

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.

Maple Syrup Evaporator Boosts Production

Sunrise Metal Shop of Topeka, Ind., specializes in maple syrup evaporators and accessories for processing sap at home and on a commercial scale. The business began in 1958 as a plumbing store with custom sheet metal fabricating known as the Topeka Metal Shop.

One bestseller is the Maxiflame furnace. This syrup evaporator's unique design features a double-wall insulated front with airflow between the layers, which keeps the front cool. There's also a secondary burn system to burn gases that would otherwise produce smoke.

"Customers who use our evaporators appreciate the gasification going on in the chutes," says Sunrise Metal Shop representative Lee Miller. "With the Maxiflame, there's almost no smoke coming out of the chimney."

The Maxiflame furnace is standard forced air with a rheostat. It comes pre-bricked with an ultra-high temperature fireboard and easy-access side panels, though it's skirted on all sides to keep things contained. The furnace works well with a drop flue, raised flue, or extreme flue pans. This makes the Maxiflame easy to operate, fuel-efficient, and environmentally friendly. "The Maxiflame is more efficient, which is better for the environment," says Miller.



Maxiflame sizing ranges from 2 ft. by 6 ft. to 6 ft. by 16 ft., making it suitable for home and commercial syrup processing.

Maxiflame's sizes range from 2 ft. by 6 ft. to 6 ft. by 16 ft., making it suitable for syrup processing at home and in commercial settings. Pricing varies depending on the size, accessories and shipping location. Contact the company for a quote.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Sunrise Metal Shop, 3070 W 350 S, Topeka, Ind. 46571 (ph 260-463-4026; www.sunriseevaporators.com).



Future CEA and west wing lab space.

Abandoned School Used For Vertical Farming Project

Vegg Inc., an AgTech company in Pulaski, Va., aims to develop modern farming solutions through experimental CEA (Controlled Environmental Agriculture) projects. The team is transforming an abandoned elementary school into an indoor vertical farm.

"We have more people and less space to grow food," says Cody Journell, Chief Executive Officer. "There's a real gap with small to medium-sized farms, and we're attempting to fill it."

Much of the Vegg Inc. team has real estate backgrounds, which proved helpful for tracking down incentives for restoring old buildings throughout the region. "That's a win for everyone, right?" says

Journell. "Because when you reuse old buildings, you're putting fewer resources toward building something new."

The Jefferson School in downtown Pulaski has become the company's pilot project. "We knew we were interested in the building, but the lightbulb didn't go off immediately for us. We thought it had several potential uses, maybe even as housing." Things changed when the team saw the auditorium with its 30-ft. ceilings. "That auditorium had 'vertical grow' written all over it," laughs Journell.

Vegg, Inc.'s goal is to create a mixed-use Climate Smart building. "We plan to use the auditorium for farming, but the classrooms have a lot of potential. They could be rented out as labs or office space," he says.



Turbosawmill offers multiple models, with standard cuts ranging from 6 by 6 in. with the M6-13M to 12 by 12 in. with the M12-28A.

Swing-Blade Sawmill Makes Milling Simple

When Austin Mehlhorn stumbled across Turbosawmill's swing-blade sawmill, he knew it would fit his needs. The New Zealand-designed and built Turbosawmill requires little maintenance and is easy to operate. With its open sides, no loading logs onto a table or carriage is needed. Likewise, there are no hydraulics to increase costs.

"With a swing-blade sawmill, you just walk the blade down for a horizontal cut and walk it back in a vertical position, and you have a finished piece of lumber," explains Mehlhorn. "With the Turbosawmill, just roll the log underneath, adjust the end frames to match the size and taper of the log and start milling."

Mehlhorn works full-time in his local school system and does custom sawmill work in the summer. Because the Turbosawmill is so simple, he can rent it out to others during the school year.

"I can drop it off, spend an hour of training and let them go," says Mehlhorn. "When doing custom milling, I can pull into the yard, push it into place and go to work."

Mehlhorn had considered bandsaw sawmills and other makes of swing-blade mills. He hesitated due to the high costs and knowing he would often be milling residential trees. He expected to encounter metal in the wood. That ruled out bandsaw mills. The swing-blade Turbosawmill was priced right, and it had replaceable teeth.

"I can hit a piece of metal, and it may wreck one or two teeth," he says. "I just sharpen the remaining teeth right on the blade and move on. Teeth cost around \$100 each, but if I don't hit metal, they'll usually last multiple months, even with daily use."

Learning how to sharpen the Turbosawmill teeth was easy, adds Mehlhorn. "The mill has a decent amount of tolerance on sharpening and still turns out a consistent product."

Turbosawmill offers multiple models, with standard cuts ranging from 6 by 6 in.

with the M6-13M to 12 by 12 in. with the M12-28A. If equipped (in the case of the M6) or operated in double-cut mode (some other models are double-cut capable), the swing-blade sawmills can produce cants ranging from 5 by 12 in. to 11 by 24 in.

The M6, with an 11-hp. engine, is designed to mill logs up to 5 ft. in diameter and 14 ft. in length. However, any diameter may be sawn. The M12, with its 30-hp. gas engine, is designed for logs of up to 4 ft. in diameter and 20 ft. long, although it also can be used with larger diameter logs. It can be extended to cut logs up to 26 ft. long or longer with the addition of a center leg.

Mehlhorn likes the portability of Turbosawmill models. The power carriage operates on a beam suspended from two end frames.

One person can move the sawmills as needed, using the jockey transport wheels or towed behind a quad or small tractor.

The price includes delivery to the buyer's door. The M6, with a delivery weight of 680 lbs., is priced at \$11,000, and the M12, with a delivery weight of 2,200 lbs., is priced at \$35,000.

Mehlhorn was so satisfied with his Turbosawmill M10 that he became one of two U.S. technical sales reps for the company. "We have customers in all 50 states," he says. "The website lists customers willing to talk to prospects about their sawmill."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Turbosawmill USA, Spokane, Wash. (ph 509-530-1807 or toll-free 833-961-1904; jake@turbosawmill.com or stan@turbosawmill.com; www.turbosawmill.com) or Swift Fox Industries, 4501-46 Ave., Vermilion, Alberta, Canada T9X 1J2 (ph 780-853-3699 or 780-674-1568; office@swiftfoxindustries.ca; www.swiftfoxindustries.ca).

The company is looking to utilize groundbreaking technology for its growing space. They've connected with MOVA Technologies for carbon-capturing equipment. "We were awarded a Department of Energy grant to test MOVA's air filtering technology to capture CO2 for the benefit of our plants," says Journell. "Many other CEA farms use natural gas to create this necessary CO2, which obviously isn't very climate-friendly."

So far, the project has proven successful on a small scale. "We managed to harvest our first batch of lettuce from a grow tent in the spring of 2024," he says. "Now we're working to scale up the technology to use it for the whole auditorium eventually."

In the long term, Vegg Inc. hopes to offer its indoor farming initiatives as a solution for

improving food accessibility nationwide. Says Journell, "There are an estimated 4,100 abandoned school buildings across the East Coast alone. If we can make our pilot a success, there's a lot of room to scale up a project like this."

Moreover, they want to continue developing climate-friendly ways to grow crops. "We have our eyes set on Climate Smart certified produce," explains Journell. "The certified-organic movement first gained traction through farmers who wanted to get credit for their growing practices. We want to start a similar movement."

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