

Sheller Strips Sweet Corn Kernels Fast

Imagine stripping sweet corn kernels from 50 cobs in a minute. That's how fast David Grotegut can process sweet corn with the aid of one helper and his Bullet Corn Sheller.

"We've always put up a lot of sweet corn, and I was always one of the guys who took the kernels off the cob with a knife," recalls Grotegut. "I thought I had a better idea, so I went to my shop and designed a crude version of my Bullet Corn Sheller."

What Grotegut came up with was a pan with a twin-walled tube at one end with an opening in part of the outside tube that extended over the pan. He put an edge on the inside tube, which was sized to allow a cob to go through.

"I used the original one for five years before I retired from farming," says Grotegut. "Every farmer who has made something has probably thought about patenting it, so I decided to patent the Sheller."

Along the way, he took his original design to a metal fabricator to make the parts he needed out of stainless steel. He began welding and assembling them, selling to friends and neighbors. Some friends had first-hand experience, as processing sweet corn was a joint event.

"My buddies and I have races putting ears through the sheller," says Grotegut. "We processed a 3-ft. deep, 8 by 16-ft. trailer of sweet corn in five hrs. this year. We used to have four people cutting kernels off. Now we have two guys trading off on the one machine and have to wait for ears to be blanched."

Initially, he had the machine shop make the Sheller to handle several sizes of cutting heads to fit potentially different sized cobs. He quickly discovered that was not needed.

"I got sweet corn from farmers' markets and neighbors, and they all had the same size cob," says Grotegut. "Some guys who bought them from me said the inner tube was a little tight, so I made it a bit larger. After they tried it, they all went back to my original size."



David Grotegut operating his Bullet Corn Sheller.

"I wanted to make something that would last for multiple generations, like the old sausage grinder that almost every family has," says Grotegut. "I would like my grandkids or great-grandkids to see one in an antique store someday and say, 'That's what my papa made.'"

There is a good chance they will be able to do just that. He has sold 125 of them so far and already has orders for more than 60 yet to be made. They are priced at \$425 plus shipping.

"I get orders and put the names on a list," he says. "About 98 percent of the people I have already sold to are farmers. I've had some call back to say how much fun they had putting up corn."

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**FARM
SHOW**



Don Turner shows off his Oliver Super 55 model tractor. He has built over 150 model tractors.

Hand-Built Oliver Super 55 Model Tractors

Don Turner's classic pedal tractors are collector keepsakes across the country and have been well documented in FARM SHOW (Vol. 42, No. 2) and other publications. His latest creations are true-to-scale detailed reproductions of Oliver Super 55 gas and diesel tractors.

Turner's Super 55's have a replica engine with a chrome exhaust pipe and a working electrical system. Delicate wiring connects a small starter, generator, coil and distributor to a switch at the operator station, which actually controls headlights. There's even a belt-operated fan powered by a thumb-size motor. On the dashboard, small gauges show engine rpm's, oil pressure and voltage output behind the hard-rubber steering wheel with the Oliver emblem. A rectangular decal provides the shifting pattern for the 2-speed transmission on the left top side of the console. Always working for authentic design and scale, Turner even created a working 3-pt. hitch system with adjustable length lift arms.

Turner is a welder by trade with a natural gift for identifying part and design sizes by sight without the aid of a tape measure. "I was born with that ability, and it sure makes building or rebuilding a whole lot easier than measuring everything," Turner says. For years he's crafted his prototype tractors

from pictures and by looking at 1/16-scale toy models. Most are 38 to 41 in. long. After assembling and disassembling the prototype, he builds reproductions in quantity.

Like the previous 150 or so tractors he's made, Turner formed the Oliver 55 frames, hood, fenders and engines from cold-rolled steel. He used a custom die 2 1/2 in. thick to form the grilles and laser-cut the metal for the screen openings. The Oliver name is centered on the narrow strip of solid green separating the gold sides. Turner says creating the front axles and steering system was a tough task, but eventually he succeeded, and the finished product looks authentic and steers easily.

The diesel and gas versions of the 55's are almost identical, distinguished only by Oliver green wheels on the gas model and red wheels plus a diesel decal on the other. He has produced and sold a limited production of the gas model, 10 with red wheels and 10 with green. His wife Diane has staked her claim on the only diesel model that he's built.

Turner says he loves producing the tractors, and even some accompanying implements, and is very fortunate that his wife is supportive of the projects.

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Three new goat breeds derived from the Valais goat, which is known for its long, slender shape and large horns, are used mainly for meat and clearing land.

New Goat Breeds From Switzerland

The Swiss conservation group Pro Specie Rara has officially added three new goat varieties to its 2021 list of internationally recognized breeds: the Valais Fawnneck, the Valais Greyneck and the Simplon Goat.

Pro Specie Rara aims to preserve the genetic diversity of Switzerland's plant and animal populations for generations to come. Working with more than 4,000 volunteers, the organization has helped protect close to 5,000 plant varieties and over 30 animal species found throughout the region.

The three breeds joining the official registry aren't actually new. Rather, they are long-established varieties that have been brought back from near-extinction.

Today, the Valais goat is prized for its

long, slender physique with a long coat and imposing horns. While a multipurpose breed, they are primarily used for meat and clearing land.

Like many ancient breeds, these goats never received official names because they were only found in relatively small geographic regions.

After launching an investigation into historical photos and interviews with shepherds, the volunteer organization determined that the Valais goat breed once had three other color expressions beyond black: tan, grey, and white. Further genetic analysis found that these color variations were not the result of crossbreeding but rather indicators of genetic distinction. In

short, they were four separate breeds.

The story goes that when the Valais Blackneck goat became recognized as an official breed in 1938, all other color possibilities were omitted from the breed standard. This caused breeders to prioritize the genetically dominant black markings in their herd, and the other three colorations became rare to the point of near extinction.

Since this discovery, Pro Specie Rara has sponsored concentrated breeding efforts to bring the lesser-known Valais goats back from the brink. The nonprofit has turned what

was a mere 28 goats in 2013 into healthily growing populations.

Today, Switzerland's three newest goat breeds have passed the threshold from critically low to endangered. It seems the odds are good that Swiss shepherds will be able to enjoy a diversity of hues within their Valais goats long into the future.

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