

On Farm Innovations

This section of Northern Horizons profiles some ingenious innovations that are invented by local farmers. In this edition, we look at an easy way to raise an electric fence to allow a herd access to paddocks. We also revisit some pasture release timers that were used at Wollongbar Agricultural Institute in the early 2000's.

The photos to the right show an easy lift electric fence system from northern NSW. As seen, the system uses poly pipe, star pickets and electric fence pin locks.

The system works by sliding the poly pipe up to the desired height, with the electric fence fitted in a groove on the top, and then inserting an electric fence pin lock into the star picket hole to hold the poly pipe in place. When the fence needs to be lowered, the pin lock is removed. This is a quick and efficient way to allow herd access to pasture strips while maintaining a laneway up the length of the paddock.

While on the topic of saving time with electric fences, you may also like to visit <https://www.novel.co.nz>. This NZ company has marketed automatic gate openers on timers for several years. Some of their original gate release timers were used in grazing experiments in the early 2000's at Wollongbar. These can also be set up to shut gates as well, provided

there is some tension on the gate to close it. More recently, Novel Ways have introduced a gate release mechanism that works on SMS text messages and units that can be remotely released up to five km away by using a remote control.

Solar powered systems are also available. The uses of these release systems are many. Some include the timed dropping of electric gates to allow cows access to fresh pasture, closing gates behind herds and opening bar gates to allow access to new paddocks. Units start at around \$520 landed in Australia. ■■

