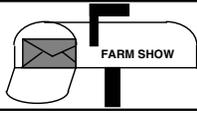


Reader Letters



(Continued from previous page)

list out free of charge. (Joe Staadegaard, Lynnville Farm Equipment, Rt. 1, Windham Centre, Ontario, Canada; ph 519 426-4416)

Persian wool from Karakul sheep - the oldest domesticated breed of sheep known, dating back 3,500 years - is considered the



finest spinning wool in the world. It is used to make the famous Persian rugs. Karakuls have a soft undercoat of Persian wool and a hairy outer coat. Previously, spinners needed to card out the hair to utilize the soft Persian wool. Commercial spinning machines could not handle the long hairs.

I solved the problem over a 14-year period by breeding Suffolk, Rambouillet, Columbia and Corriedale ewes to Karakul rams. I preserved the undercoat while eliminating the hairy outer coat.

I now sell rams from my "Persian" sheep. Newborns gain faster than commercial breeds, with no grain. They breed year-around. The lambs dress up to 65 percent, 10% higher than the national average. They're easy lambers, with long narrow heads which eliminate birthing problems.

The wool is long and silky with natural luster unique to the Persians. It has won awards at the National Sheep & Wool show. I sell rams from \$500 and also wool by the fleece. (JoAnne Keikes, P.O. Box 144, P.O. Box 144, Lesterville, S. Dak. 57040 ph 605 364-7503)

Renewed interest in wildflowers and native grasses has sparked an interest in native prairies. For example, virgin prairies in Iowa contain 175 different wildflowers and 30 different grasses.

My company harvests and sells seeds including grasses, wild flowers, and various mixtures on combined native plants. We hand pick wildflower seeds and, when prairie grasses are ready to harvest, we combine the prairie - resulting in a mix of 5 to 6 different grasses and 20 to 30 different wildflowers. (Keith McGinnis, 309 E. Florence, Glenwood, Iowa 51534)

My home-built crop sprayer has a 33-ft. boom with 6-ft. breakaway extensions on the ends. It's got a tandem axle and all wheels are spaced for 30-in. rows. There's a 3-lb. Whitney valve on each boom supply to stop



"shut-off dribble". It's fitted with an Ace hydraulic centrifugal pump. Total cost to build it was less than \$2,000, a big savings over any commercial unit. (Wm. R. Marrs, Rt. 4, Box 4440, Arkansas City, Kan. 67005)

The Ageless Iron Expo in Iowa this year, sponsored by Successful Farming Magazine, will include a special section for the

display of home built tractors and other equipment. The special exhibit area will be for anything from shop built yard tractors up to big 4-WD's. In addition to tractors, we're interested in other self-propelled equipment. For example, maybe someone has built a self-propelled manure spreader. Or maybe you've got a radical modification - like a combination of two tractors.

The Ageless Iron Expo is slated for July 3-6 at Ankeny, Iowa. Please call or write if you'd be interested in exhibiting. (Floyd Rider, 3931 SE 80th St., Ocala, Fla. 34488 ph 352-368-5886)

This is a hay feeder I built out of material laying around the shop. It works great for horses and will hold 3 square bales of hay and has a trough for grain. I used two 30-



gal. plastic barrels, cut lengthwise with the ends bolted together. I put 1 by 1-in. angle iron all the way around the edge and one down the middle to form a cap. I used 1 1/4-in. pipe for the legs. The angled feeding bars that hold the hay are made from 1/2-in. dia. pipe. I put 1 1/4-in. dia. runners on the bottom of the legs so it can be moved easier. (Jerry Miles, 1231 Ames, Spearfish, S. Dak. 57783 ph 605 642-3713)

We ordered 1,000 snails from U.S. Snail in Omaha, Neb., last fall. It now appears we may not lose our entire investment as we feared for months, but reaching this conclusion nearly gave us fits.

Here's why. We sent the company a check for \$2,280 (U.S.) for the snails on Nov. 19. It was cashed on Nov. 25. On Dec. 6, we received a letter from U.S. Snail telling us that we had to get an import permit from the Plant Protection Division of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency in Ottawa. We filed an application right away, were granted the permit, and our government informed U.S. Snail about it. Then we waited - and waited and waited - for our snails. Next, we were told on Feb. 14 by the company we'd have to get a second permit. We didn't receive the second permit until March 20 and it listed J.D. Rider of Rochester, N.Y., as shipper.

We tried repeatedly to contact U.S. Snail but our calls and faxes went unanswered. When we finally contacted Rider, he told us he does *not* ship for U.S. Snail and never has. What's more, he told us he'd received calls from other Canadians, inquiring about long overdue shipments for U.S. Snail.

Finally, U.S. Snail agreed - two days after we threatened on April 12 to go to the Nebraska Attorney General's Office - to refund our money. How that shakes out in practice remains to be seen. But, as of April 25, our understanding is that we'll be reimbursed 75 percent of our money in monthly installments beginning in June. But, in this all-or-nothing offer, it appears we'll have no choice but to accept the remaining 25 percent in South American snails. Better than a poke in the eye with a sharp stick, we figure.

We thought perhaps some of your readers could benefit from our experience. Also, that you might be able to help anyone else in Canada who may be having similar problems. (Mac and Nancy Breddner, R.R. 2, Meaford, Ontario, Canada N4L 1W6; ph 519 538-2218).

Editor's Note: The USDA's Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is investigating customer complaints against U.S. Snail, as is the Nebraska Department of Agriculture.

If you or someone you know have a complaint concerning U.S. Snail, Stephen V. Johnson, Nebraska State Entomologist, wants to hear about it. Contact him at the Bureau of Plant Industry, Nebraska Department of Agriculture, P.O. Box 94956, Lincoln, Neb. 68509 (ph 402 471-2394; fax 6892).

In the past, FARM SHOW has featured our rubber manure scrapers made out of industrial-size tires, our bedding "Fluffer", and our sawdust and sand "Side-Shooters" for bed-



ding dairy barns. Now, we thought your readers would be interested to know that our "Side-Shooters" are available in several new sizes in addition to the standard 6-ft. model we've been building for more than a year. The new sizes are 5, 7, and 8-ft. models, starting at \$2,945. We also now have 3-pt. models available.

In addition, we've just introduced a new "Manure Brush" designed for cleaning the back of free stalls. It's a plastic-bristled, 12-in. dia., 3-ft. long brush that quick-taches to your skid steer loader. It allows you to sweep either left or right. Sells for \$1,495. A model that fits on our "Fluffer" arm is also available for \$1,195. (Don Mensch, Mensch Manufacturing, 2499 S. Bedford Rd., P.O. Box 418, Hastings, Mi. 49058-0418; ph 800 945-6678 or 616 945-5300, fax 5584).

Here's a sprayer I built with safety and convenience in mind. It features a 17-gal. cone bottom tank with a drain valve that I installed at the bottom. The big tank allows me to mix up larger quantities of material than I was able to do with our old hand pump sprayer. I mix quantities as small as 1 gal. when I need to. The drain allows me to collect any leftover material into another container and makes it easier to clean the sprayer after use. I installed a pressure gauge and pressure control valve that gives me more con-



trol of the sprayer. The sprayer runs off a 12-volt battery so it can be used with garden equipment, tractors, ATVs, pickup's, etc. The sprayer was easy to build and all parts were available from commercial suppliers. (Kevin Biehle, 3145 N. Co. Rd. 360E, North Vernon, Ind. 47265).

I built this handy cart to use in our stanchion barn so we don't have to bend down to reach wash pails and other equipment.

I attached wheels and handle off an old lawn mower to the top of a 55-gal. plastic drum. I cut the bottom third of the drum off so it's open at the bottom. The wheels mount to the side of the drum with 1/8 by 1 1/2-in.



flat stock. The handle bolts to the side of the drum and the other side was cut off and mounted to a bolt on top center of the drum. I cut three holes in the top of the drum large enough to accommodate three wash pails and made a smaller hole under the handle for a trash bucket I hang underneath. I made a paper towel holder from a piece of 1-in. dia. plastic water pipe. It has a hole in one end to fit over a 12-in. by 3/8-in. dia. bolt and a slot in the other end to slide over the head when putting on a new roll of towels.



A holder for teat cup dip water completes the cart. It's made of a 3/8-in. dia. rod bent in a circle with a clip welded on to hold the bucket. (Michael Dwyer, 97 Leigus Rd., Wallingford, Conn. 06492-2517; ph 203 949-8043).

I recently purchased plans for the radial arm flame-cutter designed by California citrus grower Richard Walker and featured in "Best of FARM SHOW, 1997". The plans are quite detailed and I'm impressed.

However, what I'm most impressed with is Mr. Walker's honesty. I included a couple extra bucks with my order to cover postage for sending the plans out of the country. When I got the plans, he'd returned the \$2, explaining it didn't cost that much extra to mail to Canada.

The world needs more people like you, Mr. Walker. Thank you. (David J. Siebold, Box 477, Rimbey, Alberta, Canada T0C 2J0; ph 403 748-3582).

Editor's note: Contact Walker at: Walker Publications, P.O. Box 17924, Irvine, Calif. 92623.

The chaff spreader on my 1985 Case-IH 1480 combine never worked well, leaving a 2-ft. window of chaff behind the machine. So I modified the spreader to spread chaff more uniformly, up to 25 ft.

I simply dropped the original straw spread-



ers down 22 in. by installing longer hex shafts. I dropped the V-deflectors down to just below the cone so straw doesn't wrap around the hex shafts. I also added another 9-in. V-deflector that I made out of heavy tin that bolts on behind the housing where the straw comes out of the back of the machine.

I've been very satisfied with the results, especially because it didn't cost anywhere near what commercial after-market spreader kits cost. Cost was well under \$100 (Canadian), including \$20 for the two longer hex shafts. (Edward Kiziak, Box 24, Derwent, Alberta, Canada T0B 1C0; ph 403 741-2185).