



Dry gumboots NO SWEAT

Sandra Taylor

Tony Smith's gumboot drier is stunning in its simplicity.

Looking like a giant plastic Chinese soup spoon, this apparatus is aero-dynamically designed to encourage airflow in and out of a gumboot in order to dry it out.

The gumboot drier doesn't require heat, all it requires is a breeze and the boots will dry overnight or within 8-10 hours.

In front of a fan, the boots with the drier inserted will dry in around four hours.

Necessity is said to be the mother of invention and it was Kaikoura farmer and former Chatham Islands fisherman Tony Blunt's continually wet boots that drove him and Tony Smith to put their heads together to devise the drier.

Blunt had seen the idea of the gumboot drier in a book in the 1980s and while working on the Chathams, he fashioned a rudimentary drier out of plywood.

Much to his surprise it worked, but it wasn't until many years later that Blunt put the idea to Tony Smith.

Smith was the brains behind Skellerup's 4x4 Marathon boot, Dairy Shed boot and 4x4 Power boot and Blunt was used to trial these products in their development phase, hence their association.

The pair were both well aware of the difficulty of drying gumboots and the implications on foot health of working in wet boots all day; whether it be moisture from sweat in summer or rain in winter.

Inspired by Blunt's idea of the drier, Smith created a prototype using an old cardboard

box, plastic knives and tape.

It was at this point that Jonathan Prince, a mechanical engineer and Smith's business partner, got involved to take the drier to the next level.

Prince explains the final design, the WinDry gumboot drier, circulates the air down into the toe of the boot and sucks the air back out through a vacuum created at the back of the boot.

In essence, it utilises the processes of forced convection and evaporation to dry the boots.

Left on the verandah or porch, the boots will dry overnight, even on the coldest night, so long as there is a breeze.

The WinDry has also been designed to allow the boots to be placed upside down on top of an electric fence standard to dry.

Smith and Prince's target market is anybody who wears gumboots and judging by the interest the product received at this year's National Fieldays at Mystery Creek, the problem of wet gumboots is massive.

The product has yet to be released commercially and the pair will be selling the WinDry at retail outlets from April next year. They are expected to retail at around \$35-38.

Prince says Skellerup's long association with Smith, and of course gumboots, led to a natural partnership and the iconic company will be the Australasian distributor of WinDry for the rural and industrial markets.

The WinDry gumboot drier is the first product Smith and Prince's company The Ideas Foundry have commercialised, but they have other products in the pipeline.

Smith has the sort of brain that can identify what he describes as latent needs and will



■ Inventor Tony Smith and business partner Jonathan Prince with their first completed product, the WinDry gumboot drier.

design a product to meet those needs.

He spends a lot of time observing farmers and staff as they go about their daily life, looking at ways to make their lives easier.

Smith describes his skill as being in his DNA - a gift he was lucky enough to trip over.

At age three he pulled apart and correctly reassembled an alarm clock and so began a long career in design and making things.

Smith worked for many years in the textile industry and was instrumental in setting up Canterbury clothing stores in the 1970s. More latterly he developed products for Skellerup.

Smith has long had an affinity with the rural sector and this is where he is now focusing his design skills.

Surprisingly he doesn't have the big shed usually associated with inventors. Rather, the design process goes on his head and is scribbled on bits of paper.

Joining forces with Prince two years ago

was a meeting of minds. Both men say they share similar ideas and values, yet both have strengths in different areas.

Prince has experience at taking products to the market and knows how important it is to protect IP and deal with patents.

Smith says getting involved with Prince, who has proven success in the commercialisation of products, has given him the confidence to invest in his own ideas.

Both men are committed to sustainability, something they see as being synonymous with the agricultural sector, and where possible use recycled material in their products. They also try to ensure their own products can be recycled.

The pair say they love simple, ingenious Kiwi products and would be happy to hear from anyone who would like help getting their ideas to market.

More? tony@theideasfoundry.co.nz

New horse remedy hitting the spot

Positive feedback is pouring in for a new horse remedy developed by Marlborough entrepreneur Jo McPherson.

She has built her business on sales of a dog supplement she developed called NRG+. It sells through New Zealand and Australia, proving successful for hundreds of canine consumers who now sport shiny coats, have fleas controlled, increased mobility and less or cured skin irritations.

But after many requests, Jo started to research a suitable mixture for horses, and developed Enagiza, a product that has already produced great feedback from users.

"I'm interested in horses and thought if

it works for dogs, there must be something similar we can put together to aide horses," she says.

Enagiza is similar in formulation to NRG+. It is a tasty mix in powder form that includes B vitamins, calcium, iron, magnesium, copper, phosphorous, potassium, zinc, omegas 3, 6 and 9, fibre and essential fatty acids for improved coats and joints.

"Horses absolutely love it and like NRG+, it's 100% natural," she says.

"Already we have had positive feedback from horse racing trainers as well as others in the industry with horses struggling with various health issues."

Enagiza has been endorsed by Peter and Dawn Williams, top south Island trainers at Riccarton Stables.

"Enagiza enhanced our horses' coats and brought out rich colour, making them look very healthy. We totally recommend Enagiza," Peter Williams says.

Another regular user, Darelle Stackhouse of Cheviot, comments: "I have been using Enagiza on my show horses and ponies for only four weeks and have already seen a huge improvement in their coats and their condition."

"All coats have gone a deeper dark colour and have an amazing shine and silkiness to them. I find no need to use any spray-on shine products now which is great as they are expensive and usually make the horses itchy,

whereas Enagiza works from within so you not only get a fantastic coat, but also have a wonderful health conditioner.

"I have used Enagiza on a horse that had very bad scurf and was showing symptoms of head shaking. Since starting him on the product his coat is fantastic and he has shown no more symptoms of the head shaking. Enagiza is easy to feed and very economical."

For information or to buy Enagiza, contact freshford@clear.net.nz or phone (03) 579 4394. It is also at CRT Feedbar, Christchurch.

As a Christmas special on NRG+, Jo is offering two 500g bags for \$48 including postage.

More? For NRG+ orders, phone Jo direct on (027) 682 9811.

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