



Island Grown Farmers Co-op ferries a 32-ft. trailer to Lopez Island for meat processing.

Meat Processor Takes A Ferry To Its Customers

Moving livestock to market is a routine event for most U.S. mainland farms or ranches. But imagine that you raise cattle, sheep, hogs or goats on an island in the ocean, accessible only by ferry.

That was the plight of livestock farmers on Lopez Island, one of the San Juan Islands off the coast of Washington state. The problem was solved with the formation of Island Grown Farmers Cooperative (IGFC), which included designing and building a refrigerated mobile-processing unit that travels to the islands weekly via ferry. Now IGFC provides USDA-inspected animal-slaughter services to members and non-members on the islands, as well as to producers in nearby mainland counties.

Agriculture on the four largest of the 100 plus islands that make up San Juan County is characterized primarily by small family farms usually 100 acres or less in size. The four largest islands have a combined landmass of approximately 150 square miles.

On processing day, two IGFC butchers coordinate moving a 32-ft. goose-neck trailer that holds the processing unit onto the ferry. A USDA inspector travels with

them. At the farm, the processing unit is hooked to water and power for the day, and processing proceeds. If power and water aren't available, the unit uses its generator and onboard tank of water. The trailer can hold up to 50 carcasses (depending on animal size) and the unit needs to be at capacity for the co-op to operate efficiently.

After butchering, the carcasses are placed in the cooler and transported back to the IGFC processing plant in Bow, Washington, for aging and further processing, packaging and labeling. Each member sells their meat independently. Some members sell their meat products on the islands or through local farmer's markets. The co-op also maintains a retail outlet in Bow that sells meat under the brand name "Northwest Homegrown". All meat cuts are frozen and sold in standard-size packages, including common cuts of beef, pork and lamb. The co-op also processes and sells various sausages and ground meat products.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Island Grown Farmers Co-op, 13400 D'Arcy Rd., Bow, Wash. 98232 (www.igfcmcats.com/1.html).

He Builds Custom Horse Trailers And Equipment

Jason Gregg has channeled his experience working with steel and aluminum at a local welding shop into a thriving business that serves his passion for draft horses. He built custom draft horse vans as a spare time hobby for 15 years until it grew into a full-time business in 2018. Now his product line includes aluminum show boxes, harness caddies and custom stable equipment.

Gregg says his experience growing up in a family that raised draft horses has given him valuable industry knowledge so he can build exactly what customers want. "I enjoy designing and building custom equipment so much that it seems more like fun than work to me," Gregg says. Finished rigs have gone to customers in three U.S. states and four Canadian provinces. He designed a custom aluminum harness caddy for a client in Scotland.

Interior stalls on his show trailers have formed and fabricated padded stall dividers, padded walls, sturdy windows and ample ventilation for the animals. Other quality workmanship includes chromed loading ramps, hitch logo inscriptions on stall dividers and the rear trailer bumper, and under-carriage storage for supplies and a generator.

He also designs and builds strong and lightweight clam-shell style wheeled aluminum tack boxes and harness carts. JW Show boxes keep supplies on a handy rolling cart, traveling securely latched



JW Custom Fab builds clamshell-type wheeled tack boxes and harness carts as well as custom horse trailers and stable equipment.

together and opening to reveal custom interior finishes and special lighting that provides a beautiful display for the harnesses.

Many of his clients are fellow exhibitors at draft horse shows. He also builds custom stabling equipment along with galvanized feeders for draft horse owners. When not building horse equipment, JW provides welding and fabrication services for area customers, including design and fabrication of flatbed trailers.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, JW Custom Fab, 2409 Bruce County Rd 3, Cargill, Ontario, Canada N0G 1J0 (ph 519-955-0005; www.jwcustomfab.com).



Just 20 to 30 wild hogs can do up to five acres worth of damage in a single night. Peanut field hog damage is shown.

They Specialize In Trapping Wild Hogs

Wild hogs are an increasing problem for farmers and not just in the south.

"The problem with wild hogs is they're prolific breeders and are causing problems not only for farmers but for other game animals like deer, turkey, and quail," says Rod Pinkston, Founder and CEO of Jager Pro Hog Control Systems.

"Pigs are smarter than they get credit for," says Pinkston, who grew up on a hog farm in Illinois. "They can destroy agricultural fields quickly. We have pictures of hogs following planters down each row for up to half a mile and rooting up every seed in that row."

He says a group of 20 to 30 pigs can do five acres worth of damage in a single night.

After spending more than two decades in the military, Pinkston applied the principles of strategic combat to trapping and eliminating wild hogs. The first thing he figured out was the need to eliminate the whole herd at one time.

"We needed to get the whole herd together into one of our corral systems," Pinkston says. "We added a camera to the system that helps us identify how many pigs are in each group."

The hogs are lured into the corral system by a grain feeder. The corral is shaped like a circle and strong enough to withstand abuse from wild pigs. The animals enter through a

drop-down gate, and the panels that make up the structure are too tall to leap over.

"The key is to make sure you have the automatic feeder drop grain down at the same time every day," Pinkston says. "The feeder makes a noise that the herd identifies as feeding time."

The patented 8-ft. wide drop-down Rigid Trap gate panels are manufactured with 4-ga. galvanized steel and secured together by full-length steel connecting rods.

"If a herd is 19 pigs and you only get 15, you've just educated four pigs about entrapment, and you won't catch them again. If one of the escaped pigs is a female, they'll repopulate quickly," says Pinkston.

The base trap diameter is 35 ft. and easily expandable to any size.

A cellular 4G/LTE digital camera provides pictures day and night. The gate can be triggered by cell phone.

Many of the feral pigs harvested by Jager are donated to local families and churches for food. Their hog trapping equipment is sold through dealers all across Southern states.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Jager Pro Hog Control Systems, 2900-A Smith Road, Fortson, Ga. 31808 (ph 706-718-9789; jagerpro.com).

He Found A Market For Easy-Care Sheep Breed

A Missouri farmer has found success with Royal White Sheep. This hybrid breed was established in the late 1990's and has a combination of St. Croix and Dorper sheep traits. The resulting animal is low-maintenance, highly resistant to many parasites, and an excellent meat producer with a relatively low-fat content.

Mike Hackbart first encountered Royal White Sheep after he had poor results raising Jacob sheep. His herd of Jacobs were professionals at escaping from his fencing, so he went looking for a more docile breed. Royal White Sheep's relative rarity caught his attention.

These days, Hackbart works to maintain a flock of 20 to 30 sheep that provides him with breeding stock to sell. "I never have enough for my customers."

The placid personalities of Royal Whites have lived up to Hackbart's expectations. The sheep are naturally hornless and often act more like pets than livestock. He can easily grain train them to get off pasture in the evenings so they can spend nights safely in the barn away from coyotes and neighboring dogs. Hackbart lets them out again in the mornings once the dew has evaporated from the lawn to reduce the risk of parasite problems.

Royal Whites will breed at any time of year, and owners can get up to three lamb



Royal White Sheep are low maintenance, resistant to parasites and are good meat producers.

cropped every two years. Hackbart buys and sells his breeding stock over a wide geographic range to boost the breed's genetic diversity. Prices vary, but he generally gets \$300 per ewe and \$150 per wether.

Anyone interested in Royal Whites can connect with certified breeders online. "I'm part of the Royal White Sheep Association, as well as a Royal White Hair Sheep Facebook group," he says. "That's how I connect with many of my customers."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Miklin Creek Farm, Mid-south Missouri, near Lebanon (mdhbart@usa.com; www.miklincreekfarm.com).