

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.

## She Down-Sized Her Shetland Sheep

When a friend gave Maria Batula-Harkey a flock of sheep, she had no interest in dealing with full-size sheep for the long term. So, for the past 12 years she has been downsizing the flock of Shetland Sheep to see how small she can get them.

"I look for the smallest rams I can find and save back my smallest ewes," explains Bantula-Harkey. "Between a third and half of the 100-head flock stands less than 20 in. tall at the shoulder."

The original flock was purebred registered Shetlands, which are a small sheep to begin with. Their fleece comes in a variety of colors from white to black, brown, cinnamon and everything in between. To improve the wool for weaving, Bantula-Harkey began using the smallest Gotland rams she could find. That breed is noted for its long, soft and luxurious wool.

Bantula-Harkey notes that although fleece weight is down on the smaller animals, quality from the crossbreds is higher. She uses the improved wool for braiding rugs, mats and seat pads. Bantula-Harkey also uses it to stuff quilts and sells it bagged for all-natural home insulation. Mostly she makes gifts.

"I have 6 kids, 7 grandchildren and 16 great grandchildren, so there are a lot of Christmas and birthday presents to be made each year," says Bantula-Harkey. "I sell some ram lambs to people to butcher and donate my extras to the Salvation Army or the local food bank."

A few people, upon hearing about her miniature Shetlands, have purchased breeding stock from her. She prices males and females alike between \$100 and \$150 each, depending on size. The smaller the sheep, the more she feels it's worth. "I try to keep the price so



A friend who's only about 5 ft. tall holds one of Batula-Harkey's full-grown rams, waiting his turn to be shorn.



Almost half of her 100-head flock stands less than 20 in. tall at the shoulder.

people can enjoy them and not have to pay through the teeth for them," she adds.

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## Selling Leeches, Worms On The Internet

By Nancy Leasman

The Jewell family has run a wholesale bait business for more than 25 years. Son Mark recently launched the Jewell Outdoors website to sell leeches and night crawlers to fishermen who order online.

"We can sell them a lot cheaper online," says Jewell.

How does the Jewell family trap leeches?

"We take a 12-gauge sheet of aluminum that's about 3 ft. long and 2 1/2 ft. wide," explains Mark. "The next step is like making a paper air plane. First, fold the sheet in half. Then, fold one side back on top of itself, and do the same to the other side. This leaves you with three folds in the aluminum. We then put a hog ring in one end of the trap, pinching the folds together. Tie a string to the ring, and a bobber of some kind to the end of the string. The string is usually 5 to 6 ft. long. Your bait (beef liver or ground up fish carcasses) goes inside each of the folds (just a little bit). The leeches will come to the

scent of the bait in the water, and stay inside the folds until the bait is gone."

After the leeches are rounded up, they're cleaned and sorted into various sizes. When the orders come in, the leeches are packaged for shipment.

"Leeches are packed inside a plastic bag which has enough water and oxygen for a two day shipment on Speedee Delivery or UPS. They will arrive inside a cooler, which is packed securely in a cardboard box. Leeches and Crawlers are kept at a comfortable temperature by placing ice bottles in the cooler. A customer's geographic location dictates which company we ship with."

Mark blogs regularly on his website and encourages fishermen, and women, to share their fishing stories.

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Jeff Overton built this heavy-duty rim crusher out of a giant wood splitter. An "anvil" is welded to one end of rig's 10-ft. long, 10 by 10-in. H-beam.

## Tire Crusher Smashes Semi Rims

With the heavy-duty rim crusher Jeff Overton built, he estimates he can remove rims from as many as 500 tires a day. His service is welcomed by the landfill near his Gatineau, Quebec, home.

"I separate them, and a company picks up the tires. I take the metal rims to sell for scrap," Overton explains.

Overton has contracted the work for four years. At first he rented a machine, but it was expensive and didn't work on large semi tires. His machine works on everything from bicycle and lawn mower tires to 11R 22.5 semi truck tires.

Basically the crusher is a giant wood splitter made out of a 10-ft. long 10 by 10-in. H-beam. Overton cut a hole in one end to solidly weld an "anvil" he made out of 2 by 10-in. steel plate. A 5-in. hydraulic cylinder with a 48-in. stroke powers a crusher plate that he made out of 3/4 and 1-in. steel plate. The cylinder and hoses cost about \$900.

Overton welded the unit on an old Dodge Caravan axle so he can pull it with his tractor. He hooks up the hoses to the back of the tractor and runs it at idle to power the 25-ton force cylinder.

Overton lays the tire flat on the H-beam next to the anvil and flips on the hydraulics to smash the tire.

"Car tires usually just take one stroke," Overton says. "Semi tires take two strokes."



A 5-in. hydraulic cylinder powers a metal plate that crushes tires. Unit is powered off tractor hydraulics.

The rim falls out when he lifts the tire up. He tosses the rubber in one pile and often throws the rim into a junked car.

"I get a better price when they're in an old car rather than just selling loose steel," Overton says.

The press works well and costs much less than the \$10,000 machines that can only press car tires. There doesn't seem to be a shortage of work either. Because the crusher is mobile, he can take it to sites throughout his area.

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## High-Tech Games Attract Farm Crowds

GPS, text messaging games, and geocaching can take your maze or other farm entertainment business to a new level. According to "Maze Master" Hugh McPherson, today's economy is prime time for farmers to expand their offerings and marketing beyond mazes and selling pumpkins or other farm crops.

"We try out all of our crazy ideas on our own place," says McPherson, who has offered mazes and entertainment at his Pennsylvania farm for 12 years. "We are professional designers who try to come up with new ideas for attracting people to the farm. We are inventing all the time."

Teens (and others) will enjoy a new text messaging game where they find stations, and text codes to lead to the next clues and prizes, such as a coupon for savings on something sold at the farm.

McPherson suggests extending the season with GPS geocaching hunts over 40 or 50 acres. High school students, Scout groups and even corporations seeking team building options work together to find items that are hidden on the ground using GPS units.

"Corporate team building can cost \$50 to

\$100 per person. Businesses don't want to stop developing their staff," McPherson says, suggesting farmers spend time on the phone marketing and booking groups. By charging admission from \$7 to \$12, farms offer an affordable option to corporations and extra profit for the farm operations.

McPherson's company Maize Quest sells a package that provides signs and marketing materials, and advises how to purchase appropriate GPS units and coordinate them with the game.

GPS is also a huge time saver in cutting mazes, McPherson adds. His business offers a la cart and complete maze design packages.

For people not interested in technology, the Maze Catalog offers new non-tech games and retail take-a-ways like the Happy Apple Face Trace and Funky Pumpkin worksheets that allow young children to choose stencils to create custom faces.

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