

Teen Entrepreneurs Start Fish Cleaning Service

At 14, Josh and Kregen Norder are already in their fourth year of being entrepreneurs, well on their way to paying for college. The Mobridge, S. Dak., twins started a fish cleaning service when they were 11.

The opportunity was available; their parents, Mike and Jessie Norder, own Bridge City Marina and Resort. And though the boys help with jobs that are part of the business, Josh came up with the idea to make extra money cleaning fish. He and his brother learned to clean catfish when they were just 8.

"They are hardworking boys and have a great work ethic," says their father. "They came up with this all themselves."

"We had a little sign for the first two years. Josh says, "A lot of our customers were surprised that we could clean fish that well to start out."

The brothers filet bass, walleyes and panfish and have started to clean large

northern and remove the Y-bones, as well. Their station is a folding table with a cutout with a garbage can below and access to a water hose. Filets are rinsed off and bagged in Ziploc bags for customers.

Business fluctuates according to the season and whether the fish are biting. Spring was good this year, but late summer was slow. Spring tournaments are the busiest, Kregen says.

At 50 cents per fish (plus tips), the twins have managed to save up to buy items such as a laptop. Half the money they make automatically goes to their college fund. Josh has plans to be a nuclear scientist, chemist and engineer, while Kregen is looking at biochemistry, robotics or computer science.

"We get to talk to a lot of people," he says, adding he especially enjoys joking with the firefighters who put on a spring tournament.

"Start small. Don't go full bore," Josh suggests to others considering starting a



To help pay for college, Kregen and Josh Norder started a fish cleaning service when they were just 11 years old.

similar service. Start with quality filet knives and invest in quality cordless knives once you can afford them. The twins like Berkley and American Angler electric knives, but also use hand knives on bass.

As the 2015 summer winds down, the twins don't have any special item that they are saving up for. But Kregen has a practical suggestion.

"Maybe we should start saving up for gas," he says. "We'll be driving soon."

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Mini Bale Sideline Business

With help from his wife, Chelsea, and a neighbor, Travis Kleine can bale up to 120 mini bales an hour that sell for \$5 apiece. It's one of several on-farm enterprises that keep the Kleine family's small farm profitable in Heron Lake, Minn.

Kleine's father-in-law had the Amish-built mini baler in a shed, but hadn't had the time to use it. It makes 11 by 18-in. bales, 9 in. long, that weigh 10 lbs. each.

"I saw it and thought I'd try to see if I could do anything with it. I had seen articles in FARM SHOW about mini baling," Kleine says.

He purchased big round straw bales from neighbors and then had to figure out how to unroll them for rebaling. Instead of purchasing an expensive unroller, Kleine made his own from a manure spreader.

"I took the beaters off and welded spikes to the apron chain," he explains. The unit is stationary and bales are placed in the spreader, and the unroller is powered by tractor hydraulics. The unrolled hay feeds into a hopper above the baler pickup and is tied with plastic twine. One large round bale makes about 120 mini bales.

Kleine spends much of his spare time in late spring and summer baling straw harvested the year before in order to be ready for late summer orders. Most of the straw bales are sold as fall decorations.

When he started five years ago, Kleine marketed to local garden centers and farm supply stores. Currently his biggest contract is 6,000 bales for Menard's, which are individually bagged and picked up in early August. Other customers include orchards, farm produce stands and other agritourism businesses.

In addition, Kleine bales grass hay, which is sold as feed to pet centers and people with guinea pigs and rabbits. When he can find barley straw to purchase, he bales it to sell for algae control in ponds. The bales are sacked and sunk in the water and provide a non-chemical alternative to reducing algae growth. Finding barley straw can be difficult, Kleine notes.

He fills orders of any size, and bales can be shipped. Straw and hay bales sell for \$5, and barley bales (when available) sell for \$9.

Along with raising Great Pyrenees dogs



Travis Kleine uses an Amish-built mini baler to make 9-in. long, 11 by 18-in. bales that weigh 10 lbs. apiece.



Unrolled big round straw bales feeds into hopper above baler pickup. One big bale makes about 120 mini bales.

and Icelandic sheep, selling eggs and broiler chickens, and working other ag-related jobs, Kleine says mini-baling is a way for his family to "farm" without a lot of acreage.

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An English equipment manufacturer makes this baler/packer that mechanically repackages materials from big square or round bales.

"Re-Baler" Packs Hay Into Sealed Plastic Bags

Lauren Morton of Ken Mills Engineering, an English equipment manufacturing company, says "there's a good market for companies and farm operations to package hay and bedding products in small bags. Realizing that, our company recently introduced a baler/packer that mechanically re-packages materials from large square or round bales into 45 to 60-lb. bags. Those bags are easy for one person to handle and also convenient to palletize for bulk delivery or storage."

The Trojan CC haylage breaker and baler is actually a 2-part machine. The "breaker" tears apart large square or round bales and deposits it onto an angled platform conveyor about 4 ft. wide. A chain with 4-in. long fingers pulls the material up the conveyor and deposits it onto the scale platform, which meters the correct weight of material into the baler. The baler pushes the material through a rectangular chute that forms the material and pushes it into a bag. An operator removes the filled bag, seals the top and places it on a bag conveyor.

"The system produces neat and compact bags that are easy to handle and ideal for resale," Morton says. "The packaged material has a long shelf life because it's completely sealed from outside air." The plastic bags can be plain or be printed with visuals and text to identify the product inside.

Morton says the machine is very popular in the U.K. and Europe where smaller farms can handle feed in a bag without using a tractor,



Machine tears the bale apart and then conveys the material into a baler, which packs hay into 40 to 60-lb. sealed plastic bags.

loader or other machinery. The machine also works to re-package chopped straw, hemp, wood shavings, shredded paper, cardboard and other plant material. One person can operate the machine efficiently at small capacity, and 2 people are needed for full capacity. The Trojan is available in different sizes that pack from 100 to 180 bags per hour. It can be equipped with high efficiency de-dusting equipment that eliminates 95 percent of the dust and mold spores. Morton says the company has 2 machines working in Canada and is looking for U.S. distribution. Pricing depends on the size and capacity of the machine purchased.

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