

Salon Products That Come Straight From The Farm

Sheep wool, corn, and soybeans are active ingredients in Paulette Legred's line of hair care and body products developed and sold from her Minnesota farm.

Legred lives on a farm and spent more than 30 years working in a hair salon. With the help of a chemist, she developed shampoo and other products that she first introduced in 2016. Her business is called Farm to Fashion.

Each of her ag ingredients adds specific qualities. Corn adds softness and flexibility. Soybean is a premier moisturizer. Protein derived from sheep wool adds strength and protection from heat and UV rays. Beeswax tames hair and seals in moisture. Ruby Red Grapefruit adds a fresh, invigorating scent.

"Another key ingredient is water. I use deionized water that has been purified twice so it's cleaner and fresher," Legred says.

All her products are natural without added chemicals, and a manufacturing facility bottles her products according to her formulas. Initially, Legred stored and shipped product from a 17 by 60-ft. area of the farm's machine shed. After a couple of years of double digit growth, the Legreds built a 34 by 60-ft. addition for her business.

She sells mostly to salons, but consumers also order products at her website.

"Our go-to-market strategy is sampling," she explains. "When people try a sample, they almost always like it."

Legred named her line of products Lis'n (pronounced "listen") to reflect the caring



Legred's natural hair care and body products use ingredients such as sheep wool, corn, and soybeans.

relationship between a hairdresser and her clients. Her shampoo, conditioner, and detangler are her most popular products, but she also carries styling products as well as body wash and lotion.

As a way to promote her products and offer styling and business tips, Legred publishes a quarterly 12-page magazine called *Farm to Fashion* that is distributed to salons and customers.

"I always had a passion to run my own company," says Legred, who started her company in her late 50's. "I'm glad I did. I'm building a legacy."

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Award Winning Stock Dog Trainer

As a herdsman at Mississippi State University in the 1980's, John Holman enjoyed working with stock dogs as much as he did taking care of sheep. That enjoyment eventually became an occupation when he began training sheep and cattle dogs while raising registered Border Collies. Thirty years later his "Dog4Ewe" business has a national and international reputation with top level dogs produced through 6 generations of selective breeding.

"My customers like my Border Collies because of their athleticism, intelligence and trainability," Holman says. "They can handle tough cattle, any type of sheep, and I can even train them to be gentle enough to handle ducks," he says with a chuckle.

His own competitive success, and owners who've purchased his dogs, back Holman's reputation as a breeder and trainer. In open competition he's had 8 wins at the Iowa State Fair, 7 at the Nebraska State Fair, and 10 at the National Western Stock Show. In 2003 he began competing in the National Cattle Dog Finals of the U.S. Border Collie Handlers Association and has consistently produced top ten finishers, winning the competition with his Border Collie, Lee, in 2014. His dogs have also received more than 70 AKC competitive citations.

In a typical year Holman trains a dozen pups, usually 3 from his own litters. He can train any breed of stock dog and he likes to keep two pups in training at a time. Pups start training at 8 months and continue a strict regimen for 2 to 3 months.

In addition to training, Holman is an experienced judge with licenses for the American Kennel Club (AKC), the American Herding Breed Association (AHBA), and the United States Border Collie Handler's Association (USBCHA).



John Holman has an international reputation as a trainer of top level sheep and cattle dogs.



He also puts on several dog handling clinics a year in the U.S., Canada and occasionally in Europe. "I welcome handlers and dogs at any experience level and can set up a clinic for single or multiple days," Holman says. "Each participant gets to work their dog in two sessions a day where I'll analyze their work and give clear advice on how they can correct problems and improve."

Trained Border Collies make good family dogs, but Holman doesn't suggest them as purely pets. "They need structure, mental stimulation and a job to do, otherwise they'll get bored and get into trouble." Border Collie pups from Dog4Ewe are priced from \$1,000 to \$1,200 with all shots provided. Training them runs \$750 per month.

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The Boulonnais is known as "the marble horse of France" because of its marble statue looks. Lynn Gennrich and her friend own the only ones in the U.S.

She Brought Rare "Marble" Breed To North America

Most travelers to France tour art galleries to see marble sculptures, but Lynn Gennrich journeyed there with the sole purpose of learning about "the marble horse of France," otherwise known as the Boulonnais draft horse. In 2015, after much paperwork, a 4-year-old Boulonnais stallion arrived from France to live on her Rio, Wis. farm. At the same time, a bred Boulonnais mare was shipped to her friend in Deerfield, Wis. They're likely the first Boulonnais in the U.S. since 1904.

Gennrich became enamored with the breed after seeing a photo in a book, then discovered there are only about 500 of them left in France. Before WW I there were more than 660,000 Boulonnais horses. When Gennrich took her first trip to France she met a 95-year-old French farmer who managed to keep one of his mares by hiding her from the Germans during WW II.

Gennrich and her friend currently have the only 9 Boulonnais in the U.S., with the goal of preserving and bringing attention to the breed.

"They look like a marble statue, with lots of sheen to their coats and a softness to their hair and skin," Gennrich says. "Their coat glitters like diamonds when you give them a bath. They have an exotic quality to them."

Related to Percheron draft horses, the Boulonnais tend to be a little shorter, 15.1 to 16.3 hands high, and more square. Though there are black and chestnut Boulonnais, most are white or grey. They have a defined arch in their neck, very thick manes and a gentle disposition.

"The bone in their thighs is substantial, but they move light and look elegant. My farrier says they have a fantastically structured foot with a good amount of heel-to-toe so they

are more upright," she adds. "They're very sensitive, very athletic, and you can watch them think. They'll follow you with their eyes."

Gennrich returned to France 3 more times and purchased 6 more horses including weanlings and stallions. They're trained to ride and drive. One stallion drew much attention at the Minnesota Horse Expo last spring. A trainer with the Cirque Ma'Ceo, an acrobatic equestrian show, was impressed enough to lease him from Gennrich, and he will appear in shows throughout the country.

Gennrich finds satisfaction in introducing others to the breed, though her Boulonnais venture has been very expensive and challenging. Importing weanling horses, including the costs of required quarantines, cost \$15,000 each. For stallions it's \$25,000 to \$30,000. With vet care and improvements to her farm, she has substantially more invested in each horse.

But, she says, they bring out a passion in her she has never had before. And she's seen the horses work their magic on a friend suffering from severe depression.

Besides continuing to make people aware of Boulonnais, she has one big plan for them. "My goal is to have six of them in a Rose Bowl parade," she says.

For people interested in the breed, she has created the N.A. Boulonnais Association. Also, she has a couple of males for sale.

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