

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 email us at: editor@farmshow.com.



James Goebbert started building his specialty crops business when he was just a freshman in high school. He grows crops like dill and parsley on 50 acres.

Teen Succeeds With Specialty Crops Business

Just out of high school, James Goebbert, Hampshire, Ill., has tapped into the huge specialty crop market in Chicago. For the past several years he has grown about 10 specialty crops like dill and parsley on 50 acres.

He started building his business, called Go-Ro Fresh, when he was just a freshman in high school. At the same time, he participated in high school sports but his real passion was farming.

He markets his crops at the Chicago International Produce Market, a wholesale market for local grocers. He now owns four tractors, a precision seeder, a semi truck with a refrigerated trailer, two ice machines, tillage implements, and irrigation equipment.

Goebbert comes from a marketing-oriented family. The Goebbert family has been known for its pumpkin production. FARM SHOW published a photo and story

on the family 14 years ago (Vol. 19, No. 6). They have a striking, eye-catching display on their farm – a giant pumpkin sitting atop a silo.

This year he bought 18 improved acres including a house and a number of out-buildings, which will be the base for his operations. Next year he expects to expand to 150 acres and grow even more vegetables, including parsley root, leeks, knob onions, kohlrabi, Swiss chard, and beets.

This year he employed some 20 workers. Even with his youth he finds no difficulty in managing the workers.

"I sign the checks, and the workers respect that. Things have worked out well," he says.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, James Goebbert, 42W813 Reinking Rd., Hampshire, Ill. 60140 (ph 847 464-0105).

Fire Truck Turned Into Mobile Wedding Chapel

The Illinois State Fair is the latest entity to become fascinated with Rev. Darrel Best's one-of-a-kind fire truck turned wedding chapel. It became a new attraction at this year's fair as a place where romantic couples could really tie the knot or renew their vows.

The idea for a mobile wedding chapel "just sort of happened".

Brother Best actually is the former president and CEO of a credit union in the Metro East St. Louis, Ill., area, and now lives in Shelbyville, Ill. He had always liked fire trucks, and after being ordained he was looking for a vehicle that could some day serve as a mobile ministry.

One day he was on a business trip to nearby Eagle Creek resort and saw an old faded-red fire truck sitting by the road. He thought it might fit into his mobile ministry.

Days later his family purchased an unused chapel in Shelbyville that had been up for sale. It became home for that part of his ministry.

A Country Music Television show called "Trick My Truck" picked up on the idea. The TV people refurbished the truck. They installed a new engine, gave the truck a new paint job, a waterproof interior, and added marine quality stereo speakers. Then they built the whitewashed chapel complete with pews, stained glass windows, and a look-alike organ that conceals a stereo system for pipe organ music.

The truck's sanctuary has two small pews and just enough room for the minister, bride and groom. There's also room for two other people as witnesses.

Rev. Best says that wherever he goes the mobile wedding chapel attracts plenty of attention. Last July Karen Foster was married



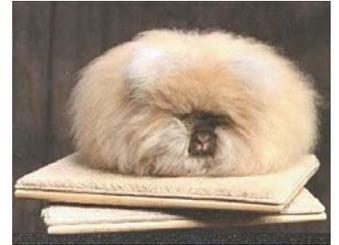
Vicki Johnson operates a thriving business turning rabbit wool into socks and other products. A large farm building is filled with antique knitting machines.

She Turns Bunny Fur Into Socks

Vicki Johnson hand-shears her 25 Angora rabbits 3 to 4 times a year and knits the wool, blended with Merino sheep's wool, into crew socks that are worn inside shoes and boots across the globe. Vicki's little operation, Northland Woolens, Inc. started in her basement with wool she handspun and knit on two flat-bed-knitting machines. The thriving business has since taken over a large storage building - filled with knitting machines - on the property she shares with her husband, Scott, a mile north of Nelson, Minnesota.

Vicki acquired her antique knitting machines from a variety of places, the latest ones coming from Montreal. With a myriad of interlocking parts, the machines look mysterious to the casual observer and take considerable time to learn to operate efficiently. Vicki has learned to fix breakdowns on her own, since sock knitting machine repairmen have to come from a state away when something goes wrong.

The demand for Northland Woolens socks has grown far beyond the amount of Angora wool that Vicki's rabbits can produce so she now depends on other wool producers. Raw wool is sent to Crescent Woolen Mills in Two Rivers, Wis., for spinning. The wool/Angora blend socks are made in 5 styles



This fluffy Angora rabbit is ready to be sheared.

and 4 sizes in 3 natural colors. "The wool blend socks with Angora are twice as warm as wool alone," says Vicki, who now sells several thousand pairs of socks a year.

Marketing has progressed from word of mouth to taking wholesale orders at trade shows. Vicki has added knitted hats, headbands, mittens, vests and jackets. She employs a half dozen women who work on site. Others do hand work in their homes.

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Fire truck turned wedding chapel is complete with pews, stained glass windows, and a look-alike organ that conceals a stereo system for pipe organ music.



Truck's sanctuary has two small pews and just enough room for the minister, bride and groom, and two witnesses.

to John Foster at what's now the Foster farm home in rural Tuscola, Ill. They had seen the truck/chapel on TV.

Rev. Best says the mobile chapel attracts a lot of attention wherever he goes, and there's no danger of exceeding the speed

limit as the truck's top speed is only about 45 mph.

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