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what I was saying earlier about the many alternative materials on the market. However, we have only discussed types of fencing fabrics. We still have to look at the many types of posts, gates, insulators, tighteners, and chargers, as well as a multitude of other products.

Let's talk posts. The most common type, of course, is wooden. Most commercially purchased pressure-treated posts are generally southern yellow pine because they are relatively straight and easier to nail or staple into than denser woods. The size of posts depends on the application of that post — whether it is a corner, a line, or a brace post and the number of types

of wires that are to be installed on them. There are also many different types of plastic posts to choose from and these vary by manufacturer. There are many different sizes just as there are with wooden posts, and you need to buy the ones that will meet your needs.

There are many temporary, plastic step-in posts for portable fencing systems. There are also fiberglass posts of all different sizes and you need to buy the right size for your intended use and needs. A word of caution when using fiberglass posts. Be certain to wear good leather gloves. With age these posts do get glass splinters on them which can penetrate your hands. Removal of these splinters is difficult because

they are hard to see and they can cause you a great deal of discomfort. The posts, however, are good for many fencing installations.

Well, we have only talked about two of the many components that go into a fencing system. We need to discuss the one component that makes this new technology work and that is the charger. Today's low impedance, high output chargers are designed to provide effective animal control even over long distances. It is a fact that we are electrifying a fence that does not have great physical strength. The electric charge does the controlling as opposed to the physical fence itself.

There are many different chargers on the market. There are solar-powered charges that run off of 6 or 12 volts and can provide electric charges where AC current is not available. There are 120 and 240 volt models available. Which model you select depends on how much fence you need to charge. If you have a mile of fence sur-

rounding your farm and you have a 4-strand wire system, you will be charging 4 miles of fence. Therefore, you need to consider the total length of wire you will be charging and buy a properly sized charger to meet your needs. Chargers are rated in joules of power, but each company has their own way of determining that power rating. This makes it hard to compare chargers. You need to talk to a company representative to determine what size charger will meet your needs. Do not buy a smaller charger than you need. In fact, you need to consider buying a more powerful unit because, in all probability, you will increase the demand on a charger over time as you install more fence.

As you can see, there are a multitude of decisions to be made when purchasing fencing system components. You may have a local supplier that has a limited inventory and then you have fewer choices to make. However, there are several large mail order companies that give

you a great number of choices. Study those choices and make good decisions to meet your needs. If you would like information on any aspect of fencing, or if I can help you get "charged up" about grazing, please contact me. Give me a call at (717) 237-2221, e-mail me at duane.pysher@pa.usda.gov, or write to me at NRCS, One Credit Union Place, Suite 340, Harrisburg, PA, 17110-2993.

Until next time, happy grazing and hope to see you at Ag Progress Days, August 20 to 22.



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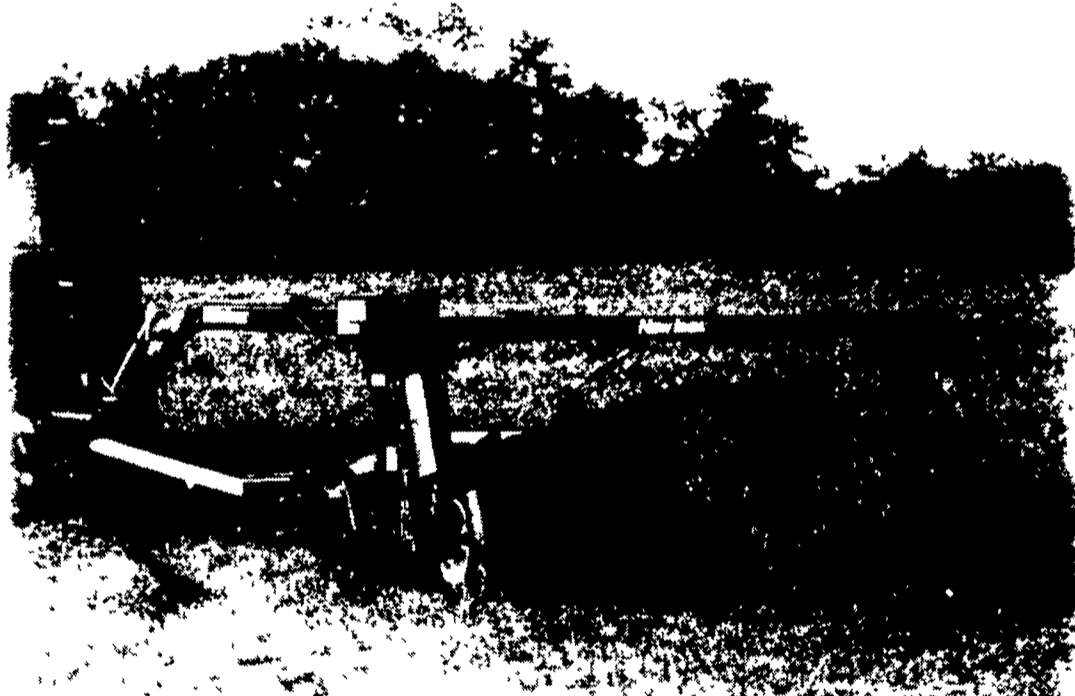
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