



barrel pumps

Posted by [Michael Phillips](#)
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[Michael Phillips](#)
[barrel pumps](#)

March 30, 2014 03:56AM

Ordering spray products in a 55-gallon drum means you need a reliable way to get the stuff out. Liquid fish is not something to siphon, eh? And then there's pure neem oil and even effective microbes if [activated in large batches](#).

Two years ago I bought a cheap rotary barrel pump at the local auto parts store. Thirty bucks. Fish gunked up between the sliding vanes despite flushing the mechanism and suction pipe. I took it apart to clean but couldn't get it working again. I really think the paint job was part of the "design" to seal the plates.

Last year I bought the better rotary barrel pump at the local auto parts store. Fifty bucks. This time I took it apart sooner, having realized that flushing could never thoroughly clean the center where fish goo gets around the vanes. I custom fit gasket material to insure a good plate seal. I oiled the works. The damn thing turns great but won't even lift water.

A different design is needed. Here's a [piston-type pump](#), one of many [pump options made by the Cary Company](#) in Illinois. It's stainless, made in America, costing \$87. It's intended for "solvents" that pass readily through small orifices.

I know pumps are made for varying viscosities. I need to deal with fish, neem oil, and biology. What pump works for farmers?

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Zone 4b in New Hampshire

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[David Maxwell](#)

[Re: barrel pumps](#)

March 31, 2014 02:59AM

How about this: [www.wastecorp.com]

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This is called a "Sludge Pump" and is designed to pump - well,... sludge. They even have a model designed to pump tile grout.

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Zone 5b in Nova Scotia

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[Michael Phillips](#)

[Re: barrel pumps](#)

April 05, 2014 02:36AM

Liquid fish is not sludge! Remember, this stuff goes through any orchard sprayer (including hand-pumped backpacks) no problem. An expensive sludge pump is not the answer. Purchasing fish hydrolysate by the 55-gallon drum is a good deal: The cost per gallon (for the Organic Gem product, which I use) is \$4.90 to \$6.90, [with shipping](#), the range based on whether there are 1 to 4 drums on the freight-delivered pallet. Purchasing fish in a 5-gallon bucket amount, by comparison, will cost a home orchardist \$16 and up per gallon.

So let's solve this. Other growers in this holistic orchard forum certainly purchase spray materials in volume. Could someone have the gumption to state their experience with barrel pumps, whatever the type. PLEASE!

I did consider another pump design based on compressed air to power the suction. Bob Piluri, my [Organic Gem distributor](#), pointed out a righteous consideration: This will pump air into the product, the phosphoric acid will gas off, and thus the fish will go bad if stored for months. Otherwise, a two-year storage expectation is entirely reasonable.

[Lost Nation Orchard](#)

Zone 4b in New Hampshire

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[Fabio Chizzola](#)

[Re: barrel pumps](#)

April 05, 2014 04:02AM

From my own "fishy" experience on 55 gallon drums, here is what i found out. There a couple of points to make first.

1. If you want to leave the fish in the 55gallon drum, you need to buy a simple plastic pump from Napa or any automobile parts stores. My first pump was metal and the fish totally destroyed. The plastic one still works great.
2. Fish overtime, if not "stirred", gets the more solid parts on top and the more liquid on the bottom, so if it's in a 55 gallon drum, it will be very hard to stir it, so after you pump out the bottom liquid part, then you have the "sludge" problem. So I bought 11 used 5 gallon pails, and pumped out the

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fish from the drum, and stored the pails in a dark cool place and every time I used a pail of fish, I would first stir it very well and then pour it into the sprayer thru a very fine filter.

In all this you kind of want to use your fish in max 2 seasons.

This method worked for me. Hope it will help you.

Fabio

[Westwind Orchard](#)

Zone 5b in New York

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