

Wanna Make Sausage? Here's Where To Go

Whether it's a grinder, casings or seasoning mixes, The Sausage Maker website is a great place for DIY'ers to start. But it's also the place to shop if you want to make bacon, ham, beer, wine or cheese or preserve other foods. The family-owned business has been helping folks make their own sausage for more than 40 years. They build equipment at their Buffalo, N.Y., manufacturing plant with the same focus on quality that founder Rytek Kutas had when he started the business in 1978.

The experienced sausage maker developed recipes and wrote books. When readers told him they couldn't find casings and other ingredients, Kutas began selling supplies and making equipment.

Krzysztof Stanuszek, CEO for the business, was left the company upon the founder's passing in 1998.

"We're unique in our niche for being a sausage making company," says Miroslaw Stanuszek, VP for the business. "What separates us is our manufacturing division. We are often the first manufacturer of a product, and then knock-offs are brought in from overseas. We build from the

ground up."

The stainless steel grinders, smokers, slicers and other equipment are designed to last for generations. They come with a 3-year warranty, but the company has been known to replace parts and make repairs long after that.

"About 90 percent of our customers were hunters, anglers and people who want self-sustainability. Now about 75 percent fit in that group and the rest are hobbyists and people who are concerned about preservatives," Stanuszek says.

The Sausage Maker sells a variety of spices and blends for sausage, jerky, rubs etc. that they mix themselves – without any preservatives. But their quarterly catalog also includes mixes from other companies.

"Sausage is our mainstay. People find us for sausage. We have the largest selection of natural, collagen, fibrous, cellulose and even vegetarian casings," Stanuszek says. "Among our best selling products are fermenting crocks for sauerkraut making. We are the biggest distributor of ceramic fermenting pots in the U.S. Also, fruit and wine presses are big sellers."



A family-owned business called The Sausage Maker manufactures equipment to make sausage. Photos show their 30-lb. (left) and 50-lb. smokers.

To view the many products The Sausage Maker sells, request a catalog or check out their website. In addition to product listings there are helpful links for how to make sausage and other preserved food.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, The Sausage Maker, Inc., 1500 Clinton St., Building 123, Buffalo, N.Y. 14206 (ph 888 490-8525; www.sausagemaker.com; customerservice@sausagemaker.com).

Freezing Temps Can't Stop Mobile High Tunnel Gardener

By Jim Ruen, Contributing Editor

Daisy Fair's moveable hydronic heat system keeps her mobile high tunnels frost-free all winter long. Growing vegetables at 7,000 ft. near Park City, Utah, makes greenhouse heat a necessity. Thanks to her heated high tunnels, Copper Moose Farm had gross sales of nearly \$200,000 in 2016.

"We expect short growing seasons with frost in August, but it froze in July the last 2 years," says Fair. "I've been growing vegetables here for 15 years, and I couldn't believe it."

The heated beds helped keep the plants safe. Fair uses standard hydronic PEX tubing buried 6 in. deep in the beds. The beds are inside her 30 by 50-ft. and 18 by 50-ft. high tunnels. Thermostats buried in the beds track soil temperature and trigger the pumps to circulate hot water through the PEX.

Fair's beds extend another 50 ft. beyond the end walls. She practices Eliot Coleman's year-round market gardening approach, moving her high tunnels and reinstalling the hydronic heating system every fall.

Meanwhile the area that was under the high tunnels is exposed to direct light and cold winter temperatures. Come spring, some will be planted to hardy vegetables, but most will be planted to cover crops in hopes of reducing disease pressure. By late September the beds will again be tilled, PEX tubing buried, and the beds planted. In late October, the high tunnels will be rolled back in place. It's a process that has been repeated for more than 10 years.

"We put up our smaller tunnel in 2007," says Fair. "I knew I wanted it moveable, but moveable high tunnels were not available. We welded together huge rails for it to slide on, but it had to be pulled by a tractor. When we built the second one in 2010, we bought a hoop house kit and pieced together a wheel system from

locally sourced parts. Later we updated the smaller hoop house with wheels as well."

The improvements allow Fair and her crew to move the high tunnels by hand. The natural gas water heater that heats the water in the PEX in both high tunnels is moved at the same time.

"It is on a small platform that we only have to move about 10 ft.," explains Fair.

Each bed has 2 loops of PEX with square ends formed using connectors rather than a tight bend in the tubing. Fair acknowledges that each connector adds to the cost, but she hasn't had a failure since first installed in 2009.

"We only grow cold hardy greens in the high tunnels in winter," explains Fair. "We'll harvest, let them regrow, harvest again and then start new crops."

Small hoops over the beds and row fabric covers help hold the heat from the PEX tubes around the plants. In the spring, the heated beds provide sufficient heat for germination and protection of transplants.

Fair soon plans to switch over to a no-till system and raised beds. Lines will now be buried semi permanently rather than every fall.

"Burying the lines wasn't that bad," she says. "Depending on available labor, we could bury the lines in the smaller greenhouse in 3 hrs. and in the larger one in 5 hrs."

Her heated high tunnels, along with her passive solar greenhouse, make it possible for Fair to supply CSAs, as well as several local restaurants and a ski resort, with fresh greens throughout the winter and fresh vegetables through the summer. She also operates a farm stand during the summer.

"Without the greenhouse and heated beds, we couldn't grow what we do in this short season," says Fair.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Copper Moose Farm, 1285 Old Ranch Rd., Park City, Utah 84098 (www.coppermoosefarm.com).



Photo shows heating tubes being buried in shallow trenches before moving the hoop house.



Rollers at the base of sidewalls roll back and forth on rails.



Daisy Fair poses with mature crops inside tunnel.