

New Ways To Make Money On The Farm



"Farm-made" castle is 60 ft. in diameter and 25 ft. high, complete with drawbridge.



Four heaters mounted on central support heat the large structure.

Slurrystore Castle Is One For The Record Books

When Lloyd and Leonore Dickmann's used book business outgrew the storage space available on their Markesan, Wisconsin farm, they turned to the only unused structure that remained - a 20-year-old, 440,000-gal. Slurrystore.

The Slurrystore hadn't been used since the couple sold their dairy herd in 2000, nor had it been emptied, so when Lloyd told Leonore they could store books there, she figured he was joking.

He wasn't. With a little help from a neigh-

bor, the manure was pumped from the 25-ft. high by 60-ft. dia. structure and then it was cleaned thoroughly.

Leonore says she knew he was serious when he asked her how she'd like the structure remodeled and, when she told him she thought it would look nice as a castle, he told her to talk to a builder.

"He didn't know what he was getting into," she quips. "But neither did I."

The builder put together a plan to remodel the Slurrystore into a castle, complete with

an interior beamed ceiling, knotty pine paneling throughout, and a 10-ft. balcony all the way around the inside wall. A post in the center of the Slurrystore holds up the roof, and all the ceiling beams run to it, creating a series of wedges on the ceiling. Access to the balcony is via a wooden staircase.

Slurrystores don't have doors, so the builder also designed a proper castle entryway. An Amish woodworker was enlisted to construct it. Trim to match the castle theme was also added around the top of the structure. And finally, four windows were

added to let in light.

The remodeling project began in September 2002 and was completed in late May, 2003. The Slurrystore castle now houses much of the Dickmann's used book inventory. It has also gotten a lot of attention. They still operate their main bookshop from a nearby steel building, but when people come to look at books, they're drawn into the castle.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Leonore and Lloyd Dickmann, W1778 County Hwy. K, Markesan, Wis. 53946 (ph 920 398-3375).



Slotted floor allows urine to drain into basement where it is collected for bottling.

Deer Urine Collection Pays Off For Farmers

A group of Alberta farmers have banded together to start a company to harvest deer urine. The Alberta Best Whitetail Deer Group owns upwards of 600 deer and has built a 1,900 sq. ft. urine collection barn in Athabasca, Alberta.

The company offers four deer scents to hunters: buck-in-rut, pre-rut buck, doe-in-heat, and pre-heat doe. They also offer an elk scent and have plans for moose as well.

The urine collecting facility has four separate rooms, which gives them the ability to gather four different scents at one time. The floors of the rooms are slotted, and the urine falls down where it is filtered and collected in the basement. All bottling and marketing are done in-house.

There is the possibility for CWD to be spread through the use of scents if the urine comes from infected animals. For this reason every animal is tested rigorously. In addition, Outfitter's Edge is harvested from a closed herd that has been under surveillance



Farmers collect, bottle, and market deer scent themselves.

for CWD for the last two years.

In addition to the hunting scents, Alberta Best also sells venison, moose meat, leather, and antlers. The various scents come in 2-oz. and 8-oz. bottles and sell for \$10.95 to \$29.95.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Alberta's Best, Box 1050, Athabasca, Alberta, Canada T9S 2A8 (ph 780 675-5648 or 866 700-3337; fax 780 675-3999; email: info@outfittersedge.com).

Her Business Builds Farmer Image

Chris Fesko was tired of the way farmers were being portrayed to the non-farm majority by educators, media and in the entertainment business, too.

"There's too much misinformation out there about who we are and what we do," says Fesko, Skaneateles, New York. She runs a 1,200-acre dairy farm with her husband, Rick.

Instead of complaining, she rolled up her sleeves and went to work.

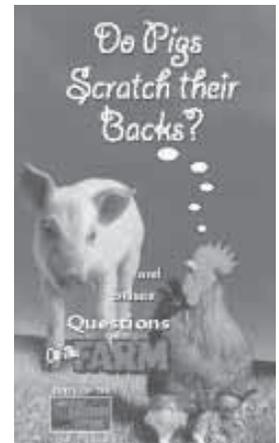
She started by producing a series of six "On the Farm" videos. They include Summer on the Farm I & II, Winter on the Farm, Fixin' on the Farm, Every Day is Earth Day on the Farm and, her latest, Do Pigs Scratch Their Backs? (and other questions on the farm). The tapes are being sold to day care centers, elementary schools, civic groups, nursing homes, and even to car dealerships where they've been put to use entertaining young children of customers.

The videos, about 30 minutes in length, have won four Telly Awards, three Parent's Choice awards and a number of other awards and acknowledgments, competing against Disney and other film companies.

Fesko has also made herself available to local, regional, and even national groups as a speaker and workshop leader to educate non-farmers of all ages.

Finally, taking her mission a step further, Chris and Rick turned a 100-year-old barn on their farm into a Discovery Center, where people of all ages can come for a day or longer and learn about life on the farm.

At the scenic Discovery Center, Fesko demonstrates not only farm life, but also shows how math, science and language arts are integrated into every day farm life. There are hands-on activities that engage most of the senses. A number of open houses are



Chris Fesko has set out to change the way educators and media portray farmers.

scheduled for the general public during the year, but most of the visitors come on pre-arranged field trips and group visits.

Fesko says that while she's working for a cause, her company, Chris Fesko Enterprises LLC, is also making a profit in marketing her videos and through her speaking engagements, and operation of the Discovery Center.

Her videos are available in a number of locations around the country, including The Machine Shed Restaurant chain. They're also on Amazon.com. Or you can order from her by telephone or on her website.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Chris Fesko Enterprises LLC, 1181 Woodworth Road, Skaneateles, N.Y. 13152 (ph 800 747-6470 or 315 636-8044; Fax 315 636-9101; email: chris@fesko.com; website: www.fesko.com).