

If you're looking for new ways to add to your bottom line, take a look at the money-making ideas featured here and on the next page.

If you've found or heard about a new income-boosting idea, we'd like to hear about it. Send details to: FARM SHOW Magazine, P.O. Box 1029, Lakeville, Minn. 55044 (ph 800 834-9665) or email us at: editor@farmshow.com.

How To Profit From A Small Woodlot

If you have a woodlot that needs to be harvested or thinned but it's too small to interest a commercial logging company, you can do it yourself and turn a profit, says Tom Repko of Dallas, Ore. In a week's time he cut down, skidded, bucked and stacked a semi-load of Douglas fir logs that were 10 to 15-in. dia. on the stump. Altogether, he ended up cutting down enough for 5 loads and averaged \$1,400/load from a local mill. He ended up with \$1,150 after paying \$250/load to the trucker. After taking out fuel and oil expenses for his tractor and chainsaw, Repko figures he earned about \$27/hour.

One piece of equipment that made the job easier was the Cat. 1 3-pt. hitch log skidder Repko invented and sells (\$500). It was featured in FARM SHOW'S Vol. 39, Issue 3.

Operated from the seat of a small horsepower tractor, the skidder has scissor tongs with 1-in. spikes that grip the log so it can be lifted with the hitch, moved and then dropped.

Repko and his wife attended many workshops and classes about managing their 40-acre woodlot. After learning that loggers weren't interested in taking on such a small job, Repko gathered simple equipment to tackle the job: his 38 hp. Kubota L3800 tractor fitted with his 3-pt. skidder; a small Stihl chainsaw (MS180 with an 18-in. bar) for limbing; and a bigger Stihl saw (MS311 with 25-in. bar) for felling; personal protective gear; sledge hammer and wedges; and a 200-ft. 1/2-in. cable with snatch blocks and choker to move logs off sloped areas of his woods.

"On the steep hillsides I hung the snatch block as high as I could get it (on a spar tree) to provide as much lifting as possible. When necessary I used additional snatch blocks and slings set low around anchor trees to provide directional control of the log being pulled," Repko says. "I found that nylon sling straps are easier to work with and much less likely to damage the spar tree or slide down the tree while under a load."

He notes that one advantage of cutting his own trees was that he took his time and paid attention so he didn't scar standing trees when pulling out logs.

"I found the most time consuming part of this project was selecting which trees to cut. A professional forester making those selections would certainly be an asset, but at a cost," Repko says. But his choices of ice-damaged trees and trees with multiple tops proved to be correct. All had 2 to 8 ft. of core rot.

With about 70 logs per load, Repko estimates he has another 3 or 4 loads to remove when weather permits.

"I have been retired now for three years, and I can't remember when I last felt so gratified after doing a project as I do now," he says. "The message I hope to deliver is that if you own a small forest land that you wish to manage for timber, or simply maintain it as a healthy forest, and you are willing to take the time and do the work, you can do the work yourself and



He fitted his 38 hp. Kubota tractor with a 3-pt. mounted log skidder that he invented.



Log skidder has scissors tongs with 1-in. spikes, which grip log so it can be lifted by tractor 3-pt.



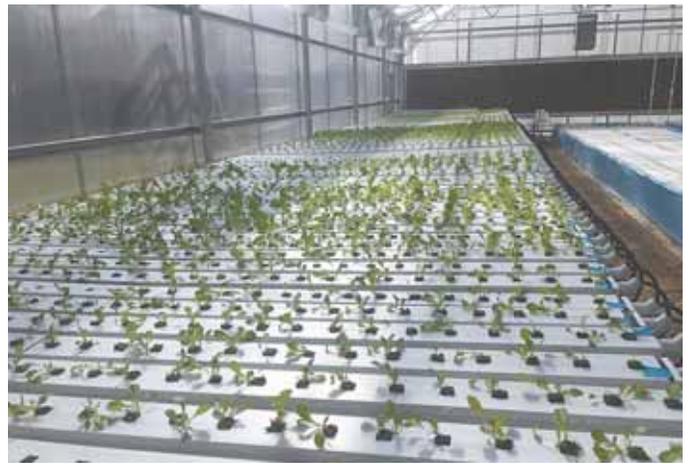
Tom Repko uses 200 ft. of 1/2-in. cable with snatch blocks and choker to move logs off sloped areas of his woods.



On steep hillsides, Repko hangs snatch block high on a spar tree to provide as much lifting as possible.

put some money in your pocket."

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Richard and Jackie Tyler use their 10,000 sq. ft. aquaponics greenhouse to operate a successful "mom and pop" commercial enterprise. It includes a 1,700 sq. ft. store.

How They Set Up Their Aquaponics Greenhouse

Aquaponics has allowed Richard and Jackie Tyler to run a successful commercial "mom and pop" farm, provide opportunities to other local farmers, and have enough food to share with a local food pantry.

Providing for the food pantry has been Richard Tyler's passion, especially after 17,000 people lost jobs in the Vian, Okla., area in 2013. Food pantry clients increased to 780 families a month. After Tyler had his own financial challenges, he decided growing food in a greenhouse could meet both the needs of the food pantry and also help him make a living.

After much research and consultation, the Tylers opened NOAH (Native Oklahoma Aquaponic Harvest) in August. The nearly 10,000-ft. greenhouse includes a 1,700-ft. store. Each week they produce 2,000 heads of lettuce, about 200 lbs. of other vegetables, and many pints of strawberries. In addition, up to 300 tilapia are sold each month.

The fish are key to success of the operation, Tyler says. "I didn't want to go with straight hydroponics because mixing chemicals and testing the water constantly requires a lot of skill. With aquaponics, once you get the system balanced, it sort of runs on autopilot."

The tilapia provide fertilizer for the growing plants, which filter the water the fish live in.

Tyler worked with Nelson and Pade Inc., an aquaponics company that has been in business since 1985.

The company's standard operating procedures and data helped the Tylers to secure an FSA loan to build what was the first commercial aquaponics greenhouse in Oklahoma. Staff from Nelson and Pade helped develop the automated setup, and Tyler attended the company's Aquaponics



Each week the Tylers produce 2,000 head of lettuce, 200 lbs. of other vegetables, and lots of strawberries.

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He also carefully researched greenhouses and has been pleased with Conley's Greenhouse Mfg. out of California.

"It's real efficient and allows us to keep the temperature at 78 degrees for \$600 to \$650/month," he says.

The Tylers sell produce and tilapia wholesale and to consumers. They donate 30 percent of the food to the food pantry and started a cooperative with small farmers. There has also been interest from people who want to set up their own commercial aquaponics operation and Tyler offers a 2-hr. tour with business planning information for \$75.

"It's the best mom-and-pop business we have found. It's not backbreaking and is a lifestyle we enjoy. We can make a decent living and help build a community of healthy food," he says.

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Up to 300 tilapia are sold each month. They provide fertilizer for the growing plants, which filter the water the fish live in.