

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.



Les Schmidt built this steam washer to clean metal roofs on dairy barns. Washer's 4-ft. wide deck has 4 high-pressure nozzles underneath that spray 160-degree water.

Roof Cleaner Makes Barn Roofs Look New Again

"You don't know how dirty it is until you clean it."

That's dairy barn roof cleaner Les Schmidt's motto, which he effectively demonstrates in a drone video on his website. Schmidt appears to be a dot on the peak of a vast roof, lowering a steaming washer down the steel ribs, leaving an obvious white path next to unwashed grey metal.

Others may not have paid attention, but about a decade ago the Wisconsin entrepreneur noticed that roofs of 10-year-old free-stall dairy barns were starting to look shabby.

"It's a maintenance issue, and there are people who want to keep their place looking nice," Schmidt says. "Cleaning the roof changes the appearance of the whole facility."

He built a washer specifically designed to clean metal roofs. The 4-ft. wide deck of the washer has 4 high-pressure nozzles underneath that spray 150 to 160-degree water. Six wheels, four in front and two in back, adjust to follow the ribs. Four jacks are raised or lowered according to the rib height. A black poly ring around the outside prevents the washer from scratching the metal.

Water is continually heated from a 50-gal. nurse tank through a hot water boiler/burner and 12 gpm/3,000 psi pressure pump inside an enclosed service trailer. Schmidt

uses the hose to let the washer down and pull it up as he works across the roof.

"I can cover 25,000 sq. ft. in a day," Schmidt says. He typically sets up to wash 200 ft. of roof on each side.

When the roof pitch is steep, he hires a helper. One lets down and pulls up the washer, while the other lifts the back end and moves the washer to the next section of roof to clean.

"It's way more difficult than it looks (on the video), especially dealing with safety," Schmidt says, noting he uses harnesses on some buildings.

Demand for Schmidt Exterior Cleaning keeps him busy throughout the Midwest. Clients typically have large operations – 1,200 to 5,000 cows – and Schmidt may spend a week or so in an area cleaning barns for different owners.

He charges expenses and by the square foot, according to how dirty and steep the roof is. Schmidt adds that he also does fan and curtain cleaning.

"My goal with my company is for people to grasp how dirty their exterior has become and recognize they can have the beautiful, fresh look all the time," Schmidt says.

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As Schmidt lowers washer down roof's steel ribs, it leaves an obvious white path next to unwashed grey metal.



Terry Jacob started up a sideline business by cutting up older planters and turning them into food plot planters.

Business Grows For Food Plot Planters

Retired farmer Terry Jacob stumbled on a great sideline business when he started making food plot planters by cutting up older planters. His first units were a result of planter units left over when he salvaged a 60-ft. planter toolbar to make his portable sheepsfoot packer (Vol. 40, No. 5).

"A friend suggested making planters for wildlife food plots with the leftover planter units," says Jacob. "I sold a 1-row for \$850 and a 2-row for \$1,250."

Since then he has continued selling food plot planters using planter units from 185 and 295 IH planters. He likes the relative simplicity of these planters from the 1960's and 1970's.

"The people I'm selling to aren't familiar with planters," he says. "They need a durable unit that is simple to operate."

Jacob gets his planters from auctions across a 3-state area. If needed, they get repainted.

"I've torn them down and refurbished them, painted them and reassembled them," says Jacob. "The market is pretty hot around Kansas City with deer hunters putting out food plots and small farmers who plant for market. Some buyers are people who have a big garden."

Depending on the end use, Jacob supplies the plates needed. He will also customize to the buyer's request. He has made 4-row planters, which sell for \$2,000 or more. The big difference is a larger tool bar and gauge wheels.

"I use a 2 1/4-in. diamond bar, which was used on those planters," says Jacob. "Most go on Cat. I or II 3-pts. If I don't have enough,



He likes to use planter units from IH 185 and 295 planters because of their relative simplicity.

I have a neighbor who fabricates Cat. I hitches."

Jacob says he is always in the market for more raw materials. Of course, not every part on a planter gets used in those he sells.

"If you're looking for parts for these planters, I have them, as well as seed plates, the little springs and all the parts found in seed cups," says Jacob. "I've taken them apart and cleaned them up."

Jacob notes that there are others making food plot planters out of Deere planter units. "I don't see many IH planters," he says. "I've sold them from Kansas to Illinois and had inquiries from North Carolina to Louisiana."

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Honey Stick Machine Boosts Beekeeper Profits

For the past decade, Wayne Flewelling has helped beekeepers make about \$55 per quart of honey with his Honey Stick Making Machine.

The sticks – straws filled with honey or flavored honey – typically sell for 25 cents each. A quart of honey fills about 220 straws, and Flewelling's machine fills between 300 to 500 straws an hour.

"I built a machine in 2003 for myself because I wanted to make my own honey sticks," he explains. When other beekeepers wanted them, he started building them, and demand continues to grow.

His setup includes a manifold with nine chrome-plated valves to fill the straws, a sealer, hot plate, pump and box of 2,500 straws for \$395 – the same price he charged 10 years ago when he first set up his online store.

The honey is heated to 120 to 140 degrees so that it can be pumped into the straws.

Individual valves shut off the flow and the impulse sealer heats up the straw ends to close them.

Besides honey, some customers use the machine to make straws filled with maple syrup or concentrated cherry juice. The machines have been shipped all over the U.S. and to other countries.

He also offers a variety of concentrated natural flavorings used in wine and beer, including favorites such as chocolate, peach, root beer and watermelon.

"Honey straws are great for diabetics to carry. Also joggers and bicyclists like them for a quick energy boost," Flewelling says, adding they are also a healthy snack option for children and adults.

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