

If you're looking for new ways to add to your bottom line, take a look at the money-making ideas featured here and on the next page.

If you've found or heard about a new income-boosting idea, we'd like to hear about it. Send details to: **FARM SHOW Magazine, P.O. Box 1029, Lakeville, Minn. 55044 (ph 800 834-9665) or email us at: editor@farmshow.com.**



Last summer Ryan and Tiffany Batalden grew a 1-acre field of red, white and blue popcorn. The hulls are colored but the popped corn is white.

Patriotic Popcorn Comes In Red, White And Blue

Ryan and Tiffany Batalden grew patriotic popcorn on their Lamberton, Minn., certified organic farm last year. The 1-acre field of red, white and blue popcorn was located right in the middle of a large plot of field corn.

In spite of the drought their first harvest yielded a respectable 55 bushels of colorful corn.

"The hulls are colored but the popped corn is white," explains Tiffany, who handles the marketing for Patriotic Pops Popcorn. She packages the colorful kernels in 2-lb. packages and sells them through her website and to a few local businesses. They donate a portion of the proceeds to the Disabled American Veterans organization.

The popcorn pops well, and the red variety adds a tasty, nutty flavor, she says. She talked to other popcorn growers and did research to choose good varieties. Diversifying with the value-added popcorn is a good fit for the Bataldens' organic soybean and corn operation.

Because strong winds are common in their area – and popcorn stalks are weak – they planted the popcorn within a cornfield for protection. Batalden notes that it's OK to grow popcorn with other varieties as long as it won't be used for seed. The popcorn did affect some of the nearby field corn, however, which had a few red and blue kernels.

"We planted the popcorn the same as field corn, and the first couple of months the popcorn kept up with the field corn, which was good because we farm organically, and we could cultivate it at the same time," Batalden explains.

With rich black soil, corn crops fared better in their area than many places during 2012's dry weather. The Bataldens harvested the field corn first and let the popcorn dry down a couple more weeks before harvest. They harvested it with the combine with a few setting adjustments.

The red and blue varieties were 14 percent moisture and allowed to dry to about 12 percent for optimal popping. The white variety was 18 percent, so it was placed in a tote bag with a fan for faster drying. After running the kernels through an old Clipper cleaner that Ryan's father had, the kernels were packaged for sale.

Patriotic Pops Popcorn sells through the family's website for \$8 for 2-lb. bags, with free shipping for two bags or more. Batalden plans to contact food co-ops and popcorn vendors to see if there is interest in the patriotic, and organic-grown crop so they'll know if they should plant more acres next year.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Patriotic Pops LLC, 39474 Co. Rd. 11, Lamberton, Minn. 56152 (ph 507 227-5314; www.patrioticpopscorn.com).



The colorful corn is packaged for sale through the family's website.

Purple Corn Taps Into Hot Markets

What began as research for a source of a natural red dye, has evolved into a corn variety higher in antioxidants and far more nutritious than yellow corn. Suntava Purple Corn™ has been bred to grow in Minnesota, South Dakota, Wisconsin and Iowa.

"All foods that are red, purple or black contain antioxidants," explains Lee French, who has been doing research on ancient corn varieties for almost 20 years. French was intrigued by the purple corn varieties and realized it provided an opportunity to create a natural dye.

"It is an alternative to synthetic Red Dye 40 that's produced from petroleum products," French says, noting that the dye hasn't been proven to cause cancer, but chemicals used to create the dye can.

Not only has Suntava Purple Corn proven to be a good source of natural dye, the nutrition exceeds other corn varieties.

"The biggest thing is that purple corn is so unique because of its high antioxidant properties (higher than blueberries)," says Bill Petrich, CEO of Suntava. "It's packed with powerful nutritional capabilities. Bakers and gluten-free people are interested in it for its nutrition, and it adds color to the end product – such as purple cornmeal."

The corn is ideal for three markets. First, it's a natural red dye for foods, cosmetics and other markets. Second, as a grain, it's perfect for cereals, snacks and all sorts of foods, such as purple tortilla chips, cornmeal and masa flour. Finally, it's a new option for the nutraceutical (fortified food and dietary supplement market) to add nutritional health benefits.

The purple corn is non-GMO, which also appeals to consumers. It requires similar growing practices as field corn, along with standards to maintain the quality and integrity of Suntava Purple Corn.

Suntava continues to research new markets



Suntava Purple Corn is a good source of natural dye and is also quite nutritious.

for the purple corn, which is already in purple tortilla chips, cereals and other products. French points out that corn has one big advantage in the dye market.

"We can store our grain and don't have to extract the dye right away unlike other crops such as berries and beets," he explains.

Purple corn research is young compared to the hundred years of yellow corn research, French adds. But so far it's promising, and continued work will improve the variety even more.

Farmers in the region interested in growing purple corn in the future may contact Suntava for more information.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Suntava, LLC, P.O. Box 268, Afton, Minn. 55001 (ph 651-998-0723; www.suntava.com).

Glass Gem Corn Shines On The Cob

Interested in planting something totally new and different in your garden this summer? You might want to try Glass Gem corn.

"Glass Gem corn has gotten worldwide publicity because of its beauty," says Bill McDorman, executive director for Native Seeds/SEARCH in Tucson, Ariz., noting that it's a flint corn. That means it's suitable for popping. However, there's more interest in it for decoration.

For about 20 years, Carl Barnes, an Oklahoma farmer selectively saved seed with vivid, translucent colors to develop the variety. His seed was eventually passed on to McDorman at Native Seeds/SEARCH. Now Glass Gem, a 90-day corn, is available for \$5.95 for about 100 seeds. But getting it might not be easy. At the end of 2012, there were 2,000 people from all over the world on the waiting list for the seed.

It's an open-pollinated variety, which means seeds can be saved from year to year.

"At our seed bank we have over 500 varieties of corn and more than 2,000 varieties of other crops adapted to the Southwest," McDorman says. The organization believes diverse and traditionally developed varieties are important for future food security.

He points to an example in the late 1980's when a stem-eating fungus broke out in commercial sunflower crops, and a search was started to breed in a variety resistant to that fungus.

"They found a resistant variety in our collection that came from Native Americans in the Grand Canyon, and that was bred into



Glass Gem corn has a vivid, translucent color. It's suitable for popping, but there's more interest in it for decoration.



the sunflowers," McDorman says.

Statistically, 96 percent of seed varieties that existed in 1903 are no longer available, McDorman says.

Check out the Native Seeds/SEARCH website for more seeds and for information about upcoming Seed School events in various parts of the U.S.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Bill McDorman, 3584 E. River Rd., Tucson, Ariz. 85718 (ph 520 622-0830, ext. 100; www.nativeseeds.org).