

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 few pages.

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).

Dried Flower Sideline Saved Their Farm

When times got tough and farm foreclosure loomed on the horizon, an Alberta farm family found a way out with an unusual "crop" - dried flowers.

Francis and Colleen Cyr got their start in 1989, and they haven't looked back since. In fact, they've continued to branch out into other endeavors, all tied to attracting paying customers to their otherwise traditional "working farm" - a 640-acre operation.

In fact, their current "Bloomin' Inn Guest Ranch" got its start in 1995 because customers who bought their dried flower arrangements and Christmas decorations at local craft shows and Farmers' Markets, expressed interest in visiting their farm to buy directly. Once they started doing that, they expressed a wish that there were accommodations and an eatery nearby.

Cyr's bed and breakfast was born, and they now offer a total of seven guestrooms and two cabins, decorating them with antiques and handcrafted accessories.

They continue to produce, arrange and sell dried flowers from their 7-acre plot, but one thing continued to lead to another, and they opened an on-farm antiques and collectibles shop and a meat store. The family also started offering quilting, willow basket weaving and dried flower arranging workshops, scrapbooking retreats, plus an annual farm festival and antique sale.

"Scrapbooking takes up 37 weekends of the year," Colleen comments.

The family now offers accommodations



Bloomin' Inn Guest Ranch got its start because customers wanted to visit the farm to buy dried flowers directly.

for up to 35 people.

They say people come because they want to share in the family's western country lifestyle and beautiful surroundings at the foot of the Rocky Mountains.

"The combination of selling tangible products, and the fresh country air on our farm seems to be a hit," she says. "Urban people love the opportunity to help with chores like collecting eggs, checking the lambs, taking salt to the cows out on pasture, and feed the pigs. They come to experience the farm, but they're also eager to take a piece of it back home by purchasing the various things we offer."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Francis and Colleen Cyr, Bloomin' Inn Guest Ranch, P.O. Box 1346, Pincher Creek, Alta., Canada T0K 1W0 (ph 403 627-5829; website: www.bloomin-inn.com).



Trailer rents for 30 cents per bird and includes propane. Comes with cones, scalding plucker, eviscerating table, final cleaning table and two chill tanks.

Portable Poultry Processing Trailer

"My home-built mobile processing trailer makes harvesting chickens an easier job. I rent it out mostly to area farmers who raise free-range chickens on pasture," says David Hoover, Penn Yan, N.Y.

The trailer includes everything needed to kill and process birds on-site. All the customer needs is a garden hose and an extension cord.

Hoover rents the trailer out within mostly a 50-mile radius. He got the idea when more people in his area started raising pastured poultry and he saw a need for better ways to process birds. "We started with the chassis from a camping trailer, which we lengthened to 20 ft. Then we put on a 92-in. wide diamond plate aluminum floor. All the equipment is built from scratch, although copied or modified from other equipment I had seen elsewhere. Last year we rented the unit to 35 customers."

According to Hoover, four or five people, with just a little experience, can easily process 30 or more birds per hour. The renter is responsible for transportation. A 1/2-ton pickup will tow the trailer.

Rental fee is 30 cents per bird (\$30 minimum). The fee includes propane, which provides hot water for scalding.

"A lot of the people who rent out my trailer

raise their own chickens on pasture, and in the past processing the birds was a problem," says Hoover.

Equipment on the trailer includes:

Cones - for bleeding birds.

Scalding - automatically dunks birds in water at just the right temperature for just the right time to prepare birds for plucking.

Plucker - removes all the feathers, with no need to singe.

Eviscerating table - for cleaning the intestines out of the bird. You have the option of using shackles or cleaning on the table. Includes water hoses to keep everything clean.

Final cleaning table - allows for quality control and cleaning the gizzard.

Chill tanks - there are two of them. One tank is for pre-chilling, with cold water used for quick cool down prior to final tank. The final chill tank contains ice water to keep fresh birds cold for sale or home freezing.

Steps that fold out from one side of the trailer fasten onto the floor for transport. The roof also disassembles for transport.

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He Specializes In Adding Height To Buildings

Ted Weiss of New Salem, N. Dak., operates a house and shed moving business. He recently sent FARM SHOW photos of a 45 by 80-ft. metal calf shed that he not only moved, but also raised. The building originally measured 10 ft. from the ground to the bottom of the rafters. He added 6 ft. to get a 16-ft. rafter height.

"Over time the ground under the building got so full of manure that the owner could barely get his skid loader under the rafters. With the extra height, he'll never have that problem again."

During the last five years Weiss has raised about a dozen different buildings, many of them pole sheds. "Usually, customers want higher buildings so they can store bigger machinery such as combines, air seeders and cultivators, and so forth," says Weiss.

The process of adding height to a building is usually done when the building is already securely braced for transport and is at its final location. "However, pole buildings can often be extended at their original location."

He uses a series of hydraulic jacks to raise the building. Then, it's transported on a set of wheels equipped with steerable axles.

The building shown was originally supported by 4-in. sq. wooden poles. Once the building was raised, Weiss used lag screws to attach 3-ft. long, 4-in. wide steel straps to both sides of the poles and the 6-ft. extensions he put below. Twelve lag screws were used on each pole. A series of 1/4-in. pilot holes were drilled into the wood before the metal straps were screwed on in order to limit cracking of poles.

Then, the building was braced for transport. Both channel iron and steel I-beams were used to build a grid system that allowed the building to be picked up without distorting its original shape.

At the new location, holes were drilled in the ground and the poles were lowered into them. The interior support steel was then removed. Galvanized tin was added to the lower sides of the building to close them up. The building's doors were replaced with larger ones.

"On buildings supported by round poles, I use curved steel plates instead of flat plates to attach the new and old poles together," notes Weiss.

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Weiss adds height to building after it's been braced for transport. He uses a series of hydraulic jacks to raise it up.

