

## Economical Fertilizer Applicator: Keep it Simple

**Clayton Fuller**

Bigelow Nurseries, Inc., Northboro, Massachusetts 01532

Sometimes in this day of high technology we forget that some things are better left simple. We feel that our dispenser does that at a minimal cost. There are no moving parts, nothing to rust, and it is unaffected by weather conditions.

### COMPONENT PARTS

- Rubbermaid vanity wastebasket 10 in. long × 6 in. wide × 10 in. high with rolled edge for better strength.
- 15-in. automotive funnel.
- 16 in. length of 3/4-in. polyurethane pipe.
- 1-in. tiedown strap with adjustable buckle.
- Two 1-1/2-in. hinges.
- 3-in. screen door handle.

### ASSEMBLY

- Attach the 3-in. screen door handle to the funnel to give the operator better control
- Cut the discharge end of the 3/4-in. polyurethane pipe at a 45° angle approximately 1-1/2-in. up the pipe so that the prills will stay in container.
- The length of the pipe is determined by height of the applicator.
- Attach 1-1/2-in. hinges to the basket on the narrow sides so it can move with the applicator.
- A slot is cut in one side of each hinge to accept the strap with adjustable buckle. Strap is long enough to hang from around the waist of the operator. We tried hanging the basket from the neck, but found it was not ergonomically feasible.

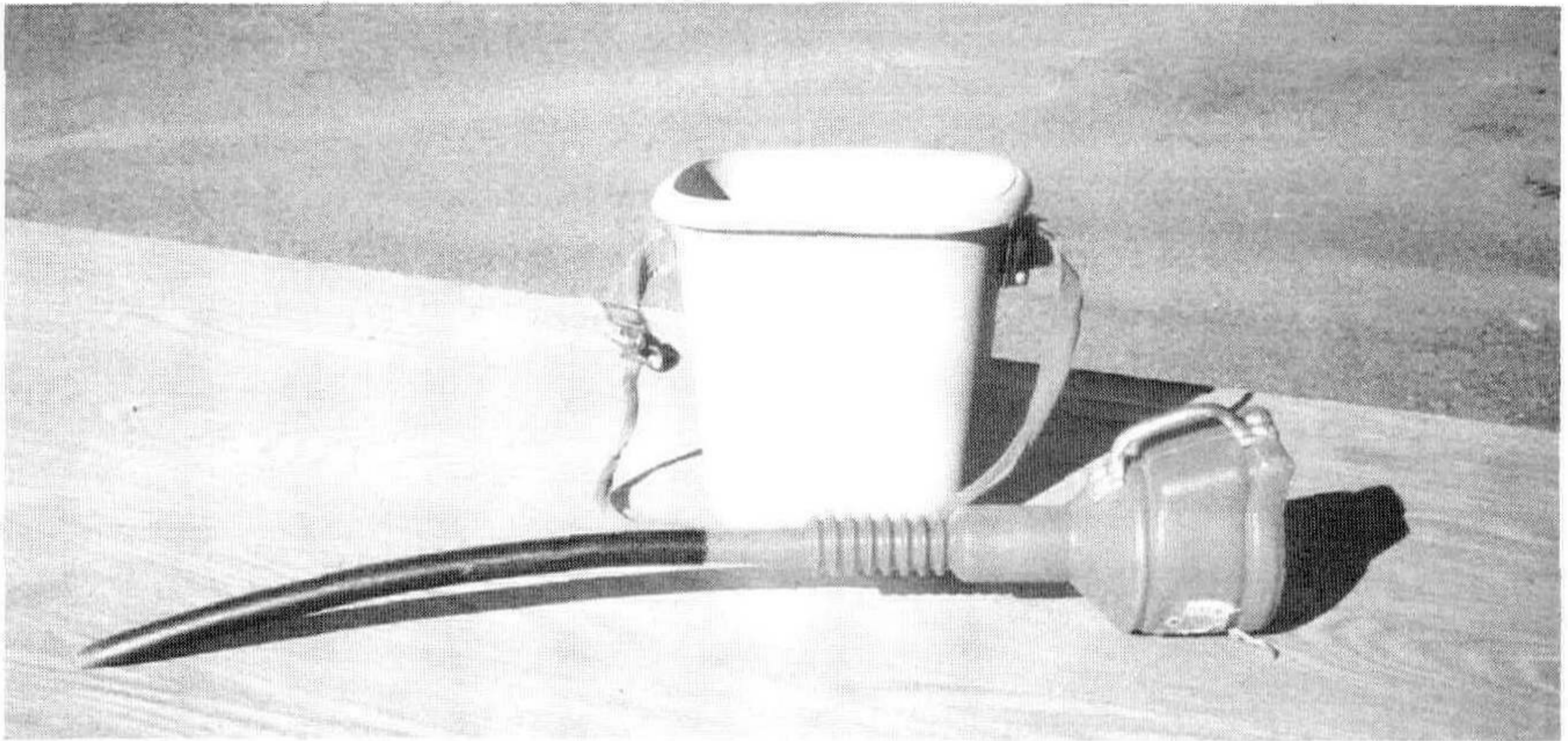
### COSTS

Applicator completely ready for work with approximate cost:

basket	\$ 3.11
funnel	2.79
handle	0.59
adjustable strap	4.89
hinges	0.29
pipe	0.50
labor	5.00

---

Total	\$17.17
-------	---------



**Figure 1.** Fertilizer applicator.

### **USE**

The operator, standing in one spot, can reach containers in a 180° angle and 3 ft diameter. The basket holds approximately 10 lbs of fertilizer, or 4540 g.

### **CONCLUSION**

With the different size scoops available from manufacturers of slow-release fertilizers, it is simple to give the operator the correct scoop for whatever size container used, thereby eliminating any confusion in adjusting equipment to do the job properly. We find that production costs of applying fertilizer have been reduced by 50% with the use of this dispenser.