

## Money-Making Ideas To Boost Farm Income

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 E-mail us at: Editor@farmshow.com.



Gary Schafer and Rick Murison grow durum wheat for the floral industry.

### Wheat Grown As High-Value Crop

Gary Schafer and his partner, Rick Murison, both of Latah, Washington, are wheat growers who've figured out how to add extra value to their crop.

The pair grows durum wheat for the floral industry. They've been doing it for close to 15 years, and they say the business has expanded enormously in the last couple of years. In 2005, they plan to grow 40 acres of the specialty wheat.

"Wreaths and dried flower arrangements are very popular. The demand for floral wheat and oats keeps growing," Schafer says. "We deal with one wholesaler, and they tell us in advance of seeding what varieties they want that year."

The partners grow three types of wheat: blond, beardless and black bearded. They are tight-lipped, however, about the specific varieties.

Conventional seeding equipment is used. They begin their "first" harvest between late June and early July, using a walk-behind Japanese rice binder with a 1-ft. wide header. They "green harvest" durum wheat

just before the stalks ripen. The bundles are later hung up to air dry.

The second harvest is a "dry" harvest of white bearded wheat, done just before the kernels mature in late July to early August. This time, they use two restored 40's era grain binders – one with an 8-ft. header, and one with a 10-ft. header. With these units, they harvested close to 200,000 lbs. of wheat last year.

Once the bundles are collected, they are stored inside a dark, tin-roofed shed, where the sun's heat helps dries them. Schafer and Murison pull out wild oats and other weeds by hand that escape their spray program. The men then pack the dried bundles in cardboard boxes.

The partners sell their floral grains by the pound and say that top quality is absolutely essential in this business.

The men were reluctant to share information about pricing and their wholesale arrangements.

Contact: Gary Schafer, South 42108 Bourne Rd., Latah, Wash. 99018.



Mobile cheese plant sells for \$245,000 and could return a \$34,000/yr. profit. All that's needed is milk, water and electricity.

### Portable Cheese Plants

If you've ever thought about setting up your cheese plant, it just got a whole lot easier. Darlington Dairy Supply, Darlington, Wis., is selling a cheese plant on wheels. All that is needed is a supply of milk, water and electricity.

"Our first one is now being used for R&D at an existing cheese plant," says Tim Thuli, company vice president. "It can process about 5,000 lbs. of milk per day. It is completely self-contained with chillers, heat source and all the equipment needed to make cheese. It even has its own cooler to hold cheese for a few days before taking it to storage."

Thuli notes that until now anyone considering setting up a cheese plant would have had to put up a building, provide heating and cooling sources and then try to find a line of small equipment to make cheese. Financing what would be in the \$300,000 to \$400,000 range and resale would be difficult.

"Lenders we have talked with like this portable concept," says Thuli. "A buyer can try to establish a market, but if it doesn't work out or he wants to quit, he can sell the unit. The new owner just hooks on and pulls it away."

Thuli believes the new cheese plant is particularly well suited for Wisconsin with its strong specialty cheese industry. While the company worked closely with Wisconsin regulators in design and development, Thuli says the plant could be set up anywhere.

"We have a consultant who will work with buyers in other states to get approval," says Thuli. "It would be inspected before it left



Unit is self-contained with chillers, heat source and equipment needed to make cheese.

our shop to meet all pasteurized milk ordinance codes."

The mobile cheese plant sells for \$245,000 and can also be equipped to make pasteurized milk, yogurt, ice cream or butter. Thuli cites a Wisconsin Department of Agriculture study that showed the plant could return a profit of \$34,000 a year over and above wages with milk priced at \$23/cwt. If a person was processing his own milk, profits could be even higher. Costs included were the price of the unit, a price per vat for cheese production, insurance, labeling, start-up fees, permits and licensing.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Ted Thuli, Darlington Dairy Supply Co., Inc., Highway 81 West, Darlington, Wis. 53530 (ph 608 776-4064; website: cheeseonwheels.com).

### Machine Turns Wood Waste Into Money

There aren't too many 93-year-olds around with the energy, enthusiasm and sharp wit of Harvey Severson, a Minnesota inventor, manufacturer and tinkerer who's come up with more machines and ideas over the years than almost anyone we've ever met.

Harvey started out as an airline mechanic and he even did some engine work for Howard Hughes in the 1930's. He started building sawmills and other logging equipment in his spare time and became well-known to woodsmen all over North America. In fact, the day we visited him, he was working on a big sawmill in his yard. He builds them from scratch, with features you won't find on any other machine.

Harvey says one of his best ideas ever is his "wood curl machine" which he calls a Severson Shaver. When he first came up with the idea in 1994, he won a national inventor's award and was featured on CNN and in the New York Times. Since then he has perfected the idea and built a bunch

of them for sale.

"Where else can you buy a business for \$17,000," says Harvey, about the machine for which he built nearly every component himself. Here's how it works:

The machine is designed to turn scrap wood from construction job sites into curled wood shavings which can be used for animal litter or for use in place of foam peanuts for packaging. The machine, which has a large, enclosed flywheel fitted with planer-type cutting edges, will make as much as 8 cu. ft. of wood curls in a minute.

All you do is to feed a tray of short wood blocks into one end of the machine. A blizzard of curls immediately starts shooting out the bottom into buckets.

"The curls are a lot different than wood shavings because they're longer and are cut in a way that gives them a springy curl. They have much more bulk than shavings," says Severson. "It lets you turn a free product – waste wood – into a valuable product that can be sold at local stores as pet or livestock



Harvey Severson feeds blocks of wood into the Severson Shaver, which turns a tray of wood into a big pile of wood curls in seconds.

litter or to any company that packages a lot of product for shipping."

The machine is designed to work with pine and other soft wood. In addition to using the curls for litter and packaging, he has experimented with mixing the wood curls into masonry cement in order to make a

lightweight, insulated building block. He says the idea has a lot of potential.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Harvey M. Severson, Severson Mfg., 8418 Dupont Ave. So., Minneapolis, Minn. 55420 (ph 952-881-8378).