

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.

They Fix Dented Grain Bins

Timing is everything when grain bins get damaged. Luckily for Chet Edinger, when he noticed a big dent in the side of a grain bin, a local farm building contractor crew was on site.

"Build Summit was installing a new bin, and I mentioned the dent," says Edinger. "They said they could take care of it."

Edinger has bins running north and south, and he notes the wind in the alley can be 10 to 15 mph greater. Recent high winds created a 15 to 20-ft. wide dent. It was the second time this particular bin had been dented by wind over the past 3 years.

Shay Nelson headed up the Build Summit crew. He has fixed his share of grain bins. Normally, he notes, the fix requires removing the dent to return the grain bin close to its original shape. Then, the damaged sheets are removed and replaced with new sheets. This fix proved to be simpler.

"The job required a boom lift, and we had a telehandler there," says Nelson. "We drilled a couple of holes in the sidewall and fished cables through to two 4 to 5-ft. long pieces of steel that spanned the inside surface of the dent."

"They popped it right out," says Edinger. "They're my go-to company for farm structures."

No bin sheet replacement was needed.



Build Summit repairs grain bins by removing dents and replacing sheets as needed.

Nelson credits the fresh nature of the dent and Edinger's quick response to it.

"Steel has memory," he says. "The quicker you get to a dent, the better the chance you have of getting the sheets back to pre-damage conditions."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Build Summit, 36581 SD Hwy 44, Platte, S.D. 57369 (ph 605-337-2841; www.buildsummit.com).



Mini cows are 36 to 42 in. tall, and micro mini cows are less than 36 in. tall. Calves have a lot of hair, and most have horns.

Family Breeds Mini Cows To Sell

Customers contact Matt and Kaylee Kleinsasser about buying mini cows for the same reason the couple purchased their first two cows.

"Their cuteness," says Kaylee Kleinsasser. "People love the hair and the unique colors. Their mannerisms, too - they're not mean, they have good personalities."

Those qualities make mini cows ideal for people looking for pets or "eye candy" on their rural property. And, because of the Kleinsassers' emphasis on careful breeding, their miniature livestock bring premium prices, from \$3,500 to \$12,000.

The Montana couple had each grown up on ranches but never expected to get into raising cattle when they purchased their first cows in 2016.

"We had a little land. We wanted our kids to experience being responsible for animals and the good things you learn, like a good work ethic. We didn't have a lot of acreage, so the minis fit better with our lifestyle and property," Kleinsasser says. They require less feed and minimal fencing and land.

When people asked about buying them, and the couple expanded their property to 240 acres, they recognized an opportunity to start raising minis. After much research, they focused on buying animals with good breeding.

To avoid having nonviable calves, they never breed two animals that have the dwarfism gene, Chondrodysplasia. Many of

their 27 cows are standard Highland cows that are naturally small. Two of their three bulls have the dwarfism gene; the other is a Highland. The goal is to have mini (36 to 42 in. tall) and micro mini (less than 36 in. tall) calves with a lot of hair. Most also have horns.

"Most of the time, females are more desired," Kleinsasser says. Customers are from all over the U.S., including Texas, Tennessee, and California, where the cows often have access to misters to help them stay cool in the summer. Some buyers get them for their children to learn responsibility as the Kleinsassers did.

Their children, Greeley and Izzy, spend time with the mini cows and their calves to make them tame, and they show them in parades. Kaylee, a pharmacist, takes care of marketing and accounting, and Matt retired from teaching to take care of the animals.

Calves stay with their mothers until weaning at 4 to 6 mos. old, when they're ready to sell. Cows are split into two groups for spring and fall calving. Buyers looking for specific colors or characteristics are put on waiting lists, but usually, calves are available to purchase within a reasonable time, Kleinsasser says.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup Two Cow Mini Cattle, 600 Hwy 191 N., Big Timber, Mont. 59011 (ph 406-939-1394; kayleekountz@hotmail.com; www.2cowminis.com).

Caterpillar's ThinkBIG program helps students start a career in Diesel Technology.



On-The-Job Training While Earning Diesel Tech Degree

By Dee Goerge, Contributing Editor

If you're the kind of student who prefers to get your hands dirty in the shop to sitting in a classroom, the ThinkBIG program might be for you. Top that with an opportunity to be debt-free, earn a 2-year degree, and land a great-paying job.

ThinkBIG is a Caterpillar-sponsored education program that teams its shops with local colleges to train technicians.

"Caterpillar has 12 ThinkBIG programs in the U.S., and Butler sponsors two of them," says Mike Sanden, Training and Development Director for Butler Machinery Co., in Fargo, N.D. In addition to working with the North Dakota State College in Wahpeton, N.D., Butler also

teamed up with Lake Area Technical College in Watertown, S.D.

In addition to ThinkBIG, which trains workers for Caterpillar equipment, Butler recently added ButlerMAX for training with agricultural equipment such as Fendt, Massey Ferguson, and CLAAS.

"It's a working educational program so students can work in a Butler shop while going to school. When accepted, they're considered an employee," Sanden says.

After being accepted through an interview and application process, students begin a cycle of 8 weeks at college, then 8 weeks at a shop while earning a wage. After nine rotations, the student earns an associate

degree in Diesel Technology, and they can immediately begin working as a technician in one of Butler's 20 locations with pay starting at approximately \$29.

In addition to earning a wage while attending school, Butler and the state of North Dakota offer scholarships so that students often finish the program debt-free.

"The thinking behind it is that many people getting into the diesel equipment field are hands-on learners," Sanden explains. "People learn by doing under the supervision of a mentor. Also, the program is focused on our being part of a team and our culture - Butler is looking to form long-term relationships."

He suggests that high school students interested in careers in diesel check out the website (www.butlermachinery.com/opportunities-for-students/), which includes Work Study and Co-op opportunities in addition to ThinkBIG and ButlerMAX, which had 40 students last year. Enrollment is open for 2024.

"We're always looking for more technicians," Sanden says. "Students have all kinds of different opportunities. We want to find the people who want to focus on diesel technology and opportunity with Butler to move from technician into other careers within Butler."



Other companies also offer programs to help with getting started as a diesel technician.

Students interested in careers with other agriculture and construction equipment companies such as John Deere and Titan Machinery may find similar programs by checking out their websites.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Butler Machinery, 3401 33rd St. S., Fargo, N.D. 58104 (ph 877-778-2230; mikesanden@butlermachinery.com; www.butlermachinery.com).