

The Klieberts keep 15,000 breeder turtles in a 500 by 40-ft. pond.

LOUISIANA FARM HOLDS DAILY TOURS OF UNUSUAL "CROP"

## They Raise Turtles And Alligators

By Pam Selbert

Harvey and Jean Kliebert, Hammond, Louisiana, have an unusual "crop" - they raise turtles and alligators.

Their "red ear slider" turtles are sold both as eggs and as hatchlings while alligators are sold for their meat and leather.

"I started raising turtles in 1947," says Harvey, noting that today the Far East and Mexico are Kliebert's biggest customers, buying some 800,000 of the animals (eggs and young combined) annually. Kliebert says they're sold in those countries for pets.

Kliebert's turtle eggs are also shipped in large numbers to U.S. universities, where they're used in laboratories for eye and blood research, and for pollution experimentation.

A turtle egg brings Kliebert between 40 and 60 cents, depending on the market; hatchlings about \$1 to \$1.50; and the 4-in. turtles sold to pet shops and wholesalers yield about \$3 apiece.

A 500 by 40-ft. pond is stocked with more than 15,000 breeder turtles. Most are about dinner-plate size. The egg laying season starts about April 1 and runs until the end of June. Pregnant females emerge from the water to lay their clutches - which usually consist of 7 to 10 eggs, but have been known to contain as many as 23 - in a 10-ft. wide swath of mud that borders the pools on all sides.

"They dig a hole for the eggs four to six inches down in the mud. When we come to dig them up - and we try to do this the day they're laid - we find them by landmarks such as wet spots, claw marks, and raised

earth," says Kliebert.

Most laying is done early in the morning; a red ear will lay two or three times a season. Over the three months Kliebert's breeders lay a total of 1.5 million eggs, and of these about 70% hatch out.

Once gathered, eggs are placed in Kliebert's four incubators which can hold the entire 1.5 million eggs laid at the farm. Incubation lasts 70 to 75 days.

The "red ears" at Kliebert's farm get fed from mid-March until the end of August. Fifty pounds of catfish food pellets are scattered every day in the ponds, and this is augmented with catfish heads and entrails, water lily pads, and duckweed - "a particular favorite", says Kliebert.

Kliebert also raises alligators in numerous pools of varying sizes. He claims to have the oldest alligator in captivity - 37 years old. He maintains 200 females and 50 males for his breeding stock. Males can measure a whopping 19 ft. long and weigh 2,500 lbs. while females rarely exceed 9 ft. and weigh about 900 lbs.

The young are raised to between 4 and 6 ft. when they're slaughtered (up to about 175 'gators per year), a process which is done at the farm. Alligator meat is shipped all over the U.S.; the hides go entirely to France. The farm can be toured seven days a week from March to November.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Kliebert's Turtle and Alligator Farm, 41067 W. Yellow Water Road, Hammond, La. 70401 (ph 504 345-3617).



This trap was called the "Wheel of Death". When mouse goes after bait a spring-loaded door snaps shut behind him and he's caught inside a square wire cage. He then goes through a hole and is trapped inside a cylinder-shaped cage that spins around freely. He can't get back out and runs himself to death.

MORE THAN 300 DIFFERENT MODELS

## "World Class" Mouse Trap Collection

Dave Huffman, Galesburg, Ill., has been collecting mouse traps for more than six years. He now has more than 300 different models. Most are more than 70 years old, and some are up to 120 years old.

"Finding a new-style trap gives me a thrill," says Huffman, who notes that more than 3,500 mouse trap patents have been issued over the years, and there have been many more home-made traps. "I prefer to collect homemade traps because they often have more ingenious designs than commercial models. Some look so odd that you wouldn't even know they were mouse traps.

"More people are starting to collect mouse traps, but I think I got into it on the first wave. When I started going to antique shops to look for mouse traps and asked the owners if they had any, they'd often give me a funny look. It's hard to find a trap I don't have, even though we travel throughout the Midwest looking for them."

Huffman's collection traces its beginnings back to 1982 when his wife bought him a mousetrap for Christmas - a French "Marty/Arouze" wire basket. He liked it and kept it. A few years later his daughter gave him another unusual trap as a gift. Then he started going to antique shops.

Huffman says he paid between \$5 and \$50 for most of his traps. However, he has paid as much as \$150 for an unusual model and there are times when he finds a rare one and "I just can't dig fast enough for the money. If I've already got the same trap, I might buy it, but I won't pay what I'd pay for the first one."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Dave Huffman, 201 Blaine Ave., Galesburg, Ill. 61401 (ph 309 342-2327).



This trap is equipped with a vertical wire cage that rises over a square water tank. Front door is held open by a length of wire. Mouse climbs up cage toward bait and pushes up on a hinged tin door at the top which automatically drops shut behind him and causes the front door to automatically reopen. He then falls into the water and drowns.



Plastic "boat" trap has a number of small holes in the bottom. Bait is inside an enclosure and can be reached only when mouse stands on a small steel plate, which drops like an elevator to bottom of boat. You then submerge boat in water to drown mouse.



This trap looks like a clipboard holder. You push it down on one end to open it and use a lever to set it. When mouse takes the bait, top piece snaps down on him.



Brass "claw" dates back to 1877. It has a number of steel prongs at bottom. Bait hangs on a spring-loaded mechanism at center a few inches off the floor. When mouse stands on its hind legs to grab the bait, he trips a trigger and gets skewered by prongs.

The Klieberts also maintain 200 female and 50 male alligators for breeding stock.