



Colorful prairie flowers and grasses are in demand for commercial landscaping, says Jack Gogerty, who uses a conventional combine to harvest native prairie.

IOWA BROTHERS WHO GROW PRAIRIE WILDFLOWER SEED SAY DEMAND IS HIGH

Prairie Wildflowers: A Colorful New Crop

Prairie wildflowers are making a comeback on Corn Belt farms, say Jack and Dennis Gogerty, who grow and harvest wildflowers on their farm near Zeoring, Iowa.

"There's an increasing demand for native plants for CRP and Wildlife Habitat Incentive programs, and also for residential and industrial property," says Jack. "Because of low production costs and good demand, prairie wildflower seed can net from \$200 to \$300 per acre, which makes it a sideline worth checking out."

The Gogerty brothers were fortunate enough to have a native seed supply right on their farm - a 4-acre patch of virgin prairie that contained more than 100 flower and grass species ranging from compass-plant to purple prairie clover.

"That part of the field wasn't near a tile outlet, so it was never plowed," says Jack. "The prairie patch has now become a valuable source of seed for our prairie restoration."

The Gogertys harvested their first crop of prairie seeds three years ago and they plant an additional 5 to 7 acres each year. They clip the newly established stands two or three times each summer at about 10 in. above ground to control weeds and improve tillering. Most flower and grass species are ready to harvest in early October.

They use a conventional combine to harvest the prairie seeds by blocking off air flow to the sieves so the seed is harvested "dirty". The grain tank gets filled with leaf and stem parts as well as pure seed. "At planting time we put this trashy mixture into a fertilizer spinner spreader which spreads the seeds and dried plant parts evenly over the field," says Jack. "We then shallow disk the seedbed to provide a light soil cover.



Combine is set to harvest "dirty" so the grain tank gets filled with leaf and stem parts as well as pure seed. At planting, the trashy mixture is run through a fertilizer spinner spreader.

"We hand harvest any plants that are subject to shattering about two weeks before using the combine. However, we've found that some fragile species mature early and tend to shatter in the wind."

Next year, when their first field of restored prairie will have been established for 5 years, the Gogertys will harvest and sell the seed.

Some of the prairie wildflowers they grow include cone flowers, switchgrass, Big bluestem, blackeyed Susans, heather aster, shooting star, and Indian grass.

Prairie flowers and grass seed is available from specialty seed houses or railroad rights-of-way and roadsides if you want to start small.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Jack Gogerty, 71095 105th St., Zeoring, Iowa 50278 (ph 515 487-7489).

Do Friends & Neighbors Borrow Your FARM SHOW?

You probably don't mind sharing your copies of FARM SHOW with friends, neighbors, relatives or co-workers, but wouldn't it be nice if they all had their own subscriptions? Now you can "gift" a year of FARM SHOW to anyone at a cut-rate price when you renew your own subscription. See the order form enclosed with this issue or call 1-800-834-9665 to order by credit card.



There's a lot of interest in do-it-yourself sawmills, says Bill Reeks, whose latest new sawmill is lightweight, easy to roll back and forth, and simple to operate.

Build Your Own Bandsaw Mill

Four years ago FARM SHOW first wrote about a do-it-yourself bandsaw mill built for less than \$100 by Bill Reeks, Cromwell, Ky. Response by readers was tremendous, with thousands contacting Reeks for more information and hundreds building their own mills.

Now Reeks is back with a new version of his sawmill which is lighter weight, easier to roll back and forth, and much simpler to operate.

"I couldn't believe how much interest there is in do-it-yourself sawmills. We've had inquiries from all 50 states, all Canadian provinces, and from countries around the world," says Reeks.

What makes the design of his new sawmill unique is that the bandsaw blade turns on a pair of auto tires. Reeks uses the 13-in. "donut" spares found in many cars. "You can buy a pair of them at most junkyards for \$5 or less because they're really not good for anything," he notes.

His new "Yellow-Jak-It" sawmill is powered by a 10-hp. motor and will handle logs up to 28 in. dia. You can use it to cut di-

mension lumber or big beams. It's so accurate it'll even cut 1/16-in. thick veneer.

Reeks built his first sawmill after a storm knocked over a bunch of trees on his farm. He couldn't justify the cost of a commercial unit so he decided to build his own.

The latest new sawmill weighs 340 lbs. and Reeks spent only about \$530 to build it, including the cost of a new motor. You can get by cheaper with used parts, he notes.

Reeks has put together a big packet of information that includes 72 color photos and detailed blueprints showing all measurements. He also includes a 12-page booklet listing suppliers of components, which include engines, band blades, centrifugal clutches, sprockets, chains, sheaves, pulleys, cable, winches, bearings, shafts, hubs, spindles, and track wheels. The information packets sell for \$48.50 (add \$2.00 extra to Canada), or you can send \$2.00 and a self-addressed stamped envelope for literature on the do-it-yourself mill.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Bill Reeks, Yellow-Jak-It, Rt. 231, Box 7104, Cromwell, Ky. 42333.

MINI CHOPPER IN A BOX

Build Your Own Helicopter

You can be flying in about 30 hours with this new build-it-yourself helicopter kit.

GYROTech Inc. started shipping its "HoneyBee" gyro-chopper kits in January, according to the company's "Gyro" Jim Fields.

"Some farmers have expressed interest in using them to drive cattle or check fields," Fields says. "Advantages of the gyro-chopper design over fixed wing ultra lights is that you can fly in most any weather, including winds up to 25 mph. The rotor keeps it level, just like a gyroscope. It takes off like an airplane and lands more like a helicopter."

The HoneyBee is powered by a 40 hp Rotax engine and has a 24-ft. rotor. It's equipped with a 5-gal. gas tank that gives it a 60 mile range at 55 mph. Speeds range from 9 mph up to 63 mph.

When complete, the craft weighs just 242 lbs. and is about 10 1/2 ft. long by 7 ft. wide with a 4 1/2-ft. wheelbase.

Complete kit sells for \$9,495. Plans are available for \$49.95 plus \$3 S&H, video for \$19.95 plus \$3 S&H, information package



"HoneyBee" chopper takes off like an airplane and lands like a helicopter. One big advantage over fixed wing ultra lights is that you can fly in winds up to 25 mph, says the company.

for \$5. Package options also available.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, GYROTech Inc., 188 Wealthy St. SW, Suite G, Grand Rapids, Mich. 49503 (ph 616 458-1228; fax 776-0224; Website: www.gyrotechinc.com; E mail: gyrotechinc@iserv.net).