

# Rural Crime Prevention

## Padlocks and Hasps

Padlocks and hasps are the mainstay of most security measures taken to protect on farm equipment, materials, and operations. The quality, strength, and reliability of these devices directly relate to the level of protection provided. A few minutes of security planning will help you determine which of these products provide the best security for the value of the items being protected.

Let's start out by saying there is no padlock or hasp that cannot be broken or opened. It is the amount of delay that the lock and hasp provide that ensure your property is securely protected. **Locks keep honest people honest, the determined thief will be able to open any lock.** What the lock provides is a delay for the thief and increases his/her potential for getting caught committing the crime. What you need to do is make opening the padlock or hasp a risky proposition for the thief, in other words, **make your farm just too hard or risky to do!**

Security measures should be taken in combination. For example, lighting to provide little concealment for the thief also assists in securing your property. You should look at using different methods for different items on your farm. There is no one standard method.



### How do I determine which lock and hasp I need?

The first step is to determine the value of the property you plan on securing. Also, you may want to look at the risk presented to your farming operation if that item or equipment is stolen or damaged. The higher the risk, the stronger and more secure a padlock and hasp you will require. Remember, you want to make that farm item or equipment too hard to do!

### Hasps, chains, or cables

After you have determined the value of the property, both as a resale item or to the operation of your farm, you need to look at how you will attach a padlock to secure the item. Hasps, chains, and cables are some of the more common methods used. **A \$100 lock attached to a \$2.00 hasp only gives you a \$2.00 security system.** Common things that you need to do are:

- Check to see if the door or opening can be opened from the side opposite the lock, an example - remove the hinge pins or plates from the door.
- Cover the screws or bolts attaching the hasp to the door or opening. Most hasps are designed to cover these if properly installed.
- Securing the hasp securely on the door or opening to prevent easy removal. Hasps bolted through the door are the best. You should avoid short wood screws in the hasp that can be easily pried out.
- If using a chain or cable to secure a gate, make sure it cannot be easily lifted off either the gatepost or the gate itself. Again remember the hinges on the other end of the gate!
- Use a hasp, chain, or cable that can provide the same level security as your lock.

### Padlocks

There are several factors you need to consider when purchasing a padlock.

- As mentioned before, the risk to your farm operation and value of the property are key factors. You need to keep these in mind when you select a lock.
- Are you going to use the lock indoors or outdoors? Not all padlocks adapt well to the outdoors. If the lock is not weatherproof, you may have a lock that you are unable to open in a few months.
- The lock should have a hardened shank. This makes the lock hard to break open – again delaying the thief.
- If the lock is going to be used in an area where it will be unobserved for a long period of time, or in an area where you have had break-ins before, you may want to consider a protected shank type padlock.
- Do you want to use a combination or key lock padlock? Normally, combination locks are not as robust or weather proof as a keyed padlock.
- Same-key set locks ease operational access to your farm equipment and items, but also allow one key to open several locks. Critical farm operations or equipment would be better protected if they have their own individual keyed lock.
- Control of any keys issued to employees is a vital part of your security planning. Unused keys should be secured to prevent unauthorized use. All keys issued should be recovered from employees leaving your farm.



A local locksmith could also help you select the proper lock and hasp for your farm operation, material, and equipment.



**If you are reporting a crime in progress, dial 911. Stay on the line and follow the instructions from the 911 operator.**

**For More Information:  
Contact your local Sheriffs Department  
or,  
Washington State Department of Agriculture  
(360) 902 - 1800**



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