground pipe.

"And once that's done there's no other bills," Jim said. "With power...we would have had monthly bills — and power poles across the fields."

The strongest attraction for the frost free nosepumps is that they give farmers and ranchers a low cost, low maintenance option for a year round water

and this basically became a reservoir for the water.

Jim suggests fitting styrofoam insulation inside the top four to eight feet of culvert and then installing the nosepump.

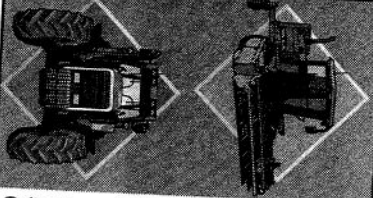
Another method of installation uses an existing dugout as its water source.

This type of nosepump was installed for a farmer west of Bentley who watered his livestock from a dugout, Jim explained.

"This makes the dugout a year-round watering site," he said.

"Now they can winter feed cattle in places where they have a dugout...it is especially important when snowfall is low...it's

also useful in keeping cattle out of the dugout, (that way) the water is always fresh, clean water." I installed



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