



NECESSITY IS THE MOTHER OF INVENTION

Invention is right at home in the Ribble Valley with two entrepreneurs whose simple idea has revolutionised the fencing world, writes *Crawford Mack*

In anybody's book 61-year-old John Brewer of Moorgate Farm in Dinckley, is a busy man. But nowadays he's taking it easier and just works six-and-a-half days a week!

But his hard work has paid off in many ways over the years. Born and bred on the farm, John at the tender age of 17 had real commercial nous. Starting with a hedge trimmer he went out and got contracting business. Now F. Brewer and Sons, agricultural and farm contractors, runs four diggers, seven round balers and no less than 19 John Deere tractor units.

Not only was he building a significant business but he was also building a reputation as someone who had great ideas on adapting machinery to best-fit design for the task in hand. So much so, that the international giant of

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John Deere started to consult him on new product development and for his straight talking no-nonsense approach.

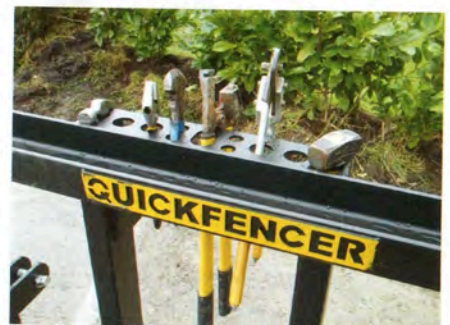
Then one Saturday in 2003 he had a lot of fencing to do so necessity being the mother of invention, he challenged himself and his friend and colleague 51-year-old Steve Rawcliffe, another intuitive engineer, to find an idea to mechanise the job. Steve is the man who can turn the spark of an idea into a well engineered and practical finished product and he modified John's original

design which then started to perform beyond their expectations.

In essence it's a device that when attached to a tractor, digger, or similar enables any type of fencing – stock fencing, ranch fencing, cattle fencing, sheep fencing, horse fencing and deer fencing – to be erected faster, stronger and cheaper than traditional methods.

They found they had created what I would call a “Why didn't I think of that?” farming solution. And they knew it.

A rush to the patent office followed to get a patent pending only two days before the biggest agricultural show in the UK –



LAMMA (the Lincolnshire Agricultural Machinery Manufacturers).

They stole the show winning the farm inventions competition, sold their prototype there and then, and have been stealing shows ever since. That was January 2004 and the rest as they say is history. Quickfencer was born and it sold 100 machines in its first year.

John and Steve continued to develop more appliances starting with two larger versions and established a good reputation with all the wire manufacturers. Their challenge was however, to push them to produce larger rolls of netting as there was nothing larger than 100m. Eventually they sourced 330m rolls from Portugal which in turn then stimulated the UK wire companies to up their game. Now they all manufacture 500m rolls of netting to John and Steve's specification and,



testimony to their achievement, is the fact that all 500m rolls now come branded as 'Quickfencer approved'.

And product development has continued apace too for the duo.

There's now a re-rolling attachment which enables netting to be rolled up as tight as new, a post driver attachment, standard brackets for attaching to various tractors, a barbed wire dispenser to pay out six strands simultaneously, sleeves for easier handling of 500m rolls and a 'twister' device that joins wire effortlessly and optimises strength.

Fast forward to 2010/11 and their latest development is a plain wire dispenser that can handle up to six plain wires simultaneously and with a cheeky grin, John indicated that there was something else in the development that he was keeping mum about.

Hmmm. That's another visit to the patent office I suspect.

Nowadays, Quickfencer not only has a fabulous reputation in the UK, but a growing presence abroad, which is where John, Steve and Brian Faud (a friend who helps with marketing) seem to be heading. Already

the team has been on a recce to Canada and Australia – just imagine the potential of this technology in the expansive Prairies for instance.

And what's also so impressive about what this little gem of a business has achieved, is that it is a just a part time affair. John's day job is his contracting business and Steve's is as an engineer. Quickfencer fits in at the beginning and end of the working day when most of us are still in bed or have put our feet up for the evening.

And when they do rest, they can rest easy



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in the knowledge of the impact their inventions have had as John noted: "In our six years of existence we feel that we have taken the agricultural fencing industry forward into the 21st century, eliminating many of the labour intensive jobs and helping people to work easier, faster and safer and in doing so, saving them money." ■

If you'd like to know anything more speak to John Brewer on 07966 285240, or see: www.quickfencer.com



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THE QUICKFENCER ROLL OF HONOUR

- 2004 LAMMA Farm Innovations Competition
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- 2005 LAMMA Merit Award (Twister)
- 2006 Royal Highland Show Silver Award
- 2006 Doctor Alban Davies Trophy Silver Award
- 2009 LAMMA Merit Award
- 2009 Royal Show Silver Award
- 2009 Royal Highland Show Silver Award
- 2009 Doctor Alban Davies Trophy Silver Award
- 2010 Royal Highland Technical Innovation Gold Award
- 2010 North West Business Award for Innovation