



Don Viste uses nose pumps to draw water out of nearby ponds. "Cattle seem to do better on them because the water is clean and fresh," he says.

Rancher Likes His "Best Buy" Nose Pumps

"We bought our first nose pump after we lost 29 head of cattle that fell through the ice on a dugout pond going for water," says Don Viste, a rancher 120 miles north of Calgary, Alberta.

Nose pumps have a small water basin with a lever connected to a pumping cylinder. When a cow wants to drink, it pushes the lever with its nose, drawing water out of a nearby pond or reservoir. When the lever is released, there's no water left in the pipe or basin to freeze.

"It keeps dugouts cleaner because cows aren't wading into them. Cattle seem to do better on them because the water is clean and fresh. We have 10 dugouts set up for nose pumps but we only need 3 working at a time so we move them around when

we move the cows," says Viste.

When weather gets down to 30 to 40 below, Viste checks the pumps once a day because the levers can freeze. "I take a hammer and knock the ice off them. I probably should just set up a windbreak around them. But it's not a big deal because one tap frees them up. It only happens in extreme cold."

Viste notes that it can take a little while for cows to get the hang of the levers. Calves learn quickly by copying their mothers. There is some investment to setting them up (\$350 to \$400 apiece; www.riferam.com; ph 570 740-1100) but he says it's a lot better than chopping through the ice on a pond every day. He also uses them during the summer.



Editor's Note: An Alberta rancher sent in a "best buy" report in the last issue about his Frostfree Nosepump waterers. The photo showed the pumps, which are manufactured in Rimby, Alberta. Unfortunately, the contact and pricing information in the article was for Rife Ram pumps, which are also nose-pumped waterers but which are not designed for winter use.

Here's the correct followup information: Frostfree Nosepumps, Box 675, Rimby, AB T0C 2J0 Canada (ph 866-843-6744; www.frostfreenosepumps.com).