

Paton built the front wheel with a Suzuki TF185 hub, lightweight scrap steel spokes from an old motorcycle shipping crate, and oil drum steel for the rim.



## Vintage Bike Puts Tractor Parts To Use

New Zealander Kenny Paton enjoys building unique machines from scrap materials. “I’ve always had a passion for vintage machinery and small engines,” he says.

After seeing a similar attempt online, Paton grew interested in building a vintage bicycle known as a penny farthing. “I watched a video of a man pedaling a large penny farthing with a tractor tire up front and two smaller wheels at the back. I figured I could do better with a front wheel steer and an engine in the rear.” When further research showed that most designs used a moped engine, he

decided to build one with tractor parts. “I called it the PennyFarming,” he says. “Think tractor up top and motorcycle down below. One of my followers online thought up the name, and it stuck.”

Paton’s idea gained ground when he spotted a neighbor’s tractor tire lying in the grass. “I started telling him my idea, and he offered me the tire. Then he ran into his shed to get a smaller tractor tread tire and an old seat.” The next step was developing a plan. “I made a rough design on SketchUp to make sure what I had in mind actually looked good,” he says.

Irvine’s Just Beyond Paradise tomato wine has been a popular product since they started selling it in 2021, but a partnership with Pizza Hut took their wine viral. Announced this past fall, the 100 cases of special recipe Pizza Hut wine sold out that day.

“Between Pizza Hut and us, we had two billion ad impressions worldwide. We have 5,000 people on the waiting list,” says Ed Irvine, patriarch of the Irvine wine-making family.

While Irvine is unsure if Pizza Hut will want a redo, the winery makes and sells Tomato Table Wine (\$17) and Pomodoro wine (\$15) made from a Kansas heirloom tomato. Unlike Pizza Hut’s Pizza Wine, these wines aren’t priced at \$25 per bottle with a two-bottle minimum. They also don’t have the same combination of pizza spices or carrot juice.

“Tomatoes make a clear wine, but Pizza Hut wanted it to be red,” says Irvine. “We added black carrot juice. It was natural and had no flavor, but it gave the wine the red color.”

The only ingredient not raised on the Irvine farm or in Kansas was the carrot juice. Irvine’s Just Beyond Paradise winery is entirely Kansas-based. Irvine and his wife, Cindy, began making wine as a hobby in 2011. The following year, they decided to start a winery with their oldest son, Ed Jr., and his winemaking friend, Scott Schlageck. Ed Jr.

studied molecular biology at the University of Kansas to build a foundation for understanding fermentation, while Schlageck earned his winemaking certificate from the University of California, Davis.

Meanwhile, the Irvines located a 40-acre property for their winery and began planting fruit trees, berries and grapes.

The family winery prides itself on using local produce, much of it farm-raised. In addition to tomato wine, they make a variety of other fruit wines.

Why tomato? “I’ve raised tomatoes my whole life,” says Irvine. “When we started, we needed a fruit that would produce quickly, and tomato is technically a fruit. It would also give us something unique. We have something virtually no one in the Midwest offers on a commercial scale.”

They started with a recipe Irvine found online. Then, they visited the Omerto winery in Quebec. Omerto makes only tomato wines, and its production has grown from 20 to 30 bottles in 2008 to more than 50,000 bottles per year today.

“We decided if they could do it, we could too,” says Irvine.

Soon, tomato wine was followed by other homegrown fruit wines. The Irvines held a grand opening in 2021. The tomato wine caught the eye of a New York marketing agency, so the Irvines sent them a few bottles of their Pomodoro. That was followed by a

“Then I set up the tires in my shed and began figuring out the building process.”

Paton built the front wheel with a Suzuki TF185 hub, lightweight scrap steel spokes from an old motorcycle shipping crate, and oil drum steel for the rim. “Once I tacked it all together, the tire only had 20 mm runout, which I’m adamant is an improvement on the tractor rim it would have come off.”

He then mounted the rear tire to a 16-in. space-saver rim and cut away the center to mount it on the rear Suzuki rim. “I made a cardboard frame template, then cut it from the oil drum steel. I used a ride-on mower bonnet up front, cut some square steel tube for the front forks, and mounted it to the Suzuki headset.”

Paton wanted to keep the tractor theme, so he made a steering wheel from reinforced steel. “I noticed that a bicycle is still somewhat controllable with a wheel, but I don’t know if physics translates from bicycle to a tractor motorcycle. Here’s hoping it holds up.”

The next step was reinforcing a steel engine mount for the 60-year-old 8-hp Kohler engine. He bolted the tractor seat on top and fitted a fuel tank from an old Villiers stationary engine in front. “I designed a two-stage drive system to move the PennyFarming up to a max speed of 25km/h (15 mph),” Paton says. “Off the engine, it has a belt to a pul-

ley, then down to the wheel through chain and sprockets. It uses a sloppy belt with a tensioner-style clutch. The Suzuki rear brake is actuated from the left foot peg lever.” He rigged a throttle lever on the steering shaft that turns with the wheel and ensures it stays within reach.

Paton’s final step was developing retractable wheels that stabilize the bike when starting or stopping and keep it upright in the shed. “I built these using levers, pulleys and heavy-duty weed eater line, he says. “There’s still some tweaking to do, but they are functioning well enough.”

At publication, PennyFarming is nearing its first test run. “I have no doubts it’ll move, but I’m curious as to what physics have to say about steering a large tractor tire while it’s acting as a gyro,” says Paton. “If all goes to plan, I’ll be able to ride it in shows and parades, though it may need a trailer behind it for stabilizing; I don’t want it falling over on kids.”

He believes, “You don’t need money, fancy tools, or new materials to create something great! All you need is your idea and the persistence to keep going. Remember, it isn’t stupid if it works.”

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Kenny Paton (patonmachines@gmail.com; Facebook: Paton Machines; Instagram: patonmachines; YouTube: @PatonMachines).

## Pizza Hut Took Tomato Wine Viral

request to send some to Pizza Hut headquarters in Texas. A partnership followed with the development of the special recipe wine.

Because Pizza Hut can’t sell wine, all orders would go to the winery. The promotion was a genuine partnership celebrating the winery’s and Pizza Hut’s brands.

Within a few months, a label had been produced, extra tomatoes had been purchased from Amish growers in Kansas, and the requisite wine had been fermented and bottled.

George and Austin, the Irvines’ two younger sons, are the winery’s resident IT experts. They handle the website and security and created a landing page for the new wine.

“We had 30,000 hits in 24 hours, and the site didn’t go down,” Irvine proudly says.

While the rest is history, it isn’t the end of the story. “We got millions in free advertising, and it’s one reason we’re still getting orders for our tomato wine,” says Irvine. “We’ve shipped it across the country and had inquiries from Canada as well.”

Customers report using tomato wine for cooking, especially in chili and tomato soup. It’s also popular in Bloody Mary cocktails and by itself.

“It’s not just a wine for drinking,” says Irvine. “A lot of people try it and are surprised.”

This year, they’re growing a lot more tomatoes on the farm. “We have the seed for five or six varieties,” says Irvine. “It’s always



**Customers report using tomato wine for cooking, especially in chili and tomato soup. It’s also popular in Bloody Mary cocktails and by itself.**

better with fruit wines to have multiple varieties for a more complex taste.”

Tomato Table Wine and Pomodoro can be purchased at the winery or ordered online and shipped to 42 states.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Irvine’s Just Beyond Paradise Winery, 13561 246th St., Lawrence, Kan. 66044 (ph 785-806-9749; team@irvinewinery.com; www.irvinewinery.com).



**Chianina cattle adapt to most climates. The ACA has many registered producers east of the Mississippi, from Michigan to Florida.**

## World’s Largest Cattle Breed

North American cattle breeders were interested in bigger and better cattle when they first imported Chianina calves and semen from Italy to Canada in the early 1970s.

Known as “the white giant” because of their color and size, Chianina cattle have been part of Italian agriculture for over 2,200 years. In the ‘70s, most North American cattle breeds were small-framed, and many producers wanted to raise bigger animals for higher profits.

“The Chianina’s feed efficiency is very good. They grow and grade well. The meat marbles well, and there’s not a lot of excess trim fat,” says Heather Counts, editor of the American Chianina Journal for the American Chianina Association (ACA).

The beef brings a premium price and is popular with high-end restaurant chefs. A purebred Chianina reaches a carcass weight of 1,433 lbs. in 16 to 18 mos. Cows deliver 110 lb. calves with ease and make great mothers. They also have longevity and good foot structure.

Those qualities inspired North American producers to cross Chianina with other breeds, both dairy and beef. While there are some purebreds, the ACA was the first to accept composites, Counts says. When bred with Angus cattle, for example, they’re called Ch Angus and benefit from qualities from both breeds.

“Chianina cattle have a big presence in the show cattle industry,” Counts says, and

often, a Chianina hybrid is a supreme champion or in the top five. Today, most Chianina cattle are black and more moderate-framed, resembling the cattle of today’s beef industry.

Chianina cattle adapt to most climates. The ACA has many registered producers east of the Mississippi, from Michigan to Florida. But the cattle also thrive in Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, and in high elevations in Montana and Wyoming.

For more information about the breed and to find breeders in your area, check out the ACA website.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, American Chianina Association, P.O. Box 890, Platte City, Mo. 64079 (ph 816-431-2808; heather@chicattle.org; www.chicattle.org).