



Here's one of the projects from MacDonald's website: Tony Utterback in Alabama, framed this shed with pallets and then finished it with stucco and a metal roof.

He Puts Old Pallets To Work

Got a big pile of wood pallets? Visit John MacDonald's website, and you'll find lots of ideas to put them to work.

MacDonald and people who submit projects to his website have used pallets for sheds, fences, benches, chicken coops and even outhouses.

"I had bought a garden tractor, and winter was coming on," he recalls. "I needed a shed for it and built one in a day using pallets."

After that MacDonald started using pallets to hold firewood, building a shed out of pallets that could hold up to four cords of wood. Then he built another shed for a generator and other dry storage. Today he has 6 pallet sheds and a 300-ft. fence around one side of his property, all made from pallets.

"I screwed the pallets together using mostly sheet rock screws," he says. "The key to the whole thing is to get the floor leveled properly."

For his tractor shed, MacDonald used four 4 by 4-ft. pallets set on recycled brick. Each wall section was made with two pallets. The front bottom was made with a single pallet split and set to either side with room for the tractor to be driven through.

A second set of two pallets split in half added about two feet to the height of the front to give slope for the roof. These pallet sections were set to overlap the lower pallet sections for added stability. Eventually MacDonald cut a section out of the center and hinged it to give himself headroom when driving the tractor in and out.

Building with pallets is easy in part because trimming one edge of a pallet allows it to overlap a lower pallet edge. The spacing between pallet boards is such that filling them in with boards from damaged pallets is easy.

For the roof, MacDonald simply ran four 2 by 4's from front to back and secured four pallets to them, again filling in the spaces with rescued boards.



MacDonald has built a couple of these simple pallet sheds. His website is loaded with step-by-step photos of his and others' pallet projects.

"The stringers were the only new boards used in the entire project," he says. "I used plywood on the floor for added stability."

The final step was to add a door. Again MacDonald used a pallet to fit the 4 by 4-ft. opening. A pallet was also used as a ramp.

"People told me that pallet wood would rot, but that's not the case," he says. "Even the fence I made from pallets has been up for more than 10 years. All I have to do is straighten it a bit each spring."

MacDonald's fence, like his sheds, consists of overlapped panels hung on 4 by 4-in. posts as well as recycled steel pipe. Designed to keep his dogs in his yard, the pallets are 1 1/2 high on the sides and one pallet high on the rear.

"It does what I wanted it to do — keep the dogs in," says MacDonald. "I'm not in it for the environment. I just like to save money."

He's not alone in his desire to save money with pallets. He says he gets 300 to 400 visitors a day to his pallet website. It's loaded with step-by-step photos of his and others' pallet projects.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, John MacDonald, 36 Masters Road, Summerville, Nova Scotia, Canada B0N 2K0 (ph 902 633-2670; <http://summerville-novascotia.com/PalletWoodShed>).



This small cabin was built almost entirely from free pallet wood.

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This Forage Corn "Tillers" Like Wheat

Plant a seed of MasterGraze, and as it grows it'll look like you planted half a dozen. The unique forage corn from Masters Choice Hybrids is the only known brown mid-rib variety (BMR) that tillers like wheat. It produces 75 percent of the bulk of a conventional corn silage variety, but in only 60 days, which leaves plenty of time for multi-cropping. Like all BMR varieties, it's low in lignin and high in digestibility.

"Our customers use it for haylage, baleage and grazing," says Kristen Cameron, Masters Choice Hybrids. "It can produce up to 7 tons per acre with no special tillage. Even average soils will produce five tons an acre."

MasterGraze can be planted from early spring until late fall, needing only 60 days of heat and soil temperatures above 55°. First introduced in Illinois, it's now grown from Florida to North Dakota and west to California.

While balanced soil fertility is important, the forage corn requires only 1/2 to 2/3 the nutrients of a grain corn crop, including only 1 to 1 1/2 units of nitrogen per growing day before harvest. Population levels can vary from 25,000 to 40,000 seeds per acre.

"It plants best with a corn planter, but you can also use a drill with foam cups so the seed isn't damaged," advises Cameron.

The forage corn grows slowly for the first month and then rapidly the second. The company advises grazing when the corn nears tassel stage, with the crop providing high quality grazing for 4 to 5 weeks. If planted in early May, MastersGraze is ready for grazing in July/August. This "August slump" is when milk production and growth of pastured animals normally slows as grass production slows.

If harvested for haylage or baleage, dry matter is at its greatest as the first stalk in the plant mass begins to tassel. Waiting until after



One seed produced this multi-stalk plant. "Tillering" forage corn produces 75 percent as much bulk as a conventional corn silage variety, but does so in only 60 days.

tassel stage increases the chance of lodging and reduces quality.

If harvested above the lowest growth point, tillers will regrow once; however, yield will be only 25 to 35 percent of the first crop. Interseeding a second forage crop in the MastersGraze stubble is suggested.

Seed is available as organic or treated and can be purchased from local dealers or direct from Masters Choice. Cameron says the suggested retail price is \$115 per 80,000 count bag.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Masters Choice, 3010 State Rt. 146 E, Anna, Ill. 62906. (ph 866 444-1044; kristen@seedcorn.com; www.seedcorn.com).

Live Trap Resets For Multiple Catches

Trapper Matt Uhlik decided it wasn't efficient to drive around every day to check traps for one animal, so he designed a trap to catch multiple animals at a time.

The Uhlik Repeating Live Trap consists of a holding cage with a sheet metal box and trigger plate on top. The Greenleaf, Kan., inventor created a trigger that resets itself after an animal is trapped.

Bait is placed on the trigger and, when the raccoon, possum or another animal goes for the bait, it sets off the trigger and dumps the animal in the cage.

Uhlik has caught everything from tomcats to raccoons to possums to skunks — sometimes he finds a couple different species in the cage. Confinement seems to change their aggressive nature as he had three tomcats at one time and a cat and skunk another time, and there was no apparent sign of fighting.

Uhlik uses cat food as bait. The first day he sets up the cage he doesn't set the trigger, and visiting critters get a free meal. The next day, he sets the trigger.

He has also designed a smaller version to catch rats and smaller animals.

Both versions are patent-pending, and Uhlik is working with a local fabricator to make traps. They will be available for sale sometime in early 2011; the price has not yet been determined.

Uhlik invites interested trappers and distributors to contact him.

To see the trap in action check out the Youtube video: uhliktrap2 (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h7tENb19c>).

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Matt Uhlik, 610 2nd St., Greenleaf, Kan. 66943 (ph 785 747-2221; uhlikmapa@yahoo.com).



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Bait is placed on trigger. When animal goes for the bait, it sets off the trigger and dumps animal into cage.