

Bamboo Business Booming...In Ohio!

Jerry Burton is a bamboo expert who ships his product all over the country. What's surprising is that he's growing the tropical product in an unlikely place - Ohio.

In addition to zoos and conservatories, Burton's found a good market in selling bamboo for privacy fences. The amazing growth rate - it can reach full height in one to two months - gives results fast.

"The cold hardy varieties I grow can range in height from 15 to 35 ft.," says Burton.

He says there are more than 1,500 types of bamboo grown throughout the world, with one or two native to the U.S. Some varieties grow as tall as 100 ft. Unlike other exotic species, there's little danger bamboo will invade broad areas. The long-lived grass only produces seed every 60 to 100 years. It's propagated by cuttings.

Burton's Bamboo Garden is located in southwestern Ohio. He says that even there about half the winters are harsh enough to damage his most hearty bamboo. If only the leaves are killed, new leaves will push off the old in the spring. If the bud is killed, the cane (trunk) will die also. When that happens, it then takes two years or more for the rhi-

zome mass below ground to produce canes to the original or higher height.

Burton offers more than 60 types of bamboo. Grown in pots, all varieties are priced at \$55 for a no. 5 pot and \$35 for a no. 2 pot when picked up at his gardens. He offers personal tours of his display gardens by appointment only. However, his website is a mother lode of information on bamboo with photos and information on more than 20 types he has for sale. He notes that when he started growing bamboo in the 1980's, there were only about 17 sources for bamboo in the U.S. Today the American Bamboo Society has 18 single-spaced pages of sources for bamboo and related information.

Burton cautions against simply planting bamboo in a yard. He recommends burying a barrier 22 in. deep or more around the plant or alongside a planting. "If you don't contain bamboo with an in-ground barrier, it will spread and take over, because it spreads underground by rhizomes," says Burton.

He also cautions against planting it with the idea of harvesting it for furniture or flooring in most of the U.S. He notes that bamboo grown north of the Mason-Dixon line isn't



"The cold hardy varieties of bamboo I grow range in height from 15 to 35 ft.," says Jerry Burton, who's found a good market selling bamboo for privacy fences.

likely to develop cane walls thick enough. However, many types of bamboo can be harvested sooner for flutes, curtain rods, picture frames and other uses.

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Burton, 7352 Gheils Carroll Rd., Morrow, Ohio 45152 (ph 513 899-3446 or toll free 877 899-3446; jerry@burtonsbamboogarden.com; www.burtonsbamboogarden.com).

Walk-Through "C" Gate Leaves Hands Free

You'll never forget to close this gate, because you never have to open it. The new hands-free "C" gate eliminates the need to ever mess with chains or latches because you simply walk through.

"It's a great way to enter or exit pens," says inventor Marlin Haberstroh, Lisbon, N. Dak. "It allows you to easily carry saddles, feed, water, and other objects into or out of fenced areas."

The arched gate is made from tubular steel and is 42 in. wide. Its curved form allows people easy passage, yet the shape prevents livestock from getting through.

To install the gate, you remove a small section of fence and place the gate next to a pre-existing fence post, leaving enough room to walk through. Then bolt the center and ends of the gate to posts, using metal brackets already on the gate.

"You can adjust the opening size to whatever you want depending on where you locate the posts," says Haberstroh. "For example, if you plan to carry 5-gal. buckets through the gate, you'd set the bucket on the ground and then place the posts so you can comfortably fit through."

Haberstroh also offers a "Half C" Gate that can be used in combination with the C Gate to leave a smooth fence line.

"The Half C Gate works especially well for arenas or riding pens. The curved walk through portion can be positioned entirely outside the arena," says Haberstroh. The C Gate sells for \$169; the Half C gate for \$250.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, The C Gate LLC, 7173 128th Ave. S.E., Lisbon, N. Dak. 58054 (ph 701 680-1204; mhaber@tds.net; www.TheCGate.com).



Hands-free "C" gate eliminates the need to ever mess with chains or latches because you simply walk through. "It allows you to easily carry saddles, feed, water, and other objects into or out of fenced areas," says inventor Marlin Haberstroh.

Solar Bubbler Keeps Water Open

This new "solar bubbler" is a 10-watt unit that harvests the sun to power an underwater aerator. Air bubbles create a flow of warmer water against the ice, melting it away to keep waterers open or pond fish alive.

"It works great in ponds up to a 6 ft. depth and in stock tanks," says Rose Kern, Solar Ranch Products, Albuquerque, New Mexico. "Up to two inches of ice on the pond shouldn't be a problem as long as there's water beneath it and you have plenty of sunshine. It'll go through one inch easily."

A 15 by 24 1/4-in., photovoltaic module powers an actuator air pump. Air flows through a 15-ft. hose to a one-way air valve below the ice. Mounting brackets provided with the kit make it easy to attach the solar panel and air pump out of the reach of livestock.

The system has proven itself in some tough conditions. However, Kern cautions it may not work in some areas where the ice freezes too thick overnight or where there isn't sufficient sunlight.

We have people using them in the mountains of Utah and Colorado, and we've sold them as far east as Pennsylvania," she says.

The pre-assembled units are priced at \$299 plus shipping.



"Solar bubbler" uses a photovoltaic module to power an underwater aerator, which keeps waterers open.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Solar Ranch, P.O. Box 9964, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87119 (ph 505 417-6790; solarranch@acweb.com; www.solarranch.com).

Dump Rake Gathers Trimmings On New Nebraska Winery

As Tim and Dave Nissen developed their new vineyard and winery over the past four years near Bow Valley, Neb., they've come up with unusual ways to get the work done.

"Vineyards involve a lot of manual labor," Tim says. "And, as with any new business, the startup costs are always more than you expect. That's why we decided to modify an old horse-drawn dump rake our father bought years ago to rake up trimmings."

Yearly pruning of grape vines is essential. For the past four years, the Nissen's have used their modified rake to clear clippings from the vines out of the vineyard.

"I had to take two feet off each side of the rake to bring it down from 12 foot to eight foot," Tim says. "The hitch was changed from a horse drawn one to a tractor hitch."

When the Nissen's explored the cost of a rake made for use in vineyards, they found they could save thousands by using what they had on hand.

"This rake was just sitting there waiting to be used or to go to the iron buyer," Tim says. "It only took a few hours to cut it down, weld it back together, and get it ready to work again. The only thing that's different now is



Tim and Dave Nissen modified an old horse-drawn dump rake to gather up trimmings from their vineyard.

that it's gathering vines instead of hay." Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Tim Nissen, 88560 566 Ave., Huntington, Neb. 68739 (ph 402 254-3426).