

## Farm Toy Restoration Expert

Roger Inman, a retired farmer from Vinton, Iowa has long been recognized as the farm toy restoration “go to” guy. “I’ve been doing this for 35 years,” Inman says. “I even got to go to the first National Farm Toy Show.”

Inman lives just an hour from Dyersville, Iowa, home to the National Farm Toy Show. He says he got started taking apart his own toys, then restoring them. The hobby took off and today Inman says, “I have customers in 27 states, and I’ve never advertised.”

He likes to work on all brands of toys. It’s usually at shows that his customers bring him their toys and pick up the completed models. While he works on all makes and models, he said he gets more requests for Deere and International Harvester toys than Allis Chalmers, Oliver and Case.”

When Inman receives a project, he has a set process he goes through. “First, I make a list of the needed parts to fix the tractor, and then the list stays with the toy in the box

until it’s done. I add to the list if needed.

“Next, I take everything off, even the rims off the tires. I boil them in water to soften them up,” he added. Once the toy is disassembled, he takes it to his farm to be sandblasted using silica sand.

Taking the time to fill in scratches, Inman works with the surface until it’s smooth and then he paints. He has a designated paint room with an exhaust.”

The paint comes from local dealerships and he works on any size model farm tractor including pedal tractors. One of the neatest perks that Inman says he has received was when he received a call from Deere and a photographer came out and took a picture of him with a restored toy for a calendar. “They only went to four people for this” he added.

Inman’s children are proud of their dad’s accomplishments and when the opportunity arises to work with him at a show like the Half Century of Progress, they come and enjoy the family time. Denise is right at home in the



**Roger Inman is known as the farm toy restoration “go to” guy. “I have customers in 27 states, and I’ve never advertised,” he says.**

farm atmosphere. “I am married to a farmer. We grow sugar cane, sweet corn, celery and green beans for fresh market.”

To contact Inman about farm toy restoration, call 319 472-4128.

## “Craft Malting” Catching On Fast

Andrea Stanley and her husband Christian wanted to brew beer from local grain, but they didn’t have one of the most important ingredients: malt. They figured other local brewers had the same problem so they started a craft malthouse.

“When we realized no one was doing any malting on the East Coast, it was shocking and exciting to discover a unique niche,” says Andrea, adding that the closest malthouse was halfway across the country in Wisconsin.

When it came to setting up their malthouse, it helped that Christian was a mechanical engineer and Andrea had business experience. He designed and built their first system. She warns that it required a lot of calculations of airflow, time, temperature and moisture.

“The first 2 steps of steeping and germinating are fairly easy,” says Andrea. “It’s the kiln that trips up a lot of people. If you don’t move enough air through and dry it down quickly enough, you can get a lot of mold growth.”

In early 2010, Andrea was selecting barley seed and talking to farmers while Christian was designing and building a 1-ton per week system. By September, they were starting their first commercial batches of malt.

Demand grew rapidly. By 2012 they had upgraded their system to 4 tons per week and started growing grain and other crops themselves, in addition to contracting with other farmers. Currently they are expanding again, this time to 12 tons per week as they supply brewers and distillers from Maryland to Maine and east into New York State. They’ve also started developing other markets for their malt, including a packaged malted pancake mix.

“We plan to continue building the market in our region,” says Andrea.

She encourages others to follow in their footsteps. “It’s a really great job if you like to work hard and be part of agriculture and brewing,” she says.

“Before you spend a lot of time and money and commit to malting equipment, look at your supply, especially if you’re not in an area with a tradition of malting grain,” says Stanley. “Not every batch will be perfect, so it’s nice having distillers as a secondary market.”

Stanley also suggests finding a mentor.



**Andrea Stanley and her husband Christian wanted to brew beer from local grain, but no one in their area was doing any malting. So they started their own craft malthouse.**

She and her husband worked with a craft maltster from Quebec. Today, finding advice is much easier. She and other craft malthouses recently started the North American Craft Malsters Guild.

“Our website went live in February,” says Stanley. “We have resources for growers and people interested in malting. Our goal is to provide educational opportunities focused on the craft.”

Stanley thinks craft malting is at an early stage and hopes the guild will establish standards of quality and safety.

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## Wild Rice Dehuller Might Have Other Uses

Wild rice, a northern delicacy, is expensive to buy. Since it mostly grows wild, people often harvest their own. “Gathering and processing wild rice isn’t for everyone,” says retired veterinarian Tom Hohl. “In Minnesota you need a license, a properly-outfitted canoe, and special equipment for processing.” Hohl has spent many hours harvesting and processing about 20 lbs. of wild rice each of the past few years. He made the processing a lot easier in 2013 by building his own dehuller.

“The mechanical dehuller I made uses a small electric motor to turn a fan-like mechanism inside a 2-ft. long drum made from a piece of 12-in. dia. plastic drain pipe. It’s a simple design that nearly anyone could build.”

The dehulling drum is 24 in. long. It’s smooth on the inside and corrugated on the outside. He covered the smooth inside surface with an abrasive rubber-like fabric that rubs against the rice hulls.

Inside the chamber, 4 metal paddles that are 2 in. wide and 23 in. long are connected to a 5/8-in. dia. shaft with sturdy metal rods. “The idea was to create a fan-like mechanism to stir and dehull the rice,” says Hohl. The paddles are covered with abrasion-resistant skirtboard.

The dehulling shaft rides on two bearings bolted to endcaps that Hohl made from finish grade 3/4-in. plywood. The endcaps and motor mount are supported by a simple frame that he made from scrap wood. The dehuller shaft is driven by a 1/2-hp electric motor that connects with a V-belt to a 6-in. pulley. The motor has a 40:1 reducing gearcase, so it rotates the shaft about 40 to 45 rpm’s, which seems just the right speed, Hohl says.

“I put about a gallon of rice in at a time and it takes about 35 to 40 min. for dehulling,” Hohl says. “When it comes out I separate the rice from the hull fines with a fan.”

Harvesting the rice, which is considered a sacred food by some Native Americans, must be done in a traditional manner. Restrictions are placed on the width and length of the canoe that is poled into standing rice. Wooden sticks known as ‘knockers’ and others called flails are used to gently brush the ripe grain from the heads into the canoe.

Hohl says it took him about 2 days to build the dehuller, but it cost less than \$40, and it will be useful for several years. He thinks the



**Tom Hohl made it easier to process wild rice by building his own dehuller. It uses a small electric motor to turn a fan-like mechanism inside a 2-ft. long drum.**



**Dehulling drum was made from a length of 12-in. dia. plastic drain pipe.**

design could be used to process other seed that’s harvested in small batches.

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