



Security Equipment

Common sense combined with reasonable security measures can keep your farm safe from theft.

Masterlock's No. 15

There was a time when it was safe to leave a rural door unlocked; sadly, that's a thing of the past. Rural crime is on the rise, and it behooves country dwellers to prevent it as best we can.

Some of the best crime deterrents are the simplest and least expensive to implement. According to the Washington State Department of Agriculture, here are some things you can do:

Have a dog or two in or near the house. Barking dogs deter thieves.

Walk your yard with a critical eye, searching for places burglars might gain entry. Beef up security there. Trim back thief-concealing trees and shrubs. Install vandal-resistant outdoor lighting. Bathe the exterior of your home, driveway, barns and outbuildings in light at night.

Ensure doors and windows are constructed of solid wood or metal and fitted with quality locks, including deadbolts on all exterior doors. Use the locks—always!

Avoid inviting strangers into your home. Don't indiscriminately hand out keys. Store valuables out of sight. Gun cabinets and high-end electronics in the living room invite thefts.

Don't leave your property at predictable times; vary your schedule if you can. When you're gone, lock up and don't leave notes on your door. Avoid hiding door keys; thieves know all the usual hiding places.

Ask a trusted person to stay on your farm when you're away for longer periods. Barring that, securely lock farm implements, tools and equipment in sheds; set up lights with household timers to reflect your normal living patterns; and ask neighbors to pick up your mail and keep an eye on things (and reciprocate when needed, of course).

Erect strong, securely mounted gates on your driveway and other access roads to your property, and keep them shut. Install a driveway alarm. Post appropriate signage ("No Trespassing," "Guard Dog on Duty" or "Alarms on Premises").

Lock vehicles; never leave keys in the ignition. Don't leave money or valuables in plain sight. Secure truck toolboxes using quality padlocks. Use lock caps on motor-vehicle and farm-machinery gas tanks.

Monitor livestock often. Ensure all are permanently marked, and maintain complete records. Photograph or shoot high-quality video of valuable animals.

Form a neighborhood-watch committee—yes, even in the country—and put up signs. Work with your neighbors; become each others' eyes and ears. Write down descriptions of strangers or strange vehicles, and be willing to call the police.

Plan ahead. Consider security when designing new structures. Whenever possible, construct barns, sheds and storage facilities within sight of the house.

Field Tuff's AgSafe Wireless Camera Monitoring System

Lock It Up

The first line of protection for securing equipment, rural outbuildings and gates is quality padlocks, hasps, chains and cables. While a persistent thief can breach most any such arrangement, good setups will slow him down and possibly send him down the road seeking easier targets.

Choose all-weather padlocks for outdoor applications, and always choose locks with hardened shackles. (A shackle is the bowed top part of a padlock.) Heavy-duty, keyed padlocks with hardened shackles and five or more pin tumblers are difficult to cut through and to pick. However, a padlock is only as good as the hasp, chain or cable used in conjunction with it; hasps should always incorporate concealed hinges.

An array of sturdy Masterlock padlocks and hasps can be purchased at hardware and department stores. Among them is Masterlock's No. 15 series of padlocks featuring laminated steel bodies, hardened boron alloy shanks for superior cut



resistance, five-pin cylinders to help prevent picking, and dual-locking levers to provide extra pry resistance. Sargent & Greenleaf manufactures specialized padlocks designed for high-security applications and extreme weather resistance. Their Environmental Padlock series features strong, powdered-steel bodies with nickel plating inside and out to resist corrosion; self-cleaning locking cylinders; case-hardened or stainless-steel shackles; and a key-retaining feature that traps the key in the padlock when it's unlocked. (No lost keys!)