

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.



Straws are inserted into 36 holes in perimeter of machine's hub, then filled with honey.

Nifty New Honey Stick Filling Machine

Tony Schwager recently contacted FARM SHOW to say he has made major improvements to his Honey Stick Machine, previously featured in FARM SHOW (Vol. 29, No. 5).

"Bee keepers, maple syrup producers, sauce makers, and others can fill drinking straws with their product for added value, samples, snacks, etc.," says Schwager, who owns a beekeeping and honey business that sells the honey straw filling system. He and his family make honey sticks in their shop.

Straws are loaded into a tray that holds 13 straws at a time, and then the operator uses a jig to seal one end of the straws all at once. The straws are then inserted into 36 holes in the perimeter of the machine's hub.

Once the hub is loaded to capacity, the operator closes the machine's lid and installs a specially made funnel in the center of the hub. The machine is turned on at low speed and 140 ml. of honey is poured into the funnel, which is enough to fill all 36 straws. The operator then shuts off the machine and pulls the filled straws out. They are then loaded back into the straw holding tray, and the other ends of the straws are sealed.

The introductory price is \$399.
Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, The Bee Store, 711 West 23rd St., Suite 15, Lawrence, Kan. 66046 (ph 913 206-2188; tony@anthonyshive.com; www.anthonysbeehive.com).

Wildflower Plots Boost Fruit Yields

Marc Cots gets a boost in pollination and yield at his C&C Mountain View Orchards, thanks to wildflowers he planted and the pollinators they attract. The diverse orchard features apples, peaches, pears, cherries, grapes and blueberries. Just as diverse are the bumblebees, mining bees, mason bees, carpenter bees, sweat bees and more. In fact, more than 100 native bee species have been found at the orchard, 3 of them ultra-rare.

"I'm pretty impressed with what the native bees do, especially the miner bees," says Cots, who only recently bought the orchards.

Joe Dickey the previous owner, worked with a \$10,000 grant from Southern SARE (Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education; www.southernare.org) to establish three 100 by 100-ft. wildflower plots in 2016. Mark Schlueter, a professor at Georgia Gwinnett College, assisted Dickey in the project.

The plots were placed in the middle of the orchard. Dickey and Schlueter measured native bee abundance and diversity over a 5-yr. period before adding the wildflowers.

In the first year of the plots, apple production alone increased to 3,150 bushels,



Wildflower plots planted in middle of Georgia orchard attract bees to boost pollination and yield.

up from the 2,200 to 2,300 the previous 2 years. In 2017, it jumped again, bringing the 2-yr. average to 3,325 bushels, a benefit that continued in 2018.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, C&C Mountain View Orchards, 2984 Mobile Rd., McCaysville, Ga. 30555 (ph 706 964-2323; www.theciderhousecafe.com).



Apple Grinder With Elevator



Apple Grinder



Apple Press



Water-Powered Press

Cider-Making Equipment

Whether you want to press fresh apple juice for friends or you need to bottle cider from a big apple orchard, OESCO, Inc., in Conway, Mass., has the equipment you'll need.

For smaller producers, OESCO sells the Jaffrey press for less than \$900. The classic-style wooden unit has a cast iron flywheel to turn the grinder and a hard maple wood press frame. It can press 3 to 5 gallons of juice/hour, perfect for family gatherings or by the glass at events.

"The Lancman press is one of many startup companies used for processing apples. It's easy to get started pricewise at around \$1,500 for an 80-liter model," says Kate French, special projects director for OESCO. The Slovenia-made units use water to fill a bladder to press apples or grapes that have been ground.

Besides being a distributor for many companies, OESCO, manufactures a line of commercial equipment from grinders to rack

& cloth presses and packline equipment. They are the U.S. distributor of FDA approved Cider processors that use UV light to kill bacteria. The result is a more pure and better tasting cider when compared to pasteurized cider, French says. Prices start around \$13,000 for a model that produces 25 gal./hour of minimally filtered apple cider.

Sales people at OESCO know the products well and can answer questions for orchard owners who want to add cider to their product line, or want to upgrade equipment. A 136-page free catalog includes everything needed, starting with picking buckets and bags for harvesting apples to conveying, grinding, pressing and processing equipment.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, OESCO, Inc., 8 Ashfield Rd., Rt. 116, P.O. Box 540, Conway, Mass. 01341 (ph 800 634-5557; www.oescocoinc.com).

Specialty Tack Fits Mini Donkeys

If you've ever thought about getting a miniature donkey, you might be interested in the custom donkey harnesses and tack made with love by a Missouri couple. Lee and Sandy Thomas have owned and trained mini donkeys since the early 1990's. Lee was also making cowboy rope halters at the time, so they came up with the idea to combine the two ventures because it was hard to find tack that fits miniatures.

"A little donkey and little pony can be the same height but the donkey's head is bigger, so the halters have to be bigger," Lee says. "We have made some for standard and mammoth donkeys also, and we still get calls for our cowboy halters. What sets our halters apart is that we use a larger ring."

That makes it easier to put on a stud chain or snap through the ring. The Thomases use nylon webbing in light to heavy weights and up to 16 color choices. Prices for halters (5 sizes, colt to extra-large) range from \$12 to \$15. Lead ropes cost \$6 and a full set of panniers is \$120 in a variety of colors. They also make cotton and custom halters for specific donkeys, neck straps, training singurcles, and mini pack saddles.

"If they can dream it, we can make it," Lee says, adding they also still train donkeys.

"I really enjoy doing it, and we have met so many nice mini donkey people," Sandy adds. "We don't consider it a job; we just want to



A Missouri couple makes made-to-fit harnesses and halters for mini donkeys.



make halters that are the right size."

Their farm-based business has grown by word-of-mouth from satisfied customers. Contact them directly by phone or email for information about tack for your equine.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Lee and Sandy Thomas, 456 State Rd. Mm, Buffalo, Mo. 65622 (ph 417 345-1305; artiedog@hughes.net).