

Editor's Notebook



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Three Amazing (Crazy?) Ideas

Sometimes it's difficult to tell if a new idea is totally wacky or if it might be a great new idea that will revolutionize life as we know it. That's the case with three stories we came across in the past month. I'll let you be the judge.

Breeding Flies To Feed The World

A South African company says the lowly housefly can be bred by the billions to provide a high-quality source of protein.

Working in conjunction with the University of Stellenbosch, AgriProtein Technologies has set up a "mid-scale" fly farm near Cape Town with an output of two tons per week of protein. The idea is to set up dense populations of flies inside buildings and let them feed off waste products from meat processing plants and other similar sources. Two large-scale plants are on the drawing board, one in Germany and the other in South Africa. The company says the protein produced contains 9 essential amino acids with levels similar or even higher than marine fishmeal, which has been escalating in value as fisheries in some parts of the ocean have become less productive. You can read more at www.agriprotein.com. You can also check out a book with more details about the idea called "The Story Of The Fly And How It Could Save The World" (available at Amazon.com).

Making Oil Out Of Thin Air

A British company has made a big splash in recent weeks after developing a process to make petroleum out of thin air. Air Fuel Synthesis (www.airfuelsynthesis.com) has set up a demonstration plant in North Yorkshire that takes CO2 and hydrogen from the air, adds electricity (from wind and solar), and makes oil that can be used as a direct replacement in cars and trucks. The company says they're turning carbon dioxide into oil the same way photosynthesis in plants turns CO2 into oil, they're just doing it faster. They say the process is cost effective because they can use alternative electricity or off-peak power to provide the power needed.

Briefly, air is blown into a tower containing a mist of sodium hydroxide which reacts with carbon dioxide in the air, forming sodium carbonate. Electricity is then passed through the sodium carbonate to release the carbon dioxide, which is stored. A dehumidifier in the tower condenses water from the air. Water is then split into hydrogen and oxygen using electric current. The carbon dioxide and hydrogen react together to create methanol, which is passed through a gasoline fuel reactor, creating gasoline fuel.

Company chairman David Still says, "We are now ready to build the first commercial full-scale production plant."

Wave Power That Works

Millions of research dollars have been spent on attempts to find a way to harness the power of ocean waves and tides. British inventor Alvin Smith says everyone else has been going about it the wrong way, creating undersea generators direct-driven by waves and tide power. The problem is that seawater and electricity don't mix well and saltwater is very corrosive, so most underwater generators have been very expensive to manufacture and maintain. Smith says his new system consists of underwater pumps that propel sea water to onshore turbines. The "seamills"



Floating buoy rides the waves, driving underwater pump.

consist of a buoy on the surface of the water that's attached to a double-acting piston that moves up and down with the waves and tide, driving an underwater piston pump. It's simple and easy to service if anything ever goes wrong. Smith is slated to have seamills on the market by 2014.

New From Denmark

As this issue went to press we heard about a bunch of new products that'll be on display later this month at the Agromex farm show in Herning, Denmark. A few of them caught my eye.

New-Style Mineral Feeder - Plastic mineral block holder mounts on top of a pole. Four holes in the bottom of unit let excess salt and mineral fluid flow down a pole so animals can lick the pole, minimizing waste. Contact: www.grene.dk



Lely Robot Feeder - Newest version of Lely's robot feed pusher is a computer-controlled feeder system that loads, measures, mixes, and dispenses feed rations automatically while pushing alley-fed hay closer to animals. Contact: www.lely.com

Slot-Plugging Method - A Danish company put together a kit that makes it easy to plug some of the slots in hog slat flooring, when needed. Uses a special mix of mortar and fiberglass fabric. Contact: www.nordic-aik.dk



Easy Gripper Tire Handler - This compact hydraulic tool mounts to a skid steer or front-end loader. Three rubber-coated lift arms eliminate the back breaking labor normally involved with lifting tires to mount. Contact: www.justeasytools.dk

"Hot" New Money-Making Idea

My friend Barney Lundstrom spotted this fellow in Berlin near the Brandenburg Gate. There was a big music concert going on and the fellow was going around selling bratwurst, fresh-cooked on a gas-fired grill hanging from his waist. He carried a propane tank in a backpack. A hose from the tank ran up to the covered grill which had drawers to hold buns and condiments. According to my friend, he had all the business he could handle.



An entrepreneurial German vendor found lots of customers for his mobile bratwurst cooking business.

Liberty Quotes

- "The men the American people admire most extravagantly are the greatest liars: the men they detest most violently are those who try to tell them the truth." *H. L. Mencken*
- "The superior man understands what is right. The inferior man understands what is popular." *Confucius*
- "The shepherd drives the wolf from the sheep's throat, for which the sheep thanks the shepherd as his liberator, while the wolf denounces him for the same act as the destroyer of liberty." *Abraham Lincoln*
- "There is no maxim, in my opinion, which is more liable to be misapplied, and which, therefore, more needs elucidation, than the current, that the interest of the majority is the political standard of right and wrong." *James Madison*
- "Self-reliance is the only road to true freedom, and being one's own person is its ultimate reward." *Patricia Sampson*
- "It's difficult to get a man to understand something when his salary depends on him not understanding it." *Upton Sinclair*
- "The state remains, as it was in the beginning, the common enemy of all well-disposed, industrious and decent men." *H. L. Mencken*
- "The ultimate result of protecting fools from their folly is to fill the planet full of fools." *James Russell Lowell*
- "Few things are more irritating than when someone who is wrong is also very effective in making his point." *Mark Twain*
- "If we don't believe in freedom of expression for people we despise, we don't believe in it at all." *Noam Chomsky*



Giant Fiat provides a unique environment to meet with customers at farm shows and other events.

Office, Bar Built Into Giant Tractor

This photo of a giant Fiat 110-90 tractor came to us from the French farm magazine, *Materiel Agricole*. The tractor was constructed out of wood and metal by a French tractor dealer to take to shows. It measures 27 ft. long by 18 ft. tall, 2 1/2 times larger than the real thing. It houses an office and fully-stocked bar for entertaining customers who come to shows.

Our FFA Photographers

Long-time contributing editor Jim Ruen grew up on a farm in southeastern Minnesota and has been writing about farm machinery for the past 35 years. If he can't show up in person when chasing down a FARM SHOW story, he sometimes has to come up with creative ways to get photos. One of his favorite methods is to contact the nearest FFA chapter and hire students to take photos for us. They do a great job because FFA'ers understand agriculture. In the last issue, Kari Kovach in Michigan took photos of Elmer Schneider's huge plow collection. Her photos were excellent. Unfortunately, we forgot to give her credit. Thanks, Kari!

Subscription Scams

A fake subscription company has been sending subscription notices to FARM SHOW subscribers. Some of the notices they send state that we are going out of business. This subscription company is not connected to FARM SHOW. In fact, if you receive a subscription notice of any kind from anyone other than FARM SHOW in Lakeville, Minn., just toss it.



If you receive a notice like this in the mail, just toss it.

A cardiologist brought his car into a repair shop. The mechanic grabbed his arm and said, "So Doc, look at this engine. I opened its valves, took out the valves, repaired any damage and then put them back in. When I finished it worked like new. So how come I make \$35,000 a year and you make \$1 million when you and I are doing basically the same work?"

The cardiologist paused, leaned over, and then whispered to the mechanic, "Try doing it with the engine running."

Lena was talking to her neighbor, Olga, after returning from a fishing trip with her husband, Ole.

"I did everything all wrong again today. I talked tew much and tew loud. I used da wrong bait. I reeled in tew soon and I caught more fish dan Ole did."

On Christmas morning, Lena woke up and turned to her husband, Ole, and said, "I yust dreamed dat yew gave me a beautiful diamond necklace. What dew yew tink it means?"

"Yew'll know tonight," Ole answered.

That evening just before opening presents, Ole came home with a small package and gave it to his wife.

Delighted, she opened it only to find a book entitled, "The Meaning of Dreams."

Ole and Lars were on their very first train ride, heading from Wadena to Minneapolis. They had brought along bananas for lunch. Just as they began to peel them, the train entered a long, dark tunnel.

"Have yew eaten yewr banana yet?" Ole asked excitedly.

"No," replied Lars.

"Vell, don't touch it den," Ole exclaimed. "I yust took vun bite and vent blind!"

Ole and Lena were returning from a party one evening. As the couple was driving home, Lena asked her husband, "Honey, has anyone ever told yew how handsome and irresistible tew women yew are?"

Totally flattered, Ole replied, "No, dear dey haven't."

At that point Lena yelled, "Den vhat da heck gave yew dat idea at da party tonight?"