

## Antique Corn Pickers Becoming "Collectable"

With restored tractors selling for tens of thousands of dollars, more and more collectors are turning to restoring other farm machinery instead. One such area that's growing fast in popularity is the corn picker.

"I sent my son to an auction of a no. 25 Deere two-row, mounted picker that had been stored inside with all the accessories. I expected it to sell for about \$1,500," says Bob Johnson, a confirmed corn picker collector. "It sold for \$2,850. Two brothers who are restoring a horse-drawn Deere picker told me they were recently offered \$8,000 by a collector."

Johnson admits it isn't just old corn pickers that are picking up in value. He cites a Deere manure spreader that was restored to perfection selling for \$9,000 this past year and a working threshing machine selling for \$7,000.

Dale Kepner has been restoring equipment since he retired as a truck driver. His brother Dave also restores tractors and implements and has two restored corn pickers. Dale sees growing interest in implements, too. He says individuals often specialize in one type of implement.

"Some are interested in corn pickers, while others are interested in balers and still others in tillage equipment," he says. "I picked up a unique Oliver no. 83 picker set up for

30-in. rows for one collector. He already had an Oliver no. 88 mounted and an Oliver no. 88 pull-type picker, as well as other Oliver single row pickers."

As popular as pickers are, Kepner says implement packages are the most sought after. "Allis and others used to sell packages of tractor, disk, plow and planter to guys switching from horses," he explains. "If you find a package like that with the paperwork to prove it, you've got better than gold."

Johnson's pickers may not be as valuable as an implement package, but that's okay with him. He simply loves corn pickers. He has nearly 30, not all of them completely restored. Many were priced right.

"I've been offered two-row mounted pickers practically free," he says. "People just want them to go to a good home, and they know I will either keep it or find somebody who wants it."

Johnson collects mostly single-row Deere models. He has a website devoted to corn pickers and is working on a book. Each year he hosts a picker day at an 11-acre field on his farm. This past November, there were 11 corn pickers working the field along with one man picking by hand.

"I put out the word to friends, and it spreads



Antique corn pickers are growing fast in popularity, says collector Bob Johnson.

by word of mouth," says Johnson. "This year we even had a video crew there, and they produced a video about the pickers."

Johnson has a few unusual pickers in his collection, including one called the Great American. It came out just after World War II. Instead of gathering chains it has three sets of paddles.

Johnson's favorite is a one-row Deere 127, mounted on his favorite tractor, a Deere B. His most modern is a pull-type 300 with changeable heads for different row widths.

Johnson says he and his wife Phyllis are collecting recollections and photos from people for their book and for display on their website. "We are looking for stories, good and bad," he says, admitting that he has heard his share of

sad stories about losing a hand or arm or worse.

Johnson is also looking for old sales literature and other information on pickers, with a goal to preserve as much information as possible.

He's especially interested in corn pickers sold by lesser-known companies. "I could do an entire book about pickers that most people have never heard of," says Johnson.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Bob Johnson, P.O. Box 525, Sycamore, Ill. 60178 (ph 815 761-3709; mrcornpicker@aol.com; www.cornpickerbook.com) or Dale Kepner, 6606 Richfield Drive, Arpin, Wis. 54410 (ph 715 652-2084; fax 715 652-6566; dkepner@tznet.com).

## Squirrel Cage Treadmills Keep Dogs Healthy

"Healthy pets get plenty of exercise."

That's the motto of GoPet, an Ephrata, Penn., company that manufactures exercise equipment for dogs. They consider their newest dog-powered tread-wheel a breakthrough in the industry.

"One of the biggest problems with dog exercise equipment is that you have to force the dog to use it," says Earl Kauffman, sales manager for GoPet. "Our products give dogs complete freedom of access. They can jump in or out without encumbrance. It's totally voluntary."

The gerbil wheel-like units come in two styles. The free-standing wheel mounts anywhere there's a flat surface to place it. It's 12 in. wide and comes in 36-in. and 48-in. diameters.

The kennel-mounted version is like adding an exercise room to a kennel or doghouse. The dog has free access to it anytime. The tread-wheel is 24 in. wide and comes in 36 and 48-in. dia. models.

The wider model makes it possible for running to be a "social experience" for dogs.

"I've seen up to seven little dogs run together," Kauffman says. "It's really interesting when there is more than one dog in a kennel. They jump in and out like they're playing jump rope."

Dogs should be allowed to figure out how to use the kennel-mounted tread-wheel on their own, he adds. Young dogs pick it up right away; older dogs may take a little longer. They set their own pace walking or running. It's not uncommon for an active dog to tally up to eight miles in a day.

Customers include everyone from pet owners to kennel operators to sporting dog enthusiasts interested in developing muscle tone and endurance.

There are size limitations. In order to get into full gallop, dogs must be no taller than 22 in. to the top of the shoulder and weigh 88 lbs. or less.

The tread-wheels are made of galvanized 12-ga. steel coated with a polyester coating that stretches with temperature changes and cleans up well.

GoPet tread-wheels are available direct from the company's website. They have a 1-



Dogs can jump in or out of this dog-powered treadmill any time they want.

year warranty and range in price from \$475 to \$683.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, GoPet LLC, 2500 Division Highway, Ephrata, Penn. 17522 (ph 717 354-3399; www.gopetusa.com).

## Eye-Catching "Boot Mirror"

Looking for a way to use old cowboy boots? Why not cut them up and put them around a mirror? That's what Bree Poppe and Reon McBride did to make their cowboy "boot mirror".

The 19-in. dia. circular mirror is lined with overlapping boot tops in many different colors and styles. It takes about eight pairs of boots to make a 19-in. dia. mirror.

The two friends grew up on ranches in Colorado and wanted a way to honor that lifestyle, so they started collecting old cowboy boots from friends and family members. To make a mirror, they cut off the boot top down to as far as the leather will lay flat. Then they glue and staple the boot tops in an overlapping fashion to a wooden frame and attach the mirror.

"It makes a nice gift. The different colors and styles and stitchings make each mirror unique," says McBride. "We also can make a sunflower-shaped boot mirror by cutting the boot tops down the middle and then placing them horizontally. You see the yoke of the boot along with its pulltops on the edges. We also plan to make square mirrors, hair barrettes, and bracelets."

The mirrors sell for \$250 to \$300.



Cowboy "boot mirror" is lined with overlapping boot tops in many different colors and styles.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Reon McBride, 7380 Maine Lane, Colorado Springs, Colo. 80923 (ph 719 591-6288 or 719 469-3057; poppeliwestock@gmail.com).

## How To Subscribe To FARM SHOW (New & Renewal)



Take out a new subscription (or renew your existing subscription) and get a FREE copy of our new "Money-Making Ideas" book.

**Yes! I want to be first to learn about latest new products. Please sign me up for FARM SHOW and send me a FREE copy of your just-published new 128-page "Money-Making Ideas - Vol. II" book.**

Check here to renew.

### United States

- \$19.95 for 1 yr.  
 \$37.95 for 2 yrs.  
 \$51.95 for 3 yrs.

### Canada

- \$25.95 (Can.) for 1 yr.  
 \$49.95 (Can.) for 2 yrs.  
 \$65.95 (Can.) for 3 yrs.

My check (\$ \_\_\_\_\_) is enclosed. (Add 5% GST in Can.)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State /Prov. \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Make check payable to FARM SHOW.

Clip and mail this coupon to:  
FARM SHOW, P.O. Box 1029, Lakeville, Minn. 55044  
Or phone toll-free 800 834-9665  
VISA, Mastercard & Discover accepted.