

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.

"Rent-A-Chick" Boosts Egg Business Profit

Laurie Lynch sells "farm fresh" eggs year around on her small farm near Kutztown, Penn. When a friend asked her for a baby chick to give her son on Easter, Lynch came up with an idea that added about \$800 of income to her small enterprise. She calls it Rent-A-Chick. "It's not a huge amount of money, but it's a nice way to start off the season," she says.

Lynch has to buy a new supply of chicks every spring anyway so now she gets them from a hatchery right around Easter time and rents them out for two weeks to customers who want the experience of having a baby chick but don't want to end up with a full-grown chicken.

"Instead of us taking care of these chicks for the first two weeks of their lives, other people do," she says.

In her second year of renting chicks, Lynch charges \$30 for a pair of baby chicks. ("They like the company," she says). They come with a box, water dish, and enough food and bedding for two weeks.

A feature story in the local paper took care of advertising. The original article

came out on Good Friday. "Saturday morning, I had to run out and buy more chicks," she says.

Some were concerned about the chicks dying. "If it dies, you just have a nice little ceremony and bury it in the back yard," she recalls telling them.

Renters were also happy to know that afterward, their chicks would live out their lives on a farm and lay eggs.

When people bring the chicks back, she gives them a coupon for a dozen free eggs from their chick. "It gets them back to our farm another time," she says, which might result in a long-term customer.

Last spring, Lynch supplied 60 chicks to 30 families. When returned, they became part of a flock of layer hens.

Before starting this business, she checked with the state department of agriculture. She recommends doing the same for anyone interested renting out chicks.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Laurie Lynch, Fleur-de-Lys Farm Market, 440 Hottenstein Road, Kutztown, Penn. 19530 (ph 610 683-6418; email: plmr@enternet.net).

Great Labels Help Sell Farm Produce

If you've got a product you sell off the farm, you'll like these discount product labels that inform your customers about what they're getting in a clear and attractive manner.

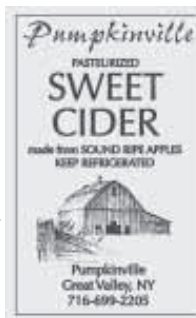
Stu McCarty and Lynn Thor of Grower's Discount Labels cater mainly to farmers who direct market frozen meat products, eggs, vegetables, honey, cheese, preserves, baked goods, salsas or body care products.

"We offer a design and production service for all kinds of durable labels that can be applied to all types of surfaces," Stu says. "We have customers from Maine to California and from Oregon to Georgia. Our office is in Tunnel, New York, and the factory is centrally located in the Midwest. Production time is three to six days and shipping is free."

The couple has been in the printing business since the mid 60's and began supplying labels to growers in the early '90's. They focus on customer satisfaction and personal service.

"We relish the challenge of transforming all the information a producer gives us into a label that will talk to the consumer when the producer can't be there to tell his story. We can measure our customer's success by the re-orders that we receive as products are being sold," Lynn says. "One of the requirements of most poultry producers is that the label will stick to a poly bag that will be frozen. Our freezer adhesive has the wide temperature range to work

A New York company specializes in labels for farm markets. The durable labels can be applied to all types of surfaces.



under these conditions and our pricing is very reasonable compared to other sources we have checked."

Labels are available for use on waxed boxes, plastic bags, clamshells, glass, plastic jugs and direct contact application.

The couple also produce their own vegetables and eggs and buy whatever food they cannot produce themselves from local farms so they feel they have a good understanding of challenges faced by small farmers.

"We want to do all we can to help small-scale agriculture flourish," Lynn says.

Write, phone or email for a free catalogue.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Grower's Discount Labels, Stu McCarty and Lynn Thor, P.O. Box 70, Tunnel, N.Y. 13848 (ph 800 693-1572 or 607 693-1572; fax 607 693-4415; email: growersdiscountlabels@tds.net).



"It's designed to work on pumpkins 8 to 12 in. in diameter," says Mike Clark about his small-scale pumpkin "de-seeder."

Small-Scale Pumpkin De-Seeder

The current popularity of pumpkin seeds as a snack food motivated Mike Clark of Newport, New Hampshire to build a small scale pumpkin "de-seeder." It mounts on a tractor 3-pt. hitch.

"The design isn't really unique. There are others out there that are similar, but this one is a nice size and is something anyone could build," he explains. "It's ideal for 100 acres and is designed to work on pumpkins 8 to 12 in. in diameter."

Before de-seeding, Clark leaves pumpkins in the field to dry. When the seeds start separating from the placenta material, you are ready to use the machine.

Clark says you load pumpkins by hand into a square chute made out of a piece of 8-in. pipe with teeth welded onto the outside. It's driven by a hydraulic motor. As the teeth break up the pumpkins, the pulp falls down another chute into one end of a seed drum where the material is further beaten around. The seed drum, which is a round sieve with paddles on it that's open on both ends, rotates horizontally and is driven by another hydraulic motor. The seeds fall through the holes in the drum into a collection pan underneath. The larger chunks of pulp fall out the back.

"The nice thing about it is that it's all hydraulic, so you can change the speed and ro-

tation of the drum as needed. If you want the material to flow out the back faster, you can change the angle of the machine by taking the top link off the 3-pt. hitch and picking up the lower lift arms," Clark says.

Most of the material used to make the de-seeder was used structural steel that Clark welded up. He had the seed drum professionally made and bought all the hydraulic parts. He made the pulping drum himself, using a piece of 8-in. pipe and welding teeth onto it. The pulping drum has an axle mounted on it, whereas the sieve drum rides on rollers like a rock tumbler.

"If you had different drums, you could also use this de-seeder for things like cucumbers, melons, and all manner of cucurbits," he says. "I wouldn't mind building a couple more of them, and would also be willing to sell the plans, or even just provide advice to anyone who wanted to build their own."

Clark's de-seeder would be available in the \$10,000 price range.

Contact: FARM SHOW, Mike Clark, 186 East Mountain Rd., Newport, New Hampshire 03773 (ph 603 863-1284; email: clarkcontr@netzero.net).

Where To Get Baskets For Selling Stuff

If you sell farm products direct to consumers, you'll be interested in the Greenfield Basket Factory that makes more than 80 styles of high quality, wood veneer baskets.

The company makes both stapled baskets for produce and floral use and higher-end, hand-nailed baskets.

Stapled baskets are hand-woven and available in natural as well as brown, green, red, and blue. They can be used for everything from farm stands to gift baskets, floral, craft, and home use. Also available are wine boxes and crates; hard-bottom buckets; round veneer boxes with lids; and veneer tubs with lids.

Prices range from \$7 plus S&H for a small mail basket to \$40.50 plus S&H for a step basket with dyed chain links.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Greenfield Basket Factory, 11423 Wilson



Greenfield Basket Factory makes more than 80 styles of high quality, wood veneer baskets.



Rd., North East, Penn. 16428 (ph 814 725-3419 or 800 227-5385; fax 814 725-9090; email: greenfieldbasket@juno.com; website: www.greenfieldbasket.com).