

Toby Kendall (left) and his uncle Ted sit on the porch steps of the farmhouse that has become living quarters for pigs.

## CHEAPER THAN BUYING NEW FACILITY

# Farmer Turns Old House Into Modern Pig Palace

By Dianne Beetler

When Illinois hog farmer Joe Kendall, of Galva, says his house looks like a pigpen, he's not joking. He has converted an old farmhouse into a pig nursery designed to hold 225 baby pigs.

"You might say I've rented my farmhouse to the pigs," Kendall jokes.

Located across the road from the Kendall residence, the seven-room house had stood vacant two years. Although it still had a solid foundation and sound walls and roof, it required extensive remodeling to make it livable.

"At first, I thought I would tear it down to eliminate the hassle of trying to rent it," Kendall says. At the same time, he needed a pig nursery but didn't want to invest a large sum of money in a building project. "Then I thought, 'Why don't we use this for a pig nursery?'"

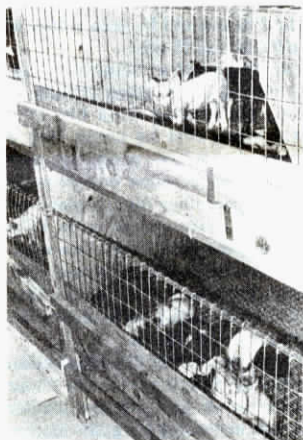
"I figured that 240 pigs would eliminate waste to the amount of 12 toilet flushes per day. I thought we would run the water into the septic tank or use the tank as a holding basin." Without the expense of a pit and with heat from the furnace in the basement, Kendall thought he could set up a nursery for a very low price.

Then in July, he consulted an agricultural engineer about ventilation in the house. "He doubted the septic tank would work, and also felt that the furnace would be too inefficient," Kendall recalls.

After considering this advice, Kendall constructed a cement pit behind the house and installed an LP gas heater in the house.

Kendall's brother, Ted, a food technologist currently living in the Galva area, did a major portion of the construction work in the nursery. He was assisted by Kendall's sons, Chris and Toby.

Ted Kendall covered the walls with



The living and dining room areas of the house now provide nursery space for pigs. Each homebuilt pen holds 14 pigs.

insulative sheeting obtained as seconds. "It has an insulation value and keeps moisture away from the plaster," he explains.

In the former dining and living room area, he built 16 confinement pens designed to hold 14 pigs each. They are arranged in double-deck rows of four each.

He also built the fiberglass trays under the pens. Manure is flushed along the trays to one end of the room where it is funneled into the pit.

The gas heater is located in the entryway to the house. A fan in a nursery window sucks warm air from the entry into the nursery.

Feed is stored in upstairs bedrooms. Holes in the floor allow the Kendalls to pour bagged feed directly into the feeders below.

"Carrying the feed up here is very good for fellas that play football," says Ted Kendall with a grin for his

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**Editor's Note:** Most of what goes into Ag World stems from story ideas sent to us by readers. This special section of FARM SHOW touches on the lighter side of farming and ranching — everything from human interest stories, to unusual hobbies, to unique things farm families are doing for fun or profit.

If you've read or heard a good Ag World type story you'd like to share with others, send it to: FARM SHOW, Box 704, Lakeville, Minn. 55044.

## CLIENTS PAY FOR UNUSED SHELTER

# Extra Money: He Rents Barns To City Folks

"It's a good way to make use of empty space," says C.W. Brown, Rising Sun, Maryland, about his sideline business — renting his unused barn and other farm buildings to city dwellers who need storage space for boats, trailers, campers, motorcycles, antiques cars and other items.

Brown, who went out of the dairy business and rented out most of his land, has been renting barn space for 10 years. He says the extra income helps pay taxes, insurance and to maintain "handsome old buildings that would otherwise deteriorate".

All in all, Brown rents space in eight buildings ranging from small brooding sheds to the dairy barn. He has 27 or 28 renters year round paying from \$15 to \$35 a month, depending on how much space is needed, and whether or not they need a high clearance building. Most come from within a 10 to 15 mile radius although he has customers from up to 30 miles away. Only those interested in seasonal or long term storage are welcome. He's not interested in

weekenders who take their boat or camper out every weekend for pleasure.

"There is also a market in renting to other farmers," says Brown. "A lot of machinery sits outside during the off season and, with equipment costs rising, it pays for them to protect it from rusting. I also store hay for other farmers on occasion."

Before going into the rental business, Brown and his lawyer drew up a legal agreement which all of his customers sign. This states that he is not responsible for insurance on anything he stores, nor is he responsible for thefts or damage by fire, wind or storm.

Brown provides keys to customers in individual small buildings but says most notify him in advance before coming out to pick up stored property. "It's a little inconvenient but the benefits far outweigh the drawbacks," he says.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, C.W. Brown, 456 Lombard Road, Rising Sun, MD 21911.

nephew, Toby, who is a senior at Galva High School. "When Joe orders his first five tons, he's going to invite the whole team out here."

Joe Kendall says he may eventually buy feed in bulk and auger it to the second floor where a large room would serve as the holding bin.

Downstairs in the kitchen, the cupboards and sink are still in place. Kendall will store his medication and tools in this room.

"The nursery was built on a shoestring," Kendall says. The pit cost \$2,400, and steel in the confinement pens, the feeders, water equipment, and other supplies brought total conversion costs to \$7,000, about half the cost of a new confinement facility.

Recently Kendall moved in 125 four-week-old pigs and plans to leave them in the nursery for a month. He hopes to keep the nursery in use year-round.