

## They Plant Ancient Grains To Preserve Them

Rick Schroeder and Steve Gardipee started raising ancient grains to feed their families better. Now they raise them to help preserve the unique varieties by selling seed to other gardeners and small farmers.

"We bought a small amount of different seeds to plant in our gardens," says Schroeder. "They did exceedingly well, and we expanded the small plots. Now we are trying to encourage other people to plant small plots for personal use."

Schroeder and Gardipee formed God's Ancient Wheat to promote the grains. Currently they are working primarily with banatka, a rare wheat variety from Hungary, and emmer, which originated in Turkey. They are also working with kamut, einkorn and a durum wheat from the Bethlehem region, believed to date back to biblical times.

"We planted 1/4 acre of banatka the first

year and have expanded each year since," says Schroeder. "It's now our largest crop, and we'll be planting 5 acres this spring. As far as we know, there's only one other farmer planting it in the U.S."

Schroeder and Gardipee like banatka for its drought tolerance and standability. "It survived our drought last year and stood up to unusually severe hail storms and heavy rains that beat commercial wheat into the ground," says Schroeder. "It was a tough year for wheat, but the banatka just shrugged it off."

Schroeder says banatka stands from 3 to 5 ft. tall with stalks that are pencil sized. Heads can be from 3 to 5 in. long with each seed in its own pod. There are 20 to 30 seeds in a seedhead.

"We harvested 1,000 lbs. from about 2 3/10 acres," he says.

Banatka is their largest crop, followed by

emmer. They are planting about 2/3 acre of it and 1/2 acre of einkorn with other grains in smaller plots.

"A 10 by 20-ft. plot of banatka would produce enough for personal use," says Schroeder. "The flavor is unbelievable, and wheat flour doesn't compare. It won't rise like commercial wheat as it has smaller amounts of gluten. You have to cook it differently."

Currently their company is only offering banatka and emmer seed. Due to limited availability, both are priced at \$1 for approximately 20 seeds or an ounce (approximately 600 seeds) for \$20.

"We are just selling a little seed to get more people to try it," says Schroeder. "We limit sales to a few ounces each."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Rick Schroeder, 6081 Cliff Lane, Temple, Texas 76502 (ph 254 986-2655; chopper10@vwm.com; www.ancientwholegrain.com).



**Rick Schroeder and Steve Gardipee raise unique varieties of ancient grains and sell the seed to gardeners and small farmers.**

## Portable Wind Machine Blows Up A Storm Of Business

"On a sizzling hot day or a frosty 30 degree night, a big gust of wind can do a lot to save crops or livestock," says Kim McAulay, the New Zealand engineer who developed the world's first super-sized portable fan. McAulay's "Tow and Blow" is highly effective at cooling steamy livestock or combating freezing temperatures in vineyards, orchards and nurseries. He says the machine is highly adaptable because it can be towed into position on flat ground or hilly terrain and can easily be relocated.

The Tow and Blow has a 3-bladed impeller operating inside a shrouded 7-ft. dia. fan head. It raises up to 28 ft. in the air on a hydraulic arm and either fully rotates 360 degrees or can oscillate back and forth through any angle.

"We think it's one of the most interesting new products to guard against freezing temperatures or blazing heat in the last several years," says McAulay. His company has produced stationary wind

machines for 23 years and marketed them around the world. Del Vanderhoff of Chamberlin Agriculture in Washington noticed the portable machine in Chile in 2014 and saw an immediate market for it. "It's ideal for frost protection, for misting, and evaporative cooling of tree, vine and ground crops," says Vanderhoff. Attaching mist nozzles makes it ideal for cooling and keeping flies away from livestock.

The Tow and Blow is powered by a 23 hp V-twin Honda engine that turns the impeller at various speeds up to 620 rpm. The engine uses about 1 1/2 gal. of fuel per hour. The fan produces only 45 db of sound at 1,000 ft., so it's environmentally friendly.

"A small vehicle can easily tow the machine to where it's needed and one person can set the outriggers, raise the fan with the hydraulic arm, and start it," McAulay says. "The Tow and Blow over comes the inefficiencies of stationary machines with noisy diesel engines." McAulay says his



**Super-sized portable fan has a 3-bladed impeller that operates inside a shrouded 7-ft. dia. fan head. It can be raised up to 28 ft. in the air on a hydraulic arm.**

machine can move as much air with a 23 hp engine as a stationary machine does with a 150 hp engine on the ground. Contact the U.S. distributor for pricing.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Tow and Blow Company, 172 Taihape Road, RD9

Hastings 4179 New Zealand (ph +64 21 444 334; www.towandblow.co.nz) or Drew Vanderhoff, Chamberlin Agriculture, 4151 State Highway 97A, Wenatchee, Wash. 98801 (ph 509 630-2093; www.towandblowusa.com).

## Honey & Cheese Helped This Family Farm Thrive

Dairy farming is popular in the rolling rural areas of southeast Minnesota, but land is at a premium and competition is everywhere. The Metz family of Rushford has stretched their farm enterprise in new directions by bringing their children into the operation, purchasing a honey processing business, and starting their own creamery.

"Some of our milk goes right from our cows through a pipeline to our on-farm creamery, where it's made into cheese that's sold direct to our customers," says Jeff Metz. "It doesn't get any fresher than that because the milk never leaves the farm."

Mariann Metz, who does bookkeeping for the operation, says her husband Jeff had the idea for making cheese on their farm for several years. "As our 4 kids got older and became more interested in farming, we had to find something to expand the operation because they all liked it out here," Metz says. "We went through nearly 7 years of planning. Eventually we put up a building next to the barn for the creamery, and Jeff spent parts of 3 years attending cheese-

making school in Madison and River Falls, Wis."

The whole idea came to fruition in 2014 when Metz's Hart-Land Creamery produced its first cheese. They started with cheese curds, expanded to a variety of Farmstead Cheddar blocks, and hope to expand to other types of cheeses and possibly ice cream in the future. They expect to use about a quarter of the milk production from their mixed breed herd of 220 cattle the first year for further processing. They'll expand that amount as other products are added.

The Metz children are an integral part of the whole operation. Their son Nathan and son-in-law Nick milk in the morning and oversee herd care. The Metz's oldest daughter Alicia is in charge of the livestock record-keeping and herd reproduction.

Mariann Metz says their Metz's Hart-Land Creamery products are amazingly fresh. "We can have cheese products for our customers about 12 hrs. after the milk has come from the cows."

The honey processing operation, which they purchased in 2013, has given them a



**Jeff Metz finishes making a batch of cheese curds at his family farm. He and his wife also own a honey processing business.**

foot in the door of local stores, bakeries and restaurants. Mariann Metz says those contacts proved beneficial when they began producing their family brand of cheese curds a year later.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Metz's

Hart-Land Creamery, 25909 County Road 13, Rushford, Minn. 55971 (ph 507 864-2627; metzcreamery@goacentek.net; www.metzhartland.com).