Most were obtained from private breeders Peregrine Falcon, kestrel falcon, Barbary Acciptiter Enterprises in 1989. Now retired, extremely time consuming, there are those sport of royalty and nobles. Although it’s uses a trained wild predator in a human/cating the public about the value and beauty Birds of prey are Karen “Kitty” Carroll’s cant market opportunities in Europe and American market - and there are signifi-pairs, Pigeon King International Inc. can’t come without having to invest in the breed-der to sell all of the extra young from the sub contractor program. We pay the sub contrac-tors for all offspring at $50 per bird. The sub are then paid $10 per young healthy bird pro-duced. Based on an average annual production of 10 offspring per pair per year, a 100-pair flock could earn $25,000 per year on the initial $20,000 investment. If clients choose to invest $500 per breed-ing pair, the company guarantees payment of $50 per healthy bird produced, or $50,000 annually. If clients choose to invest in squabbing breeding stock, they pay $100 per pair and are then paid $10 per young healthy bird pro-duced.

“We also have a sub contracting program whereby an investor can purchase breeding stock from us and then sub contract them to individual farmers with no investment for stock by the farmer. We pay the sub contrac-tor for all offspring at $50 per bird. The sub contractor then pays the farmer $25 or some other agreed amount per bird,” Galbraith says. “This way the farmer gets a good in-come without having to invest in the breed-ing stock. He simply sets up his barn and supplies feed and labor. This program is prof-itable for everyone involved and the sub con-tractor makes an excellent income on his in-vestment without a lot of work.”

New pigeon breeders need to invest money in either new or modified facilities to meet bird accommodation requirements. “Breeding pairs should have access to a large wire mesh perch attached to the sunny side of the barn, so they can get outside. They love to sit outside whether it’s sunny, rainy, or snowy,” Galbraith says.

In addition to basic feeders and waterers, the birds’ housing must have pigeon nest-boxes and perches with mesh screens below for catching droppings. “It may seem expensive to get set up, but if you have your money back after a year or two of production,” says Galbraith. “There’s no quota or large equipment to purchase like there is in other farming enterprises like chickens or dairy, and all healthy young birds are picked up at your farm once per month, free of charge.”

The breeding stock supplied by Pigeon King comes with 20 percent additional breeding pairs at no extra charge to as an easy method of providing a one-year-warranty. “You get to sell all of the extra young from the free pairs in addition to the pairs you pay for, so if you lose a few birds, they’re already replaced,” he explains. “However, if you lose a large number of birds (more than 20 per-cent), we’ll still replace them.”

At 20 weeks of age, all healthy offspring are ready to be sold back to Pigeon King and moved to a large holding facility from where they’re either sold as breeding stock, or trained for several months before being sent to another barn for racing.

“We’re the second largest supplier of breeding stock in the world and routinely ship birds in both directions across the U.S. border. We’ve also shipped birds as far overseas as Malaysia,” he says.

“Pigeons can take extreme heat or cold better than chickens, and need 16 hours of light per day for maximum production,” Galbraith says. “You can get good results from a naturally ventilated barn, or you can go to an insulated barn with small fans and some heat in the winter, if you prefer.”

Pigeons’ diet is simple and pelleted ra-tions can be purchased at a feed mill that meet dietary needs of laying birds or young growing birds.

Galbraith has been breeding, flying and marketing pigeons for 54 years and says his Manitoba holding barn is the world’s largest pigeon barn under one roof at 40,000 sq. ft. He’s been contracting breeding flocks with individual family farmers for the past 5 years.

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Falcon Business Flying High

Birds of prey are Karen “Kitty” Carroll’s livelihood. She travels around the country demonstrating the art of falconry, and educating the public about the value and beauty of these unique creatures.

“Falconry is the oldest hunting sport that uses a trained wild predator in a human/ bird alliance,” she says. “It was once the sport of royalty and nobles. Although it’s extremely time consuming, there are those of us who continue to take up the sport be-cause we love the birds.”

Carroll lives at Live Oak, Fla., and has been a “licensed master and eagle class fal-coner” since 1974. She and her husband, Pete, established their full-time business, Acciptiter Enterprises in 1989. Now retired, Pete still does consulting.

The couple currently has 12 birds which include the Cooper’s hawk, Harris’ hawk, peregrine falcon, kestrel falcon, Barbary falcon, barn owl, barred owl and eagle owl. Most were obtained from private breeders around the country, she says.

The pair travels about 30,000 miles per

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Looking for a sideline business? How about raising pigeons?

Pigeon King International Inc., based in Waterloo, Ontario, says its 10-year pigeon breeding contracts are an excellent way to make money from otherwise empty older barns, grain bins, mobile homes or other buildings, says Pigeon King International.

Pigeon Farming Catching On Big Time

Pigeon houses consist of plywood nesting boxes and perches, with mesh screens below for catching droppings. By Janis Scholte, Contributing Editor