



WOOL
HARVESTING
NOTE

No: 1.08
DECEMBER 1981

PORTABLE SHEEP YARDS

The distinguishing characteristic of portable yards is that they can be taken to the sheep. They usually consist of a number of rigid panels, together with a drafting and/or working race, which pack together to form a transportable unit. They may be carried on a platform on the rear of a tractor, or mounted on a trailer for towing behind a vehicle.

A variety of activities can be carried out, and portable yards can accommodate a range of mob sizes. The yards can also be laid out in a configuration which best suits the particular activity, and can be set up in conjunction with existing fences in order to increase their versatility or capacity.

Yards of this type are produced commercially, and some woolgrowers have fabricated their own units. Several yards are reviewed in this Wool Harvesting Note.

POINTS TO CONSIDER

When considering the purchase of portable yards the following points should be kept in mind.

- Portable yards are a supplement to an efficient set of main yards, not a substitute for them.
- The time to travel, unload and set up, together with the time to dismantle, load and return, should be compared with the time required to move sheep to the main yards.
- The cost of purchasing and maintaining portable yards should be compared with the cost of providing a permanent set of secondary yards.
- The points above, together with an evaluation of what sheep husbandry activities can and should be performed using portable yards, will assist in assessing the real need for such yards. The question of sanitation is relevant in this analysis.
- Portable yards are to some extent a compromise between what is needed to confine and control sheep and what is easy to handle and transport. Some assessment of how readily sheep can be worked in the portable yards should be made.
- The yards must be able to handle the mob sizes normally encountered on the property when carrying out the selected activities.
- It is important to inspect the portable yards and assess the likely need for maintenance to keep them in good working order, their ability to accommodate variations in ground surface, their stability, and the possibility of integrating other units into the system such as a portable spray dip, loading ramp, sheep handler, additional panels or gates, and so on.

ADVANTAGES

The yards can be taken to the sheep, giving increased versatility.

In the right circumstances, time is saved in carrying out selected sheep handling activities.

There can be better control of disease or infection.

Stress on animals (such as ewes and young lambs) can be reduced.

The yards can be arranged to suit the job being undertaken.

They are useful on properties consisting of several blocks which may be separated from one another.

DISADVANTAGES

The yards are a compromise between portability and serviceability and therefore may not withstand rough treatment, or function as effectively as permanent yards.

Time is required to unload and set up, as well as dismantle and load after the work has been completed.

Additional maintenance is needed to keep yards in good condition, especially the connections between panels.

Towing to some areas of a property may not be possible in some circumstances (such as after an abnormally wet period) resulting in work not being carried out at the most appropriate time.

Mobs of sheep pushing on the yard panels may shift their position and alter the shape of the layout.

REVIEW OF EXISTING UNITS

Information is given on several sets of portable yards produced commercially, and some examples are provided of units made on the farm for use with a tractor.

While care has been taken to see that the information is correct at the time of publication, the data is subject to alteration without notice. Suggested prices are generally ex-factory prices, and other charges may need to be added.

NAME

Cyclone Portable Sheep Yards

CONSTRUCTION

Panels measuring 2400 mm × 900 mm consist of a galvanised pipe frame and rails with a vertical dropper in the centre of each panel. The panels are carried on a special trailer unit which can be lowered to ground level to act as a drafting race.

Spreader bars give stability to the panels when they are used as a drenching race.

FEATURES

The standard unit can be supplied with 16 or 22 panels. Mass of the unit with 16 panels is 675 kg, and with 22 panels, 835 kg. Additional panels can be supplied if required. The drafting race allows 3-way drafting. The length of the trailer unit is 3160 mm, and up to 39 panels can be accommodated. The yards can also be supplied without the trailer for woolgrowers who may prefer such a unit.

SUGGESTED PRICE

16 panel unit with trailer	\$1565
22 panel unit with trailer	\$1785
Additional panels	\$ 44 each

MANUFACTURER

Boral Cyclone Ltd.

DISTRIBUTORS

1. Boral Cyclone Ltd. branch offices as follows:
 - Melbourne: 202 Gipps Street, Abbotsford, Vic. 3067.
Phone: (03) 419 2211.
 - Sydney: Ferndell Street, South Granville, N.S.W. 2142.
Phone: (02) 644 4411.
 - Newcastle: 39 Hubbard Street, Islington, N.S.W. 2296.
Phone: (049) 61 1151.
 - Canberra: 6 Whyalla Street, Fyshwick, A.C.T. 2609.
Phone: (062) 80 5044.
 - Adelaide: 589 Torrens Road, Woodville, S.A. 5011.
Phone: (08) 45 0261.
 - Perth: 310 Selby Street, Osborne Park, W.A. 6017.
Phone: (09) 446 4277.
 - Launceston: Fawkner Avenue, Kings Meadows, Tas. 7250.
Phone: (003) 44 2481.
 - Brisbane: 97 Robinson Road, Geebung, Q'ld. 4034.
Phone: (07) 265 3099.
 - Toowoomba: 378 South Street, Toowoomba, Q'ld. 4350.
Phone: (076) 35 5333.
2. Distributors of Boral Cyclone products in country areas.

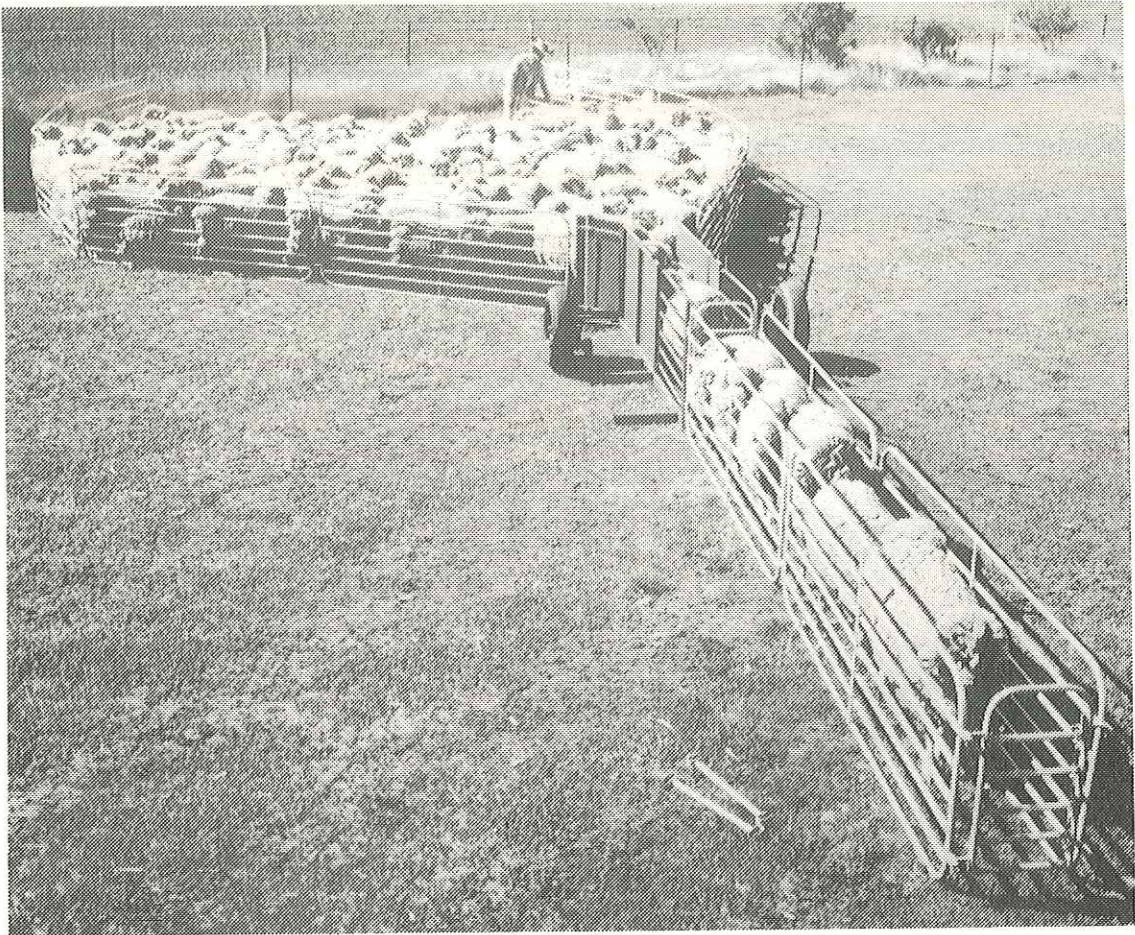


Photo 1. Cyclone portable sheep yards.

NAME

The "Jumbuck" Aluminium Portable Yards

CONSTRUCTION

These yards are made from high tensile aluminium with 30 panels each 2740 mm long mounted on castors.

The panels are carried on a special lightweight trailer fitted with a hand winch (to assist loading of the panels) and a jockey wheel.

FEATURES

The panels form a holding area, lamb marking pen, forcing pen and 8.25 m working race. The working capacity is 600 sheep.

Being made from high tensile aluminium, the panels are strong, rust free and easy to handle.

SUGGESTED PRICE

\$4,000

MANUFACTURER

Wilson Noble Pty. Ltd.,
88 Bromfield Street, Colac, Vic. 3250.
Phone: (052) 31 5144.

DISTRIBUTORS

Sewell Bros. Rural Sales Pty. Ltd.,
Hamilton Highway, Inverleigh, Vic. 3321.
Phone: (052) 65 1404.

Photo 1. The "Jumbuck" yards and towing trailer.

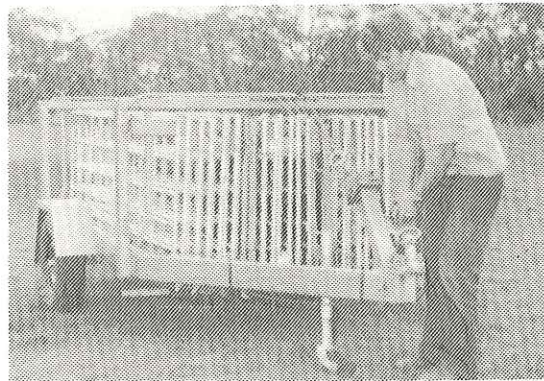


Photo 2. Using the "Jumbuck" yards.

NAME

McDonald Transportable Sheep Yards

CONSTRUCTION

The panels are fabricated from square steel tubing and are fitted with castors. They are carried on a trailer unit which, when lowered to ground level, forms a double working race.

FEATURES

There are two sets of yards available.

- (a) 52 panels each 2400 mm long, together with a trailer mounted double working race 7.6 m in length, with a working capacity of 600 sheep.
- (b) 32 panels each 2400 mm long, together with a simpler trailer unit which serves as a double working race, with a correspondingly reduced working capacity.

The yards can be extended with additional panels and models can be interchanged.

SUGGESTED PRICE

52 panel model	\$5,200
32 panel model	\$3,500

MANUFACTURER

McDougall Weldments,
Astral Street, Cuballing, W.A. 6311.
Phone: (098) 83 6020.

DISTRIBUTORS

1. The manufacturers
2. Vivco Rural Supplies Pty. Ltd.,
40 Smith Street, Naracoorte, S.A. 5271.
Phone: (087) 62 2655.
3. Rural and Agricultural Marketing,
P.O. Box W341, West Tamworth, N.S.W. 2340.
Phone: (067) 67 7228.
4. Sewell Bros. Rural Sales Pty. Ltd.,
Hamilton Highway, Inverleigh, Vic. 3321.
Phone: (052) 65 1404.
5. Hopkins Pty. Ltd.,
315 Main Road, Glenorchy, Tas. 7010.
Phone: (002) 72 6901.



Photo 1. McDonald portable yards.



Photo 2. McDonald yards laid out ready for use.

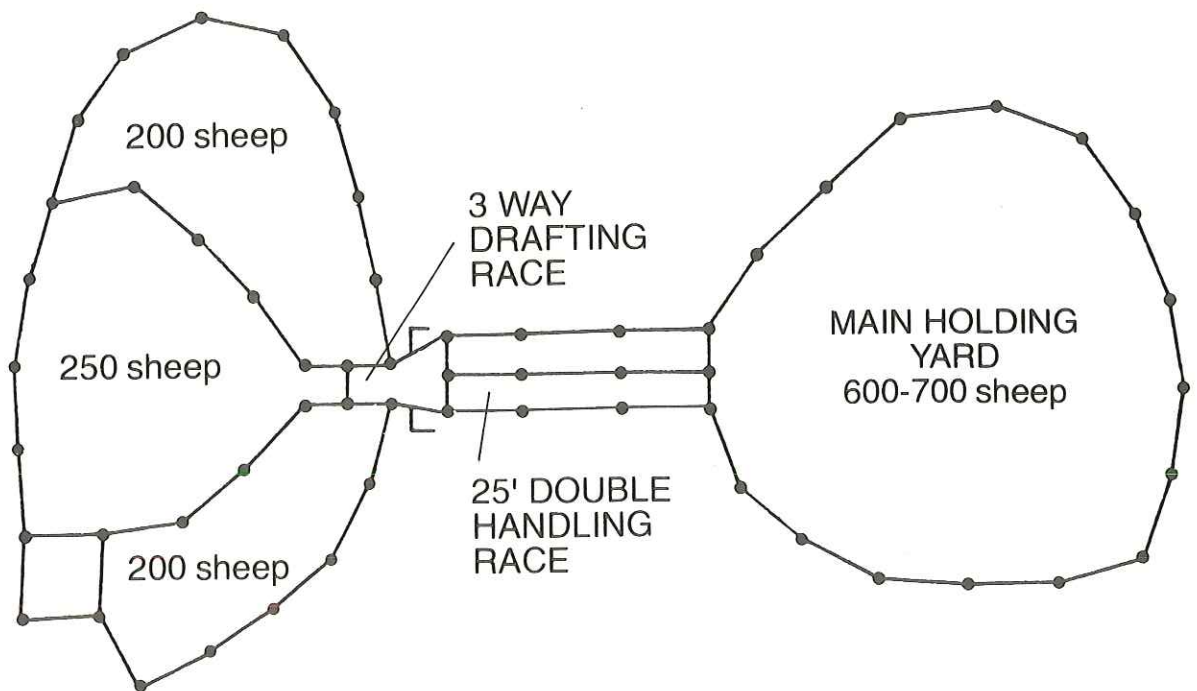


Diagram 1. Typical layout for drafting.

NAME

McKenzie Portable Sheep Yards

CONSTRUCTION

Panels are made from pipe and now have horizontal pipe rails, although earlier units used mesh infills.

The panels are carried on a trailer unit which can be lowered to ground level to serve as a drafting race.

FEATURES

The number of panels supplied can vary from 12 to 30, this being the maximum number which can be carried on the trailer. Each panel is 3050 mm long. The race is 3660 mm long and can be supplied with 2-way or 3-way draft.

It is intended to use the yards in conjunction with existing fences.

Working capacity ranges from 250 to 500 sheep.

SUGGESTED PRICE

12 panel set with 2-way draft	\$1,490
30 panel set with 3-way draft	\$2,310

MANUFACTURER

L. G. & D. M. McKenzie,
P.O. Box 27, Rainbow, Vic. 3424.
Phone: Rainbow 254.

DISTRIBUTORS

Dennys Strachan Mercantile Ltd.,
P.O. Box 256C, Melbourne, Vic. 3001.
Phone: (03) 62 0741.

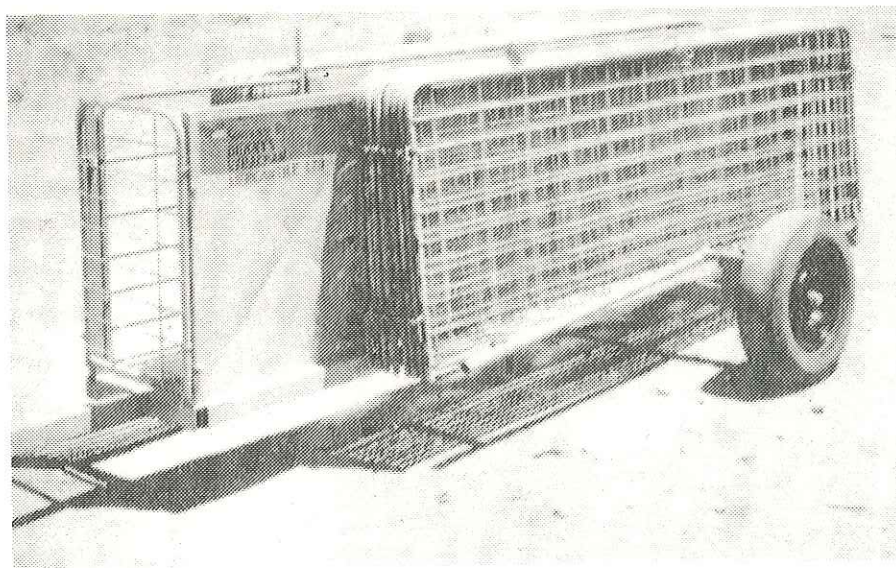


Photo 1. McKenzie portable sheep yards.

NAME

McShane-Weldmesh Portable Sheepyards

CONSTRUCTION

The panels are made from galvanised pipe covered with welded mesh. The panels, together with gates and various standard accessories, are carried on a special trailer which does not itself form part of the yards layout.

Total weight of the trailer fully loaded is approximately 1400 kg.

FEATURES

These comprehensive and versatile yards consist of 52 panels each 1860 mm long, together with various special gates, panels, adapters and spacers.

The panels feed off the trailer as it is towed forward. The trailer is repositioned to run beside the towing vehicle in order to collect the panels during reloading. Special chain-driven rollers (at what is normally the rear of the trailer) feed the panels into position on the trailer during this process.

Up to 2000 sheep can be held in the yards, and different layouts can be used for lamb marking, drenching and drafting.

SUGGESTED PRICE

Complete yards with trailer \$4,100

MANUFACTURER

A.R.C. Engineering Pty. Ltd.,
528 Ballarat Road, Sunshine, Vic. 3020.
Phone: (03) 311 5122.

DISTRIBUTORS

1. The manufacturer as above, or other State branches as follows:
19 George Street, Homebush, N.S.W. 2140.
Phone: (02) 736 2099.
Ellison Road, Geebung, Q'ld. 4034.
Phone: (07) 265 2222.
Cnr. Welshpool and Tomlinson Roads, Welshpool, W.A. 6106.
Phone: (09) 362 2244
Churchill Road, Dry Creek, S.A. 5094.
Phone: (08) 260 1544.
Remount Road, Mowbray Heights, Launceston, Tas. 7250.
Phone: (003) 26 1344
2. The principal stock agents in all States.

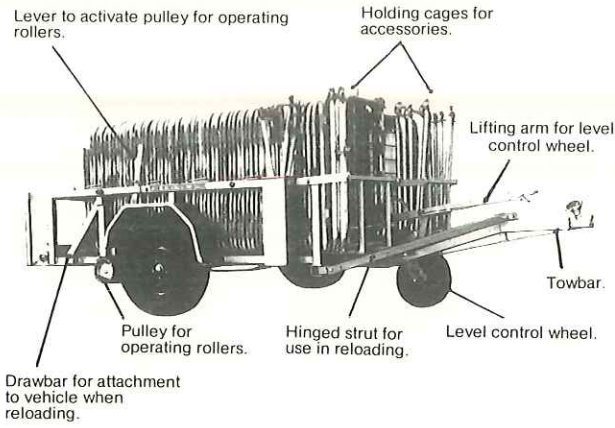


Photo 1. The McShane-Weldmesh portable yards.

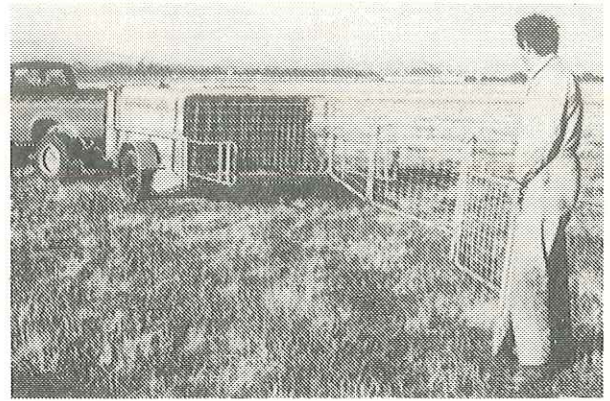


Photo 2. Laying out the panels.



Photo 3. Using the yards.

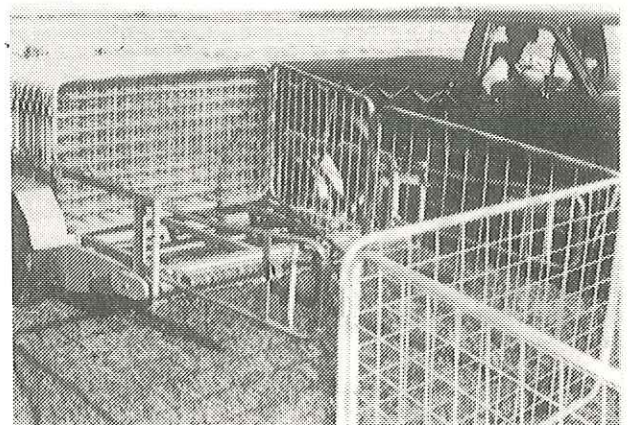
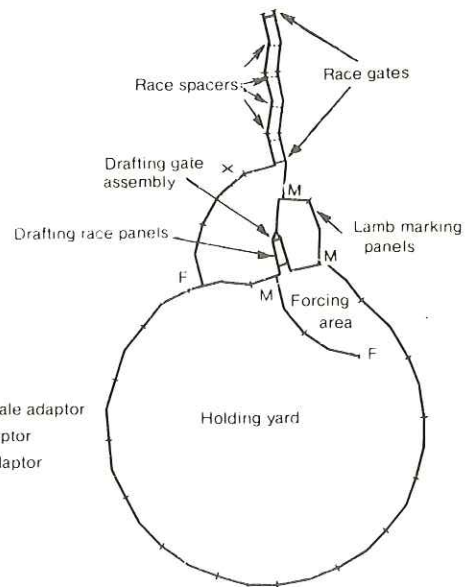
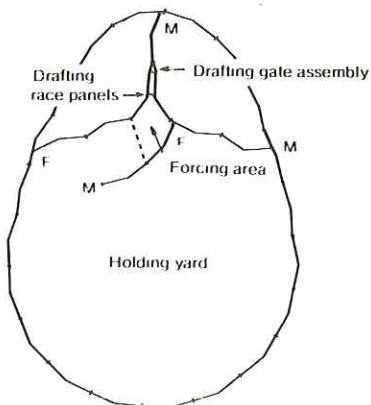


Photo 4. Reloading panels.



X denotes double male adaptor
M denotes male adaptor
F denotes female adaptor

Diagram 1. Typical layouts for drafting and for lamb marking.

NAME

“Portayard” Towable Sheep Yard

CONSTRUCTION

The panels are formed from steel pipe and covered with galvanised welded mesh. They are carried on a trailer unit from which the wheels can be removed to allow the trailer to be lowered to ground level to act as a drafting race.

FEATURES

There are 16 panels each 1820 mm long which can be used to form a forcing pen and holding pen for use with the drafting race. Using the yards in association with an existing fence increases their versatility and working capacity.

SUGGESTED PRICE

\$1,575

MANUFACTURER

A.R.C. Engineering Pty. Ltd.,
528 Ballarat Road, Sunshine, Vic. 3020.
Phone: (03) 311 5122.

DISTRIBUTORS

1. The manufacturer as above, or other State branches as follows:
 - 19 George Street, Homebush, N.S.W. 2140.
Phone: (02) 736 2099
 - Ellison Road, Geebung, Q'ld. 4034.
Phone: (07) 265 2222.
 - Cnr. Welshpool and Tomlinson Roads, Welshpool, W.A. 6106.
Phone: (09) 362 2244
 - Churchill Road, Dry Creek, S.A. 5094.
Phone: (08) 260 1544.
 - Remount Road, Mowbray Heights, Launceston, Tas. 7250.
Phone: (003) 26 1344
2. The principal stock agents in all States.

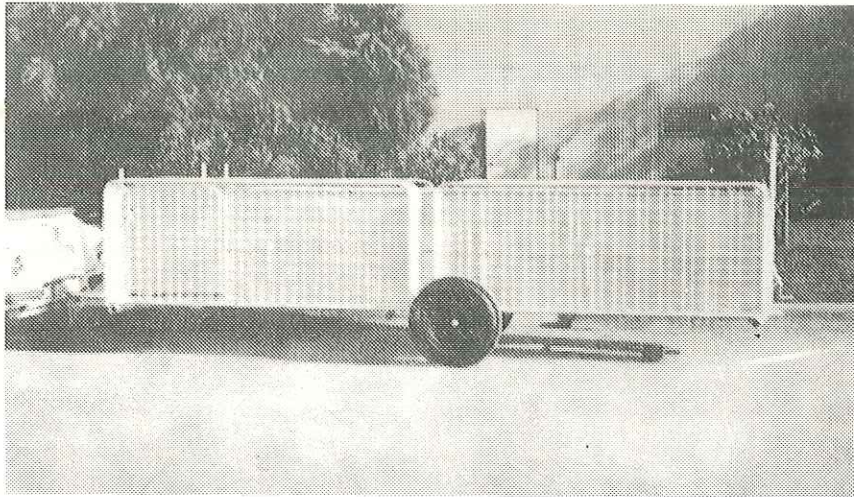


Photo 1. "Portayard" sheep yards ready for towing to the work site.

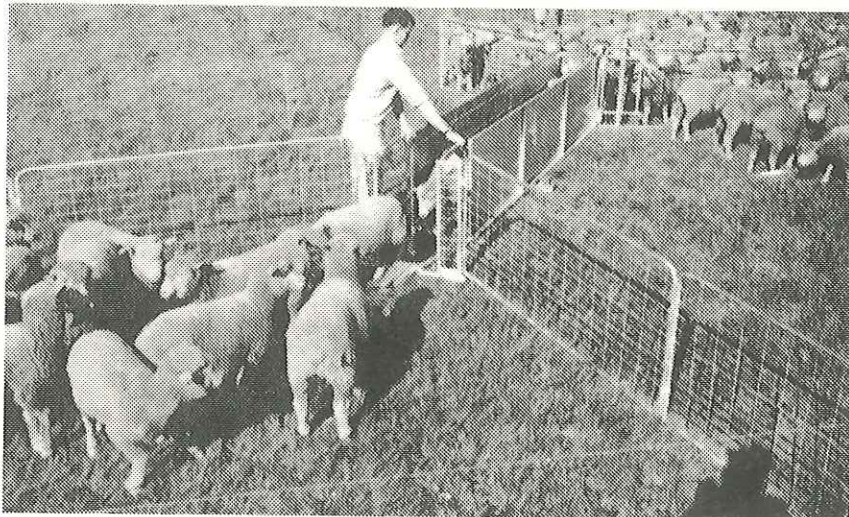


Photo 2. Using the "Portayard" unit.

NAME

Prattley Mobile Sheep Yards

CONSTRUCTION

These New Zealand yards consist of 12 panels 1520 mm long, one panel 3050 mm long, one 685 mm gate, and a drafting race which is 3050 mm in length.

The steel panels are covered with chain wire mesh. However, recent models use a welded steel mesh, the panels being galvanised following fabrication.

FEATURES

The panels form a holding pen, drafting race and lamb marking pen, and it is intended that the yards be set up beside an existing fence in order to provide adequate holding capacity.

The yards can be trailer mounted (with the trailer unit forming the drafting race) or supplied in a three point linkage form for use with a tractor.

A 5.2 m drenching race is available for use with the yards as an accessory.

The standard set of yards when used in conjunction with existing fences has a working capacity of 100 to 200 sheep.

SUGGESTED PRICE

Standard yards	\$1,770 (Aust.)
Drafting race	\$295 (Aust.)

MANUFACTURER

Prattley Engineering,
P.O. Box 109, Temuka, N.Z.
Phone: 1530M.

DISTRIBUTORS

Enquiries should be made direct to the manufacturer.

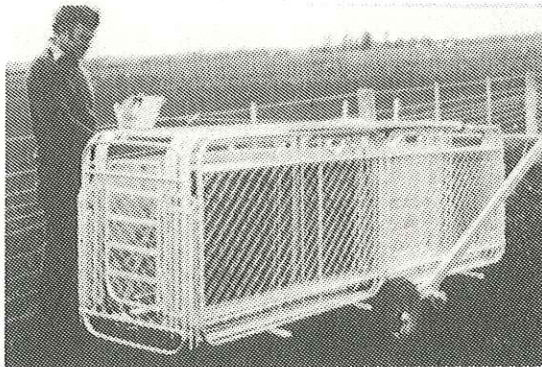


Photo 1. Prattley yards and trailer.

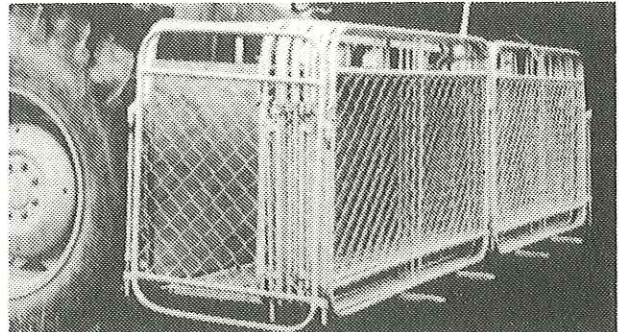
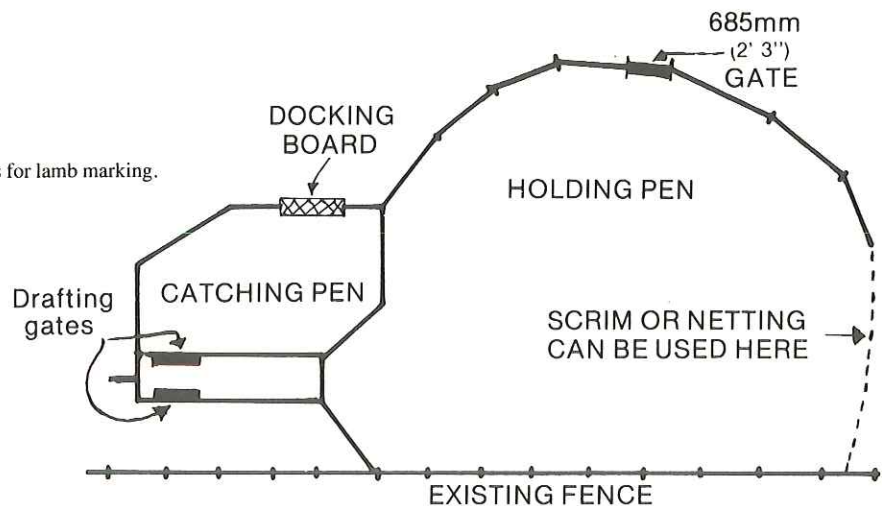


Photo 2. Tractor mounted version.

Diagram 1. Typical layout of yards for lamb marking.



NAME

Steer Portable Sheep Yards

CONSTRUCTION

Standard panels are made from galvanised pipe with six horizontal rails. They are carried on a trailer unit which can be lowered to ground level to form a drafting race.

A wide variety of additional components are available which are compatible with the standard panels. These include block gates, swivel wheels to give mobility to the panels, fence stays to improve stability, gates fitted in frames, curved panels, and connectors.

FEATURES

These portable yards form a comprehensive and versatile system. The standard panels are 2440 mm long, and can be arranged in a variety of configurations.

In addition to the accessories available, other units can be incorporated into the yards layout. These include portable sheep shower, portable draining pens, portable loading ramp, elevated races, races with adjustable sides, and drafting gates with extended handle to permit drafting from behind the sheep.

The yards are available in a variety of sizes to suit mobs up to several thousand sheep.

SUGGESTED PRICES

Trailer mounted three-way draft with panels as follows:

No. 1 pack	16 panels	\$1,320
No. 2 pack	20 panels	\$1,515
No. 3 pack	25 panels	\$1,755
No. 4 pack	35 panels	\$2,240
No. 5 pack	40 panels	\$2,420
Special tandem trailer unit with 80 panels		Price on application
Portable loading ramp		\$473

MANUFACTURER

Steer Engineering Pty. Ltd.,
218 Grange Road, Thornbury, Vic. 3071.
Phone: (03) 497 1844.

DISTRIBUTORS

1. The manufacturers.
2. Principal stock agents in all States.

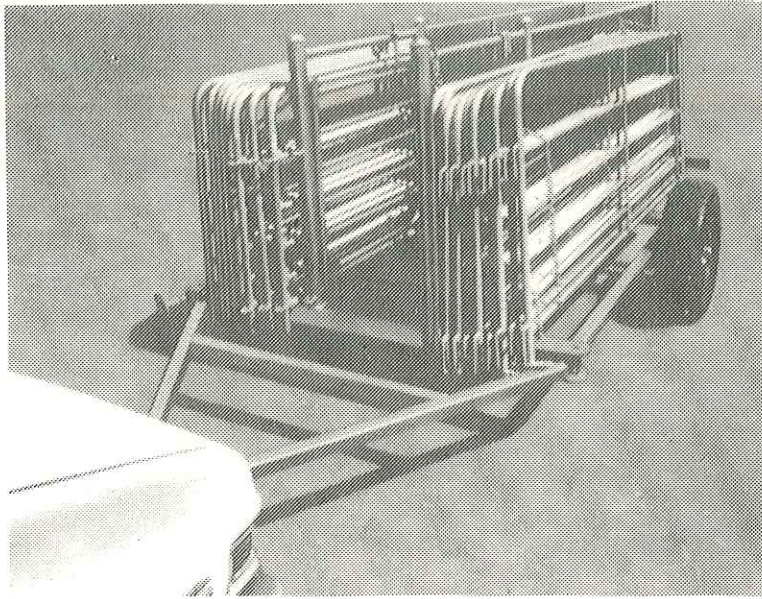


Photo 1. Steer portable yards ready for towing.

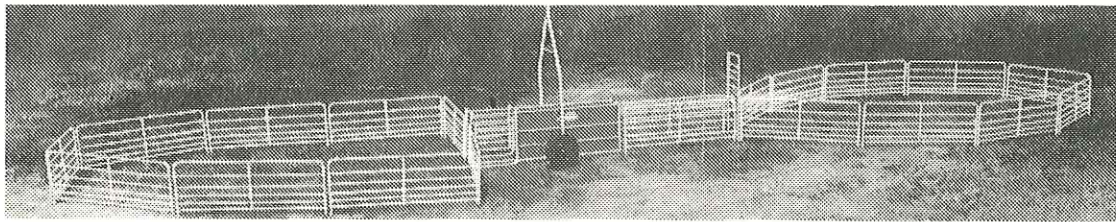


Photo 2. Typical arrangement using 20 panels.

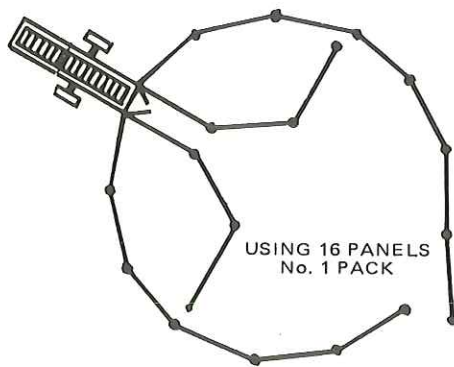


Diagram 1. A layout using 16 panels and portable loading ramp.

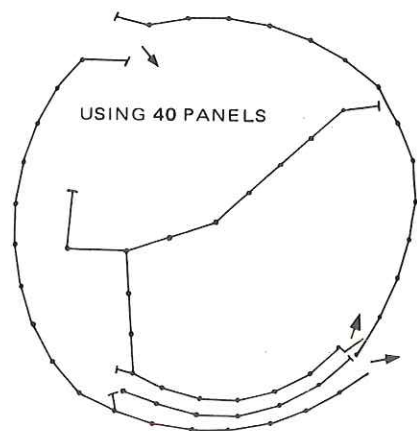


Diagram 2. Layout using 40 panels.

NAME

Thornton Portable Sheep Yards

CONSTRUCTION

The panels are 2740 mm long fabricated from galvanised steel pipe and are carried on a special trailer unit. The trailer can be lowered to ground level to form a drafting race. This race can be extended to serve as a working race.

FEATURES

The yards can be supplied with either 22 panels or 16 panels.

The working capacity is estimated as 250 sheep for the larger model and 150 sheep for the smaller model. When used with existing fences, these capacities can be doubled.

Additional panels can be supplied if required.

SUGGESTED PRICE

22 panel model	\$1,570
16 panel model	\$1,265

MANUFACTURER

A. Thornton,
RSD 302, Penshurst, Vic. 3289.
Phone: (055) 76 3284.

DISTRIBUTORS

1. Sewell Bros. Rural Sales Pty. Ltd.,
Hamilton Highway, Inverleigh, Vic. 3321.
Phone: (052) 65 1404.
2. All major stock agents in the various States.

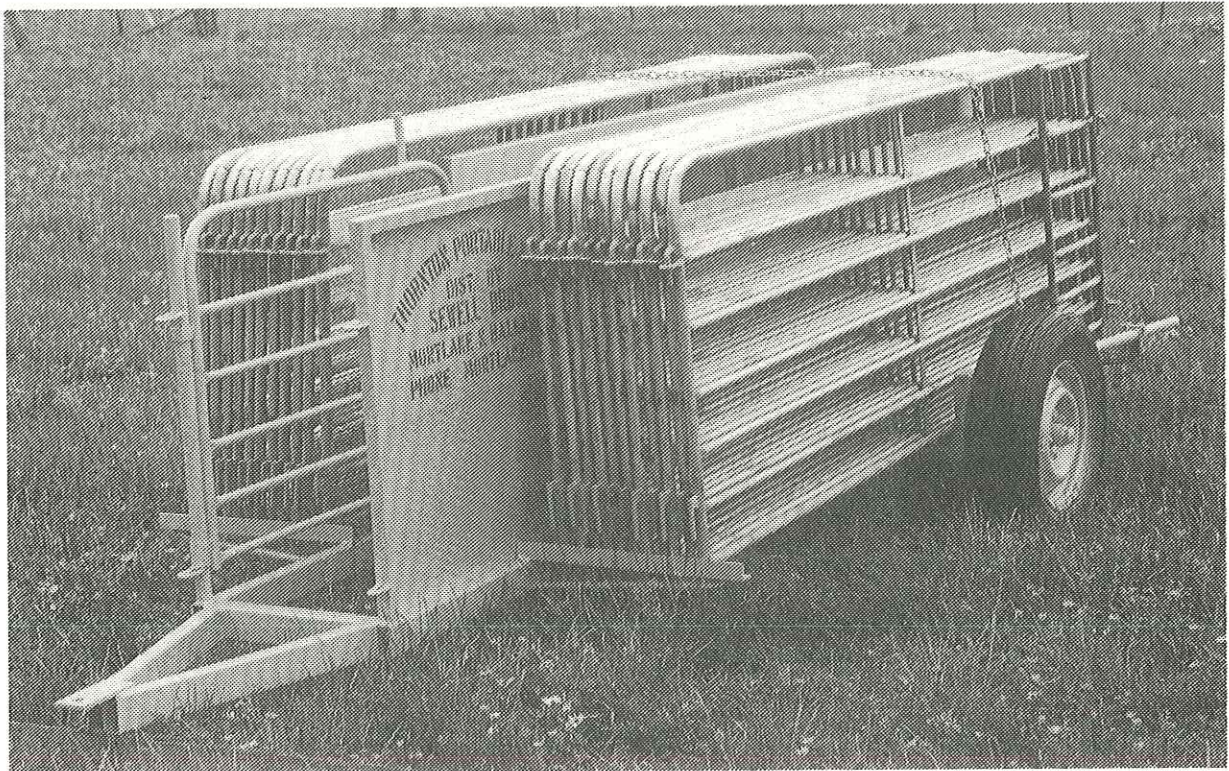


Photo 1. Thornton portable sheep yards.

NAME

Tubebilt Portable Package Sheeppyard

CONSTRUCTION

The panels consist of a pipe frame with rails made from either flat steel strip or pipe. They can be supplied in painted or galvanised finish. The panels hook together, and a special gate connector allows gates to swing through 360 degrees.

Total weight is 860 kg, and the woolgrower must provide means for carrying and transporting the yards.

FEATURES

There are 28 panels, 6 gates and accessories which allow the yards to accommodate some 550 sheep in six pens as shown in Diagram 1. The yards can be used to work mobs of about 250 sheep. If used in conjunction with an existing fence, then 1000 ewes and lambs can be held.

Additional panels can be supplied if required.

SUGGESTED PRICE

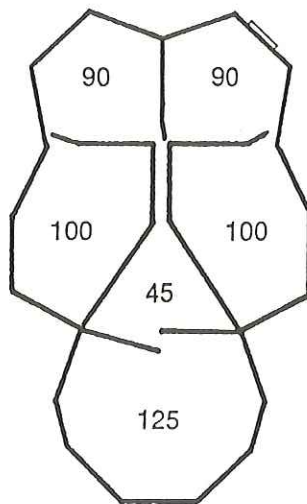
Flat rail panels, painted finish	\$1346
Tube rail panels, painted finish	\$1569
Tube rail panels, galvanised finish	\$1888

MANUFACTURER

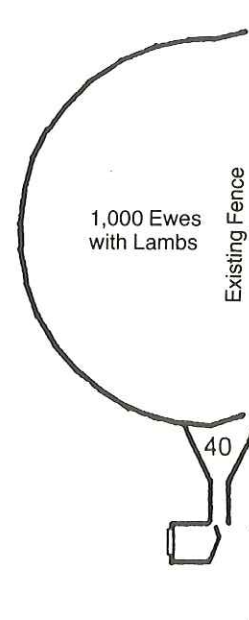
Structures Ltd.,
Bennet Avenue, Edwardstown, S.A. 5039.
Phone: (08) 276 5011.

DISTRIBUTORS

All major stock agents in the mainland States.



Recommended for drafting.



Recommended for lamb marking.

Diagram 1. Suggested yard arrangements.

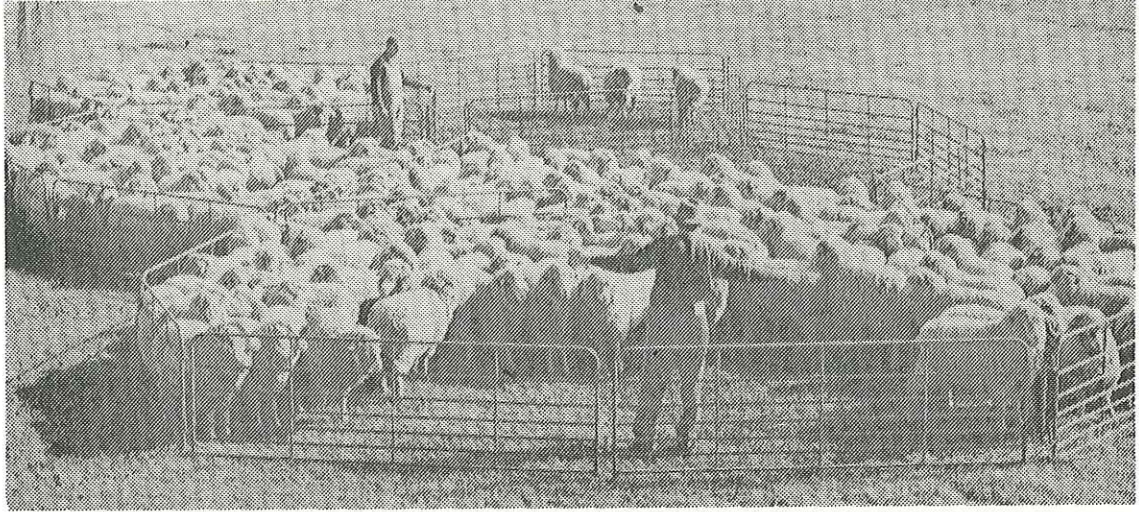


Photo 1. Typical layout for Tubebilt portable yards.



Photo 2. Thornton yards in use.

Some farmers have used effective portable yards which they have devised themselves, and in some cases, built in their own workshop.

Four examples are given of such units.

EXAMPLE 1

Woolgrowers who run mobs of up to 200 sheep may find that using yards of the type developed at Cressy Research Station in Tasmania will save time when marking lambs.

Pipe-framed fence panels are joined to each other with conventional collar hinges, and attached to the three point linkage of a tractor.

When the weight of all the panels is taken up by a slight lift of the three point linkage, one man can pull the panels into position.

The ewes and lambs are rounded up into the main pen and the panels closed behind them. If the yard is set up in the corner of a paddock, the capacity of the yard can be doubled or trebled, but for this to be practical the paddock fence must be lamb-proof.

A small wing is set up in the main yard (marked * on diagram) so that the lambs can be drafted into the small yard behind the tractor and the ewes back out into the paddock.

The portable yards can be set up in about ten minutes.

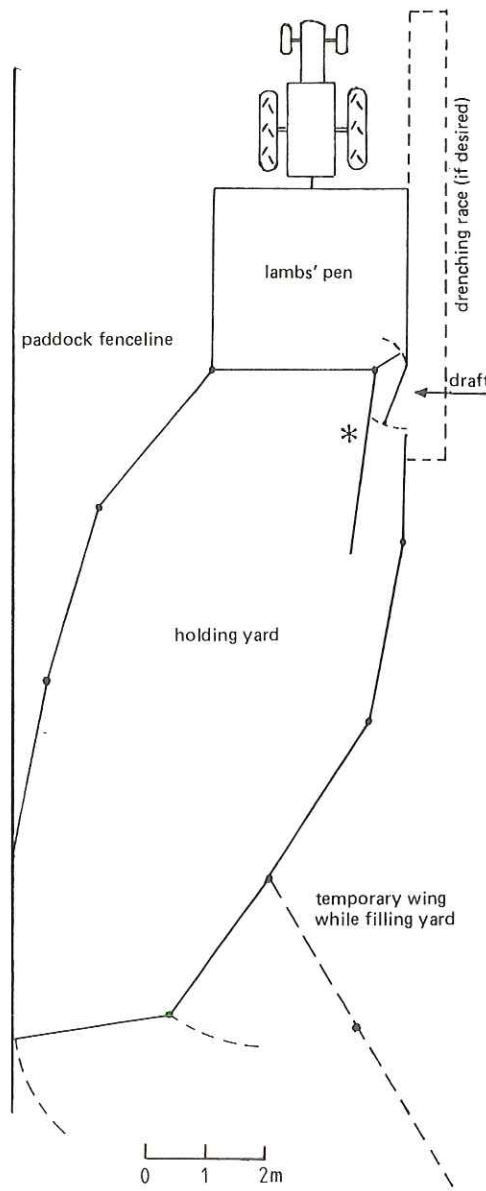


Diagram 1. Cressy Research Station portable yards.

EXAMPLE 2

When drafting is a major activity, the layout shown in Diagram 2 has proved useful.

A 2-way drafting race is built to attach to the three point linkage of a tractor. Hinged fence panels fold in beside the race for easy transportation. Additional panels can be carried in the race if necessary.

The layout makes use of an existing fence to obtain adequate capacity.

A handling or working race can be added by extending the drafting race as shown.

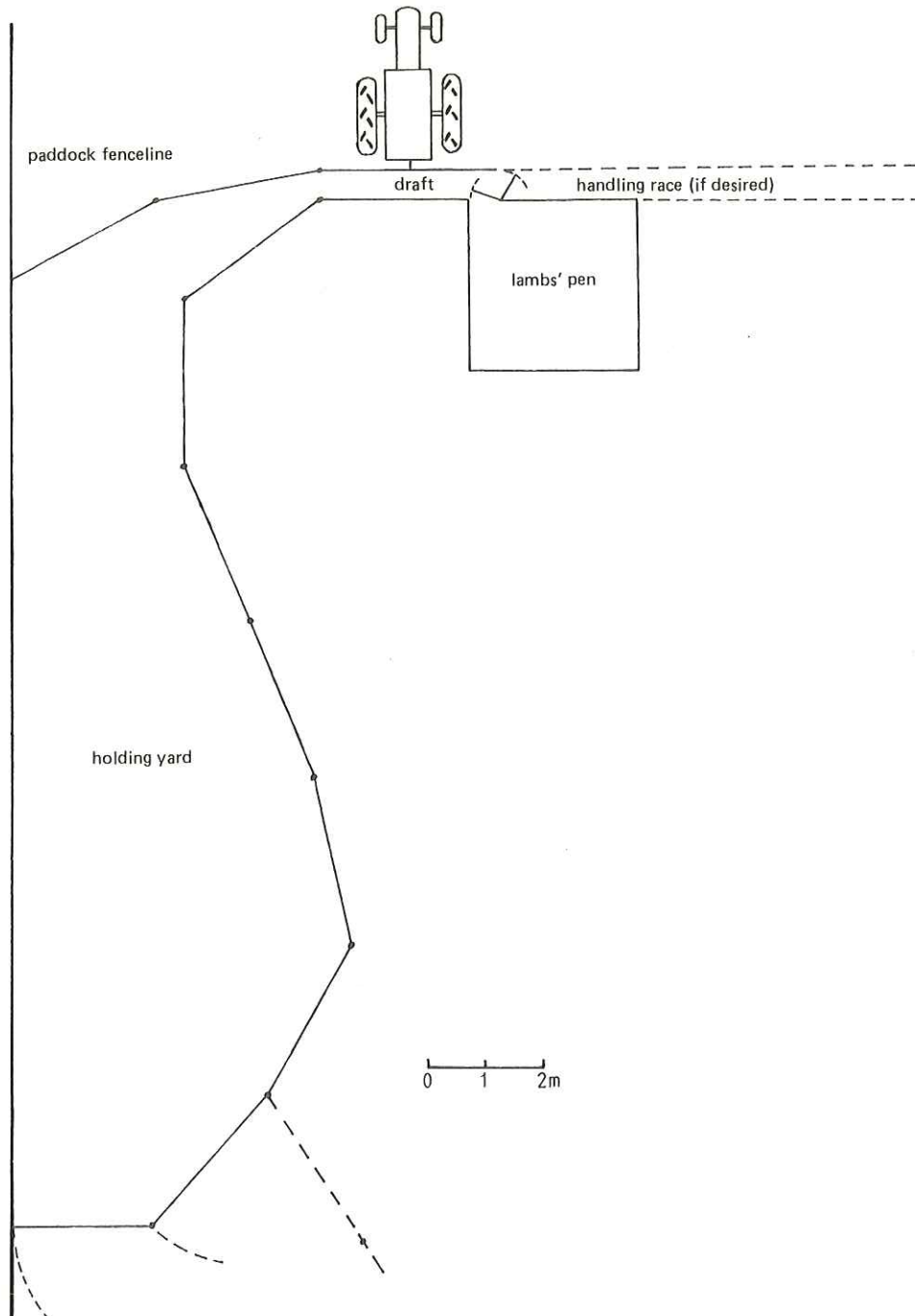


Diagram 2. Tractor mounted drafting yards.

EXAMPLE 3

A system providing a 3-way draft is shown in Diagram 3. The panels are carried on a platform attached to the three point linkage of a tractor.

If more than about 200 sheep are to be held in the holding area, steel droppers should be used to provide added support and prevent the mob of sheep from pushing the panels out of position.

These yards are intended to be used in conjunction with an existing fence, and a handling race can be included as shown.

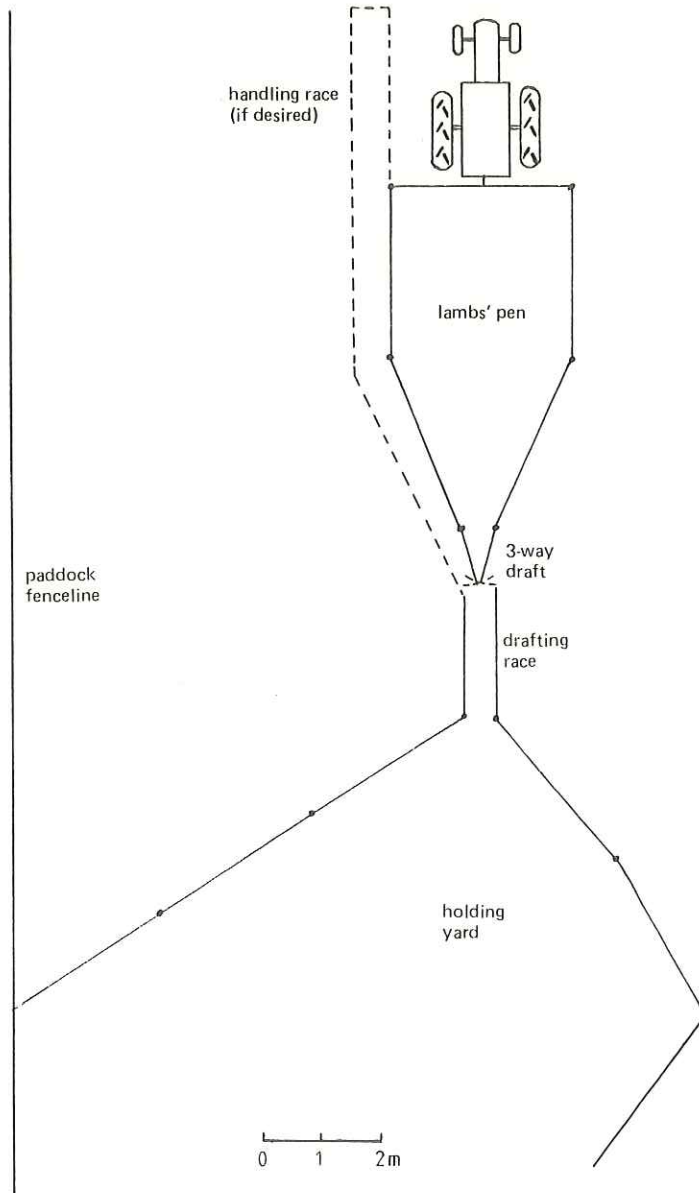


Diagram 3. Tractor mounted yards with 3-way draft.

EXAMPLE 4

A woolgrower devised this handling race to speed up routine tasks such as drenching.

The race is built on a tandem axle unit in such a way that, when located in position, the race can be lowered to ground level to make working easier. It is 10 metres long and built as a double race, but the centre fence can be removed to make a large pen.

A drafting gate at the front end allows sheep to be drafted two ways from each race.

Panels are used to form a holding area, and by setting up the system in a corner of a paddock, adequate holding capacity is obtained. If necessary, prefabricated fencing or netting is first run along the existing fences to make them lamb-proof.

The unit is towed behind a tractor or other vehicle. It has a frame of steel with timber grating flooring to help keep animals clean, and allow the panels to be carried in the race. The panels are fabricated from steel tubing.

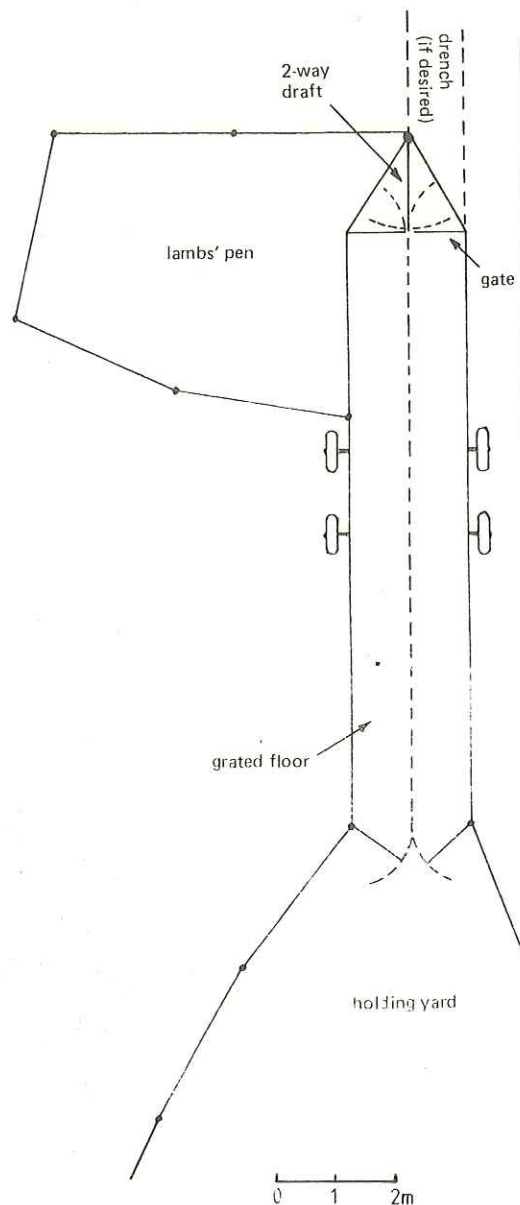


Diagram 4. Mobile working or handling race with portable panels.