

## Sustainability Notebook

With Blayne Petrowicz



# Frostfree Nosepumps

There are a number of local businesses that are promoting sustainable practices and if you're one of them we would love to hear from you. Below is a featured article from Mr. Jim Anderson co-owner with his wife Jackie of Frostfree Nosepumps. He tells us how his business is taking care of not only his cattle but the environment as a whole:



My wife, Jackie & I are 2nd generation ranchers/farmers, living in the Blindman valley, southeast of Rimbey. The Blindman river splits our farm in half, and, over the years, we have become concerned about the influence of our management on the quality of the water. In early years, our cattle had free access to the river creating erosion and weed issues. During the late 80's we began making efforts to improve the situation.



At first we redesigned corrals, creating some grassy filter areas to improve drainage of effluent. Then we began swath grazing which enabled us to keep the cattle away from the creeks and river. After this we fenced the farm with electric fencing and planted over 6000 trees and shrubs along the length of the river with the help of family and friends. This work was graciously sponsorship by the Woodlot Association of Alberta and has become a demonstration riparian development project. We needed to be able to water the cattle, so we turned to diaphragm nose pumps which enabled us to use the river water without the cattle entering the river in our rotational grazing cells. But their limitation became clear in the fall with freezing night time temperatures.

Finally we felt it was time to find an alternative. With the idea of a friend, my own ideas, and the assistance of the Alberta Research Council, the Frostfree Nosepump was born...a nose pump that could withstand even the freezing temperatures our cold winters throw at us. This pump allowed us to graze into the winter, swath graze, and feed cattle out in the field, where they could spread their own manure. This pump worked so well that we added 2 more the following year, and now have 7 available around our ranch for summer and/or winter use. The pump uses the heat from the ground and the power from the livestock, so requires absolutely no heat or electricity to operate year-round. Once the unit is installed, we water livestock for free. It is a very reliable watering device because it is so simple.

Using the Frostfree Nosepumps on our own ranch has improved our management at minimal cost. In fact, we can graze remote locations and get cattle away from confined locations, which reduce disease in the calves. We have been able to divide our cattle into smaller groups for breeding or body condition purposes and we can isolate bulls from the herd without them having to be in a "bull pen".

We have seen numerous benefits from the Frostfree Nosepump and, as such, we wanted to pass these benefits on to our neighbours, our friends, and the greater community. Over the past 10 years, Jackie and I have developed the Frostfree Nosepump business which we now operate right on our ranch. We are pleased to tell you that there are now 800 producers in North America that are sharing in the benefits we have seen from the use of this pump with cattle, bison and horses.



**To contact either Jackie or myself, please check us out at <http://www.frostfreenosepumps.com/> or call toll free at 866-843-6744**