Bryan Nowak built his portable “kick panel” after he got kicked while working on a cow with an AI breeder. It’s sized to surround 5 cows secured in headlocks.

**Portable “Kick Panel” Makes Cattle Chores Easier**

Working with beef cattle is easier, faster, and safer since Bryan Nowak built a portable kick panel. It’s greatly appreciated by his AI breeder and veterinarian, who say they wish it had been available sooner.

Bryan built the kick panel after he got kicked while working on a cow with a breeder. Though cattle are secured in headlocks they still had room to move side to side and back. Bryan solved that by building a three-sided pen on wheels custom sized to surround five cows secured in headlocks.

He welded up a solid frame with square tubing from an old gate and mounted it on 4-in. swivel casters. He covered the sides with wire panels used for calf hutchies. Bryan added extensions on the sides to fit over the curb manger and sized it to line up with each end of the 5-stall headlock to securely chain the pen to the stall.

When it’s time to vaccinate, breed or pregnancy check cows, the Nowaks place treats in the feeder in front of the headlocks and lock in five cows at a time. They roll the kick pen behind the cows and secure it with the chains. Bryan built the pen 49 in. tall so cows aren’t tempted to try to jump over it. But for easier access to breed and check the cows, he added a hinged gate on the top of the back that can be lowered.

“Even if we are only working on two cows we put in five cows. The pen keeps them from moving side to side,” Rachel explains. “I do the vaccinating so I appreciate it. I can’t get kicked.

It also works to confine calves as well as the two cows in the Nowaks’ herd that refuse to go in the headlocks. When working with bulls, Rachel got inside the pen and used it as protection as she helped move the bulls in place.

“The breeder said he likes it because there is no chance of getting kicked. And our place is his favorite because it’s the fastest,” Rachel says. “When we call someone to do something for us, we want everything as easy as possible for them.”

For people interested in making their own pens, she had two suggestions. Use heavy-duty parts to build it solid, and clean the area where it will be used so manure and mud don’t get caught up around the casters.

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**Garden Tractor’s Tires Filled With Concrete**

If you’ve got a garden tractor sitting with an unfixable flat tire, you might be able to save the cost of a new tire by filling the old one with concrete.

That’s what Jeff Hoard’s stepdad, Dick Lane, did to the rear tires on his Sears Craftsman garden tractor.

“The tractor had sat idle for a couple of years,” and Dick said I could have it,” says Jeff. “Both front tires were flat, and as I was winching the mower onto the trailer to bring it home I noticed the rear tires were filled with concrete.

“The next morning I pumped up the front tires and got the tractor running. The whole time I was working on it I was thinking I’d have to change the rear tires, but after driving the tractor for a while I decided it wasn’t necessary. One of the rear tires was slightly out of round, but I really only noticed it while driving in high gear. At mowing speed, the tractor drove fairly smooth.

“I talked to Dick afterward, and he told me one of the rear tires had been damaged too badly to be fixed by a patch or plug. It would have cost about $100 to replace each tire, so he decided to fill them both with concrete.”

To make the repair, Lane left the tire and wheel assemblies on the tractor. He drilled a hole big enough to insert a sabre saw and cut a 2-in. dia. hole into each tire. Then he jacked up the rear end of the tractor and rotated both tires so the hoses were on top, and inserted a make-shift funnel.

He lowered the tractor until the tires just barely touched the ground (to avoid flat spots). Then he blocked the tractor so it wouldn’t move and mixed up some wet, ready mix concrete and funneled it into each hole until the tire was filled.

“At mowing speed, the tractor drives fairly smooth,” says Jeff Hoard.

He notes that you don’t want to try this idea on a car or truck.

Hoard shares his “creative scrounging” ideas and projects on his Hillbilly Heaven CD, available at his website.

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