

Money-Making Ideas To Boost Farm Income

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 E-mail us at: Editor@farmshow.com.



It took about 15 days and about 1,500 tons of rock make up this football field-sized sheep that promotes Roger Harley's farm.

Rock Sheep Promotes Livestock Business

Roger Harley found a unique way to promote his farm using a perfectly situated hillside and a big pile of rocks.

The Keene, Ontario farmer made a football field-sized sheep on the side of a hill next to his farmstead, where he produces cattle, sheep and hogs.

The purpose of the 300 by 400-ft. piece of rural "artwork" was to promote his farm and also focus attention in the community on the lack of any nearby packing plants. The closest one is almost 4 hours away.

The determined farmer wants to revitalize his rural community, which he says is dying because of past closures of regional abattoirs.

Harley is proposing a federally inspected, multi-species plant that would increase local employment and help provide a local market for farm products.

So far, his plan is working, because once the giant rock sheep was completed, people started driving out to see it. He points out that there has even been a lot of aerial traffic. But most importantly, strong support has been mustered for the abattoir project.

"It's something different," he says, "and

it has certainly gotten people talking... and listening, too. I recently spoke with the federal minister of agriculture and he wanted to know what our plans were. Today, I got a letter from him, giving names and addresses of people and organizations who may be able to help."

It took about 15 days to create the sheep. Local animator, Barney Wornoff of Super Popular Studios, helped with designing a grid pattern for the sheep. After a matching grid was "drawn" on the hillside using reels of caution tape of the type used by police at crime scenes, volunteers used rocks to complete each section of the drawing inside the grid lines.

"There are probably 1,500 tons of rock in this sheep," Harley says "Most were taken from an old fence line on the farm. Moving and placement was mostly done with backhoes, but some was also done by hand."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Roger Harley, Freedom Foods, 1578 Heritage Line, R.R.3, Keene, Ontario, Canada K0L 2G0 (ph 705 295-4656; email: freedomfoods@nexicon.net).

Good Info For Mom Inventors

If you're a mom with a "million dollar idea," you might want to check out Tamara Monosoff's website at www.mominventors.com.

She provides information about what it takes to become a successful inventor, directing the information to women. One section is a 9-page downloadable document called "10 Steps to Inventing: The Mom Inventor's Roadmap."

The website's eBay store also sells "mom invented" items including "Good Bites," a plastic mold that cuts off bread crusts and "Shoe Clues," animal stickers that will face each other when the shoes are on the "right" feet.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Mom Inventors, Inc., 125 Grover Lane, Walnut Creek, Calif. 94596 (ph 866 376-



Sandwich cutter is one invention successfully promoted by mominventors.com

1122; email: info@mominventors.com; website: www.mominventors.com).



George Hubka picks dried corn silks before harvest and sells them in Ziploc bags to ethnic food and craft stores. Customers use them for making tea, arts and crafts projects, and fancy restaurants use them as dinner plate garnishes.

He Makes Money Selling Corn Silk

Who would ever think you could make money marketing corn silk? It's money that shouldn't be left in the field, says George Hubka, Dowling, Mich.

He sells bundles of dried field corn silk packaged in Ziploc bags to ethnic food stores and retail craft shops.

The silks are "pulled" from the end of the corn ears before the crop is harvested. As they walk down the row, workers pull the silks with one hand and place them in a large plastic bucket carried in the other hand. The silks are stored in large mesh bags until they can be processed later. He prepares labels on a computer and places them in the Ziploc bags along with the silks. The finished bags are then counted and placed in boxes for shipment.

"If just half the silks from a field with 26,000 plants per acre are harvested, we can produce more than 200 bags for sale. After the cost of labor, packing material,

and delivery are deducted, the net return is \$70 to \$90 per acre," says Hubka. "Customers buy the corn silk for making tea, art and craft projects, and making holiday decorations. Fancy restaurants use the silks to garnish the dinner plates.

"I got the idea after talking to an ethnic food store owner. He wanted the silks to make a 'kidney tea' which he drinks every day. After talking with arts and crafts shop owners, I saw an additional possible niche market. We use clear packages that allow customers to see the silks to ensure their color and quality prior to making a purchase. And they're able to re-seal the bag to retain silk quality until the silks are gone."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, George Hubka, 3691 Bristol Oaks, Dowling, Mich. 49050 (ph 269 721-3830).

He Sells Hunting Rights On The Internet

Dave Coonrod is using eBay.com to showcase and sell hunting leases in Texas. The Lubbock, Texas outfitter spends most of his time guiding hunters and fishermen or leasing hunting rights out to local and regional hunters. He finds that eBay pays off the best.

"If I lease land out to a local hunter, I lose all access to it," says Coonrod. "It's more lucrative to lease land over eBay and then run guided hunts on it. I may lease out a portion of a ranch or lease by time periods."

Coonrod is actually subleasing hunting rights, which he initially leased from local farmers and ranchers. He then works with the owner to manage the land for wildlife and manage the hunting. He encourages them to leave crops for quail and other wildlife.

"Ranchers know everything about cattle and crops, but they may not know a lot about wildlife," he says. "Their biggest phobias are getting sued or having it overhunted. Now they are making more money off of hunting with none of the worries."

Coonrod carries a \$2 million insurance policy to cover his hunting business and the leased land. He has one lodge that sleeps 8 and is in the process of remodeling an old farmhouse for a second lodge. He advertises locally but adding eBay has attracted hunters from across the U.S.

"It is a low cost way to advertise, and it gives people a chance to see pictures of the area, dates of hunts, success rates and

such," says Coonrod. "It doesn't hurt to get the exposure, and it only costs \$6 to 12 per week based on the number of photos. You can even link to a web page. If 1,200 people look at the ad, and 100 go to my web page, that's 100 more than I would have had."

Putting an ad on eBay doesn't mean selling at your regular price, warns Coonrod. "People want a deal, but you can't give it away either," he adds.

He offers several hunting options. With a full guided hunt, he is with the hunters all day. In a semi-guided hunt, he shows them property lines, deer stands, feeding areas and which way the deer move and where other hunters are likely to be. For the lowest cost, he takes a hunter out to the lease, drops him off at a stand, and leaves.

"A guided hunt sold on eBay generally goes for \$1,500 to \$1,750 and includes all lodging, food and guiding," explains Coonrod.

Regardless of type of hunt, hunters pay extra for trophy status deer, wild boar and turkey. Depending on the Boone & Crocket rating (official scoring method), a hunter may pay from \$1,000 to \$1,500 for a guided deer hunt and another \$1,000 to \$2,000 for the deer based on Boone & Crocket points.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Texas Trophy Guide, c/o David Coonrod, 6908 Hope Ave., Lubbock, Texas 79424 (ph 806 778-7632; website: www.texas trophyguide.com).