

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.



Frustrated with the small hand-operated cider presses on the market, Gerald Simons designed this model that can press out 20 to 25 gal. of cider per hour.

Apple Processor Geared To Small Orchards

If you have a small orchard or U-Pick apple operation, Gerald Simons has a cider press for you. Frustrated with the small hand presses available and not having enough apples for a commercial press, Simons designed an "in-between" one that he's now building for sale.

"Most commercial presses require a minimum of hundreds of bushels," says Simon. "Mine will handle about a bushel of apples in 10 min. At an average of 3 1/2 gal. of cider per bushel, I can press out 20 to 25 gal. of cider per hour. You can also use it with berries, grapes and tomatoes."

Simon designed his machine to be a one-man operation. The wheeled machine can be used anywhere with electric power. It's also simple and low maintenance. "When you're done with mine, clean it out, throw a tarp over it and forget about it until next spring," says Simon.

While Simon's cider press is made from food grade materials, in most states you can't sell raw cider as produced with his press. You can, however, still turn cider making into a profit center.

"One of my customers with a small orchard sells people the apples and then charges them to use the press to make their own cider," says Simon. "He'll make money from the apples, from the press and from selling them jugs for their cider."

The most complex part of the machine is the apple processor. It's a long chute with a set of 20 Skil saw blades at the bottom. They are separated by 135/1000-in. shims, just enough to let the apple pulp and juice fall through into a plastic 5-gal. pail.

"When the apples hit those blades, they practically explode into juice and particles the size of creamed corn kernels," says Simon. "You can pour apples in about as fast as you want, and the 1/2 hp motor won't slow down."

Safety is important to Simon. He designed the chute to curve so it's physically impossible to get your hand to the blades. A kill switch disconnects the motor if the chute is opened up.

As apples are pulped, they move to Simon's unique barrel press, which rotates within its stand for easy loading and emptying. The complete unit (apple processor and press) is available with pneumatic drive (\$2,850) or a manual (\$2,250) design.

Simon builds his cider presses himself in groups of five. If none are in stock, it may be two weeks before one can be shipped.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Gerald Simons, 570 Green Acres Lane, Bosque Farms, New Mexico 87068 (ph 505 869-6553 or 855 869-6553; applesandwinepress@yahoo.com; www.appleandwinepress.com).



Selling U-pick flowers provides good sideline income for Cathy Lafrenz. The 20 by 20-ft. bed of flowers she started with in 2002 has grown to a full acre.

"Pick Your Own" Flower Business

Selling U-pick flowers is not an easy way to make a living, admits Cathy Lafrenz, but she says it has been a good sideline income producer.

The 20 by 20-ft. bed of flowers she started with in 2002 has grown to a full acre of annuals and perennials. She works 60-plus hours a week during the busiest part of the season. Customers travel to her rural Donahue, Iowa, home from mid-June until the first hard freeze, usually in October. The deal is \$15 for as many flowers as you can fit into a cut-off plastic gallon milk jug, which Lafrenz provides. Usually that's between 25 and 50 stems or enough to make three nice bouquets. Some thrifty customers really get their money's worth, but Lafrenz is known for adding even more flowers to many of her customers' bouquets.

She wants "Miss Effie's Country Flowers and Garden Stuff" to be more than just a business.

"It's not summer until you come to Miss Effie's," she says people tell her. Besides providing a product, she provides an adventure and a welcoming atmosphere. There's a bed to rest on in the garden and a "Cornzebo" to rent with tables and chairs, gas grill and a fire pit. A tree filled with hanging teacups given to her by customers symbolizes the relationships she develops.

Work begins in early spring when she plants 8,000 annual plugs.

"The flowers have to have at least two re-blooms and be taller than normal varieties," Lafrenz says. She has old-fashioned and new varieties including zinnias, snapdragons, cosmos and sunflowers, just to name a few. There are also perennials – daisies, Asiatic lilies, Echinacea, *Veronicastrum*, and more.

Flowers are grown without chemicals and planted close together in rows 30 in. apart so they will grow tall. They are supported by cattle panels that the Lafrenzes cut and bend. She collects up to 3,200 gallons of rainwater and uses a pump and hoses to irrigate when there isn't enough rain. She pulls weeds and mulches (63 yards worth) for weed control.

"About 60 percent of my time is working with customers. I teach them how to cut the flowers and what to look for," Lafrenz says.

Location is important (she's near the Quad Cities), but so is marketing. "Facebook works just as well as anything," Lafrenz says. She has over 1,000 fans, and she lets people know about events, what's in season, and other products that are available from people who sell at her on-farm store. It's also helped her develop a wedding market.

"I'm working with a bride for a September wedding," she explains. "We're looking at \$240 to \$250 for everything."

Besides saving lots of money, picking flowers adds to the wedding experience. One couple brought their bridal party, family and friends to the farm at 8 a.m. Each person had a list of what to cut, and by 11 a.m. the group left with all the flowers they needed. They had time for a brunch and plenty of laughs while getting the job done.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Cathy Lafrenz, Miss Effie's Country Flowers and Garden Stuff, 27387 130th Ave., Donahue, Iowa 52746 (ph 563 282-4338; www.misseffiesflowers.com).

He Raises Maggots To Heal Equine Wounds

Several years ago, veterinarian David Harris watched another vet treat a hoof wound on an expensive Kentucky thoroughbred with a vial of maggots purchased from a lab in California.

Harris was impressed and thought there might be a market for maggots raised closer to the horses in Kentucky. After he retired, he set aside part of his barn and developed a system to hatch the fly eggs and disinfect them to remove bacteria.

Using maggots to clean out wounds is an old idea that was used on wounded Civil War soldiers and is still used today on some diabetic and burn patients.

Harris sells larvae to veterinarians in vials: Small (250 to 500 maggots) for \$89

and Large (500 to 1,000 maggots) for \$130, plus the cost of overnight shipping with a cold pack. A small vial is typically enough to treat a hoof wound.

The larvae are placed on the wound and covered with a bandage that's secured with a horseshoe or tape. The bandage is changed daily and by the third day, the maggots have eaten their fill and are disposed of.

"There is a compound in their saliva that kills bacteria, which helps the infected wound," Harris says. "More importantly they remove dead tissue to allow in oxygen and blood supply." The larvae aid in removal of tissue by releasing enzymes that liquefy the dead tissue allowing better drainage from the wound.

"Maggot therapy is not a standard of care now, but I think it will be one day," he adds. "At this point many equine podiatrists use it on a regular basis. Some also use it after abdominal surgery."

Harris says maggots can also be used to treat fistulous withers, postsurgical abdominal dehiscence, canker and a variety of other problems.

The larvae are not available to the general public. Horse owners can ask their veterinarians to contact Harris for more info.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Haltere Lab, P.O. Box 11, Paris, Ky. 40361 (ph 859 621-8071; www.halterelab.com).



Maggots work great to clean out wounds on horses, says David Harris, who sells maggot larvae to veterinarians.