

They Make Old Tractor Cabs Look Like New

When your tractor still works great but the interior is looking shabby, Tractor Interior Upholstery offers a solution. The Iowa company has been in business since the late 1990's making upholstery for tractor and equipment cabs. Initially, the business only dealt with wholesale customers, but about seven years ago, they started selling directly to farmers and equipment dealers.

"We pride ourselves on having the best fitting kits that don't need to be modified," says Mitch Mulder, product manager for the business. Patterns have been perfected for John Deere and Case-IH tractors and equipment as well as other models built in the late 1970's and newer.

Some kits need to be glued in place, but most customers order plastic-backed parts that snap in place with a click or silicone adhesive that allows for wrinkle-free repositioning. That takes the stress out of incorrect placement using glue.

The company offers complete kits for the cab or individual parts from headliner panels (roof) to door panels.

"We use automated Nichrome wire cutters for nice crisp edges and bends on the foam to help get the proper fit and placement every time," Mulder says.

Tractor Interior Upholstery uses Polyester Polyurethane foam and perforated vinyl. The Iowa business makes upholstery parts in-house and typically gets orders out in a



Upholstery kits are made to fit various tractor and combine models with little to no modification.

couple of days. They can also order seat and suspension kits for customers.

Check their website for available products and pricing. Items can be picked up to save on shipping, Mulder says.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Tractor Interior Upholstery, 4979 Orchid Ave., Northwood, Iowa 50459 (ph 641-390-0321; productmanager@tractorinteriors.com; www.tractorinteriors.com).

Water Buffalo Raised For Meat And Dairy

One Pennsylvania ranch is taking a different approach to its grass-fed livestock by switching away from cattle. Instead, Buffalo Valley Pastures of Quarryville, Penn., is making a name for itself with a wide range of products made from water buffalo.

The ranch's goal is to give others access to water buffalo raw dairy products like milk, kefir, ghee, cheese, butter, and more, and has since expanded to meat from the buffalo.

Founder David Fisher got his start in agriculture on his father's dairy farm with a herd of Holsteins. He managed a herd of 40 cows for several years before making the family farming operation 100 percent grass-fed and organic.

Fisher received notices from the local conservation district about soil erosion concerns on his farm. The property had several steep hills that triggered washouts in bad weather.

Fisher transitioned his 100-acre farm to a grass-fed operation and made one more significant change - he switched the focus to water buffalo.

On average, one water buffalo will produce between 10 and 15 lbs. of milk a day, while a Holstein can produce 50 pounds or more. Each buffalo can be milked twice a day and will produce for 6 to 7 mos. at a time before going dry, a period that lasts between 3 to 6 mos.

Thus, large herds are necessary if you plan to have dairy production at scale. Even so, water buffalo remain the second-largest source of milk suppliers in the world. Their milk contains twice the fat content of traditional dairy, making for a richer and creamier product that many customers believe tastes sweeter, too.

The farm also specializes in A2 dairy products. This variety of milk lacks a form



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of casein proteins called A1, and instead contains A2 proteins. The structure of A2 protein is similar to breastmilk, and it's found in milk from sheep, goats, and buffalo. Many find these dairy products are easier to digest and lead to less gas, bloating, and diarrhea, especially for those who deal with lactose intolerance.

Pricing for Buffalo Valley products varies by location due to delivery fees. For example, pricing throughout West Michigan comes to \$7/lb. for butchered water buffalo, \$16.19/lb. for water buffalo brisket, and \$25/lb. for water buffalo filet mignon. Sign up for an online account to determine if shipping is available for your area.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Buffalo Valley Pastures, 114 Pumping Station Road, Quarryville, Penn. 17566 (ph 215-962-5794; www.bvpmarket.com).



Plants were started at the college's greenhouses last cropping season, and this year five research stations and three producers agreed to plant them for trials in landscape fabric on their farms.

Canadians Growing Exotic Veggies

African and Asian varieties of amaranth, hibiscus, eggplant, beans and okra are not typical Canadian crops. But several growers have added them to their gardens this year as part of a research project with the agricultural department at Collège Boréal in Sudbury, Ontario.

"We selected varieties that are in high demand in the immigrant population. We want to make them as easy to buy as spinach and carrots," explains Johnny Kashama, the college's agronomist who is managing the ethnic vegetable research. "Also, we want Canadians to benefit from having them as part of their diet. The varieties each have three or more health benefits."

African amaranth leaves are steamed or stir-fried and added to many dishes and are rich in Vitamin C, protein and other nutrients, for example. Hibiscus calyx, which can be brewed into tea, helps reduce high blood pressure.

The imported vegetables are expensive. African eggplant can be as high as \$10/lb. and hibiscus \$7/lb. Growing them locally will make the produce fresher for consumers and

less expensive. At the same time, it gives producers additional value-added options to grow.

Plants were started at the college's greenhouses last cropping season, and this year five research stations and three producers agreed to plant them for trials in landscape fabric on their farms. They will work with Kashama and his assistants and students to measure growth parameters and resulting harvests of 22 varieties (total) of the five crops.

As the crops are being grown, Kashama is also working on marketing and introducing the vegetables to consumers through cooking sessions and to students through the college's menu options. There will also be demonstrations, samples and recipes at farmer's markets and other venues.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Johnny Kashama, Collège Boréal, 21 Lasalle Boulevard, Sudbury, Ontario, Canada P3A 6B1 (ph 800-361-6673; ext. 2058, or 705-560-6673, Johnny.Kashama@collegeboreal.ca).

Low-Cost Repair For Honda Bikes

Randy Hinzman has a money-saving process to repair a common failure to Honda XR80 and XR100 motorbikes that are often used by farmers and ranchers. Hinzman says problems with the handy two-wheelers typically occur if the engines run out of oil or are operating too long on "dirty" oil.

"With bad oil, the camshaft can ride right on the engine head without any bearing or sleeve," Hinzman says. "That causes excessive wear or even a seized engine. The cost of a new head can be \$300 on top of additional charges for a new cam and rocker arm holder."

Using his 40 years of experience as a motorcycle and engine mechanic, Hinzman perfected a way to repair the cam and head for less than half the cost of a new head. He began offering the service about five years ago on eBay and since then has repaired more than 100 heads with good results.

Hinzman says his process first involves cleaning any embedded grease from the worn cam journal surfaces, then heliarc welding the area to build up the journals. He can also build up and repair the rocker arm surface. After rebuilding the surfaces, he machines the cam journals to achieve the proper running clearance between the camshaft and the head.

"I've made repairs for owners from all over the country with great results and not any complaints," Hinzman says. He charges \$125 for his repair expertise, plus a nominal charge



Hinzman offers a way to repair the cam and head of a Honda XR motorbike engine for less than half the cost of a new head.

for shipping, even to Alaska and Hawaii. To make the repairs he needs the head from a damaged Honda XR80 or XR100, a new cam, and the rocker arm holder. Hinzman can be contacted through his eBay seller handle (Hondnut), or he can be reached by phone or email at his shop in Minnesota.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Randy Hinzman, 13780 Hwy 60 Blvd., Zumbrota, Minn. 55992 (ph 763-218-1317; randys@citilink.net).