

Trailer Takes Flowers To Market

“Our flower trailer lets my wife haul flowers to our local farmer’s market without needing any help from me,” says Chuck Schreiber, Calabash, N.C.

Schreiber started with a flatbed trailer that measures 8 1/2 ft. long by 4 ft. wide and has a plywood floor. He added 28-in. high wooden sides made from 1 by 4 treated lumber, with a swing-out “gate” on back. He also installed 14-in. wide fold-out shelves on each side for displaying potted flowers and hanging baskets. When folded out, triangle-shaped metal brackets support the hinged shelves.

“It works slick. My wife uses a garden tractor to pull the trailer to our farmer’s market which is just a couple of blocks away,” says Schreiber. “I came up with the

idea because my wife loves to grow flowers, and this year she wanted to sell her excess at the farmer’s market instead of at our home. I spent less than \$100 to build it.

“To keep everything dry, I made a camper top for the trailer that pins onto the sideboards and is supported by wooden struts at the middle and top. It can be quickly folded down and removed for storage.”

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Flower trailer has 14-in. wide fold-out shelves on each side for displaying potted flowers and hanging baskets.



New Way To Bag Wood Fast

Bagwiz makes selling quantity firewood, wood chips, shredded bark or even sawdust fast and easy. The new bagger from Great Britain can be mounted on any front-end loader or skidsteer.

Antony Strawson, of Stourton Forestry, explains how the bagger was developed. “One of our employees came up with a stationary bagger, but that meant tipping loads of wood into a hopper with a forklift and a second forklift underneath holding a bag. It required too many people with too many machines doing too few bags an hour.”

Strawson sells firewood to individual homeowners and wholesale markets, as well as anyone else who burns or sells firewood. As oil prices have increased in Great Britain, demand for wood for fuel has seen massive growth. However, it’s a cost-conscious market with many competitors selling by the truck or pickup load. Bags bring a premium, but not enough to justify more expensive bagging systems on the market.

Strawson adapted the stationary system to use on a loader. The Bagwiz lets one person fill more bags faster. The loader-mounted hopper is driven into the load of firewood or other material. A heavy-duty rubber flap protects the bag. The operator then “flips” the Bagwiz back to toss material into the bag until it’s full. The loader

is then driven to a loading area and the full bag is replaced with an empty one.

The hopper has a gap large enough that wood chunks don’t bridge up. The bags are woven polypropylene and come in a variety of sizes.

“The 1.8 cu. meter bags we use can hold up to a ton of material,” says Strawson. “Our retailers and home customers alike appreciate them. We can deliver them to a garage or drive without leaving a mess. The bags also keep water off the wood.”

In addition to firewood, Strawson also markets bark, compost, landscape chips and mulch. The Bagwiz handles these equally well.

The Bagwiz is just entering production, and Strawson says he hasn’t even considered export to North America yet. He expects to sell it for under \$3,150 in Great Britain. There the bags sell for about \$3 each. He estimates bagging adds at least \$15 to the value of each bag of firewood.

“We can do up to 25 bags an hour with the Bagwiz,” explains Strawson. “It could earn us at least an extra \$375 an hour. It will pay back its cost very quickly.”

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Loader-mounted bagger digs into pile of firewood. Operator then flips unit back and tosses wood into bag until it’s full. Heavy-duty rubber flap protects front side of bag while loading.

How To Start Your Own Xmas Business

You can set up a business to make and sell wreaths, roping and other Christmas decorations using equipment and supplies from Santa’s Wholesale Supply. They also have the expertise and are happy to share, whether making decorations for the family or making products for sale.

“We’ve set up a ton of wreath making companies,” says Barb Jeske. “We walk them through how to set up their business, how to get sales, and how to market. We can often recommend bough suppliers or how to find them.”

In helping others get in the business, Jeske and her husband Dick are potentially creating competition for their other business. The 4th generation family business makes thousands of wreaths and miles of roping each year.

“Some people won’t share information,” says Jeske. “Our customers are happy with us, and we aren’t going to lose any.”

Making their own Christmas decorations is how the Jeskes got in the business of wreath-making equipment and supplies. It quickly became a new products lab, as Rick Jeske improved on existing equipment. For example, the Super Cam Clamper takes the stress off the knees that occurs with most volume, wreath-making equipment. The Elf Roping/Garland Machine offers options such as a timer and footage counter. It can produce up to 1,800 ft. of roping in 8 hrs.

“My husband saw a need for them, and we used them here in our business before we put them on the market,” says Jeske. “His workmanship is unbelievable, and we’ve never had anybody return anything.”

The Jeskes encourage buyers to visit their operation for one-on-one training in use of equipment and technique, as well as coaching. For those at a distance, the website offers links to a number of how-to videos. They also offer suggestions and advice by phone to buy-



ers as widespread as Ireland and Puerto Rico, though most sales are in the U.S. and Canada.

The Super Cam Clamper is priced at \$119. The Elf Roping/Garland Machine ranges from \$995 to \$1,295, depending on options. Smaller scale wreath makers can buy a hand-held crimper for only \$9.95 or a crimper and 10, 12-in. rings (makes a 22-in. wreath) for \$19.95. The company also offers a wide

Santa’s Wholesale Supply carries equipment you can use to set up your own Christmas business, including this Elf Roping/Garland machine (left) and knee-saving Super Cam Clamper.

variety of decorative items for finished wreaths.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Santa’s Wholesale Supply, N9678 N. Summit Lane, Summit Lake, Wis. 54485 (ph 715 275-4188; toll free 800 772-6827; www.santasupplies.com).