

**"YOU CAN'T BUY A BETTER BATTERY"**

## Former Farmer's Now A One-Man Battery Builder

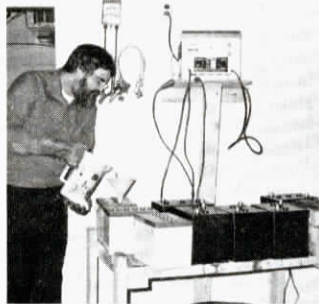
"The big manufacturers have become so inefficient a one-man shop can make batteries as much as 50% cheaper and still realize a good profit," says Ron Kent, Bolivar, Mo., who got into the battery business after leaving the farm.

Kent makes and sells his batteries out of a main street shop he calls the Battery Barn. He uses the identical raw materials, casings and molds used by battery manufacturers and says he can duplicate any 4 to 24 volt battery on the market. "Some of my batteries are even better than comparable commercial units because I add extra plates for added storage capacity," says Kent.

He learned the battery-making business from a fellow in Indiana running a similar business. After about a week he said he'd learned enough to get started and opened his own shop last December. Now, he makes and sells batteries and teaches others how to get into the business.

The actual work of constructing a battery takes about half an hour. The first step is to melt lead to pour into molds for posts and connecting straps. The posts go into plastic cases which he buys from a parts supply firm. The cases are fitted with "sandwiches" of lead-oxide plates and fiberglass separators. Straps attach to the plates and the plastic lid is fastened into place. Ron then fills each battery with sulphuric acid diluted with water and lets them cool down for a couple hours due to the heat generated by the chemical reaction between the lead oxide and the sulphuric acid. Then he puts the batteries on a charger and he's ready to go.

Prices on Kent's batteries range from 15 to 50% less than comparable commercial batteries. One heavy-



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duty Deere tractor battery, for example, that normally sells for \$60 is just \$36.29 at the Battery Barn. A battery that's nearly identical to Sears' heavy-duty Diehard battery, which normally sells for \$57, sells for \$47 at the Battery Barn, according to Kent. He offers the same warranties as commercial manufacturers, including a 5-year warranty on his Diehard look-alike.

"It's amazing how many types of batteries there are. You have to maintain a lot of inventory in order to service all needs," he says.

Kent has begun teaching others the battery business on a one-to-one basis. He charges \$3,700 for the basic course, which involves simply working with him for about a week in his shop. Once a prospective battery builder has learned the trade, he must buy molds, which cost in the area of \$1,300, and about \$5,000 worth of raw materials, which is enough to get started.

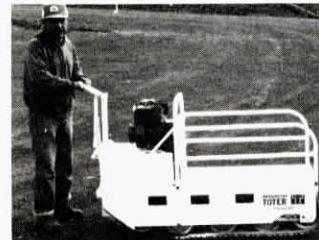
For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Ron Kent, Battery Barn, 205 E. Jackson, Bolivar, Mo. 65613 (ph 417 326-3008).

### CAN YOU USE THIS?

## Powered Farm Cart

"It'll go anywhere you can walk," says Grant Sanstrom, manufacturer of the "Washington Toter", a powered farm cart that'll haul 1,000 lbs. or more over nearly any terrain.

Sanstrom says there's lots of interest in the cart for specialty applications. Center pivot irrigators particularly like it because it lets them get equipment, such as replacement motors, tires, and so on, into the field through growing crops. One man can easily handle routine breakdowns with much less hassle. There's also interest from farmers for the cart for routine chores such as feeding or fencing and maintenance around the farmstead, particularly where a farm is located in unusually rough terrain.



Cart is 5 ft. long, 3 ft. wide and will carry loads up to 1,000 lbs.

"It'll do the work of a pickup in areas where you can't drive," points out Sanstrom, noting that the U.S. Forest Service has already purchased 250 of the Toters for use in fighting forest



Front of the new 1051 is permanently mounted on a two-wheeled cart.

### FEATURES BIG CAPACITY AND UNIQUE TRANSPORT CONFIGURATION

## Deere Selling Pull-type Combine in Australia

Chamberlain John Deere's new 1051 PTO combine has now been tested for three seasons by farmers in Western Australia, and had its first "trial" sales in the eastern states last year.

The company invested a great deal of money, time and effort in designing the machine, and was reluctant to heap praise on the harvester before it had been used "in the field" and teething troubles ironed out.

The harvester has excited much comment among farmers throughout Australia, particularly as it provides a real alternative to SP (self-propelled) machines.

Not only does the 1051 have the big capacity required, its 7.6m-wide front (about 23 ft.) is comparable to that of many SP harvesters, but it also features a unique transport configuration with the platform folding away behind the machine on its own independent suspension cart.

The front is permanently mounted on the two-wheel cart, which carries it from transport to working position and continues to support it while harvesting.

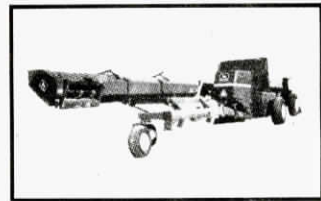
But the main reason given by most farmers for investing in the new harvester is a desire to make better use of their tractors.

At Gabbin North, in Western Australia, Russell Smith has already worked a full harvest with the machine.

Last year, he took off 2,500 acres of crop — 395 acres of which was new country that had been blade plowed, raked a few times and seeded.

fires as well as for routine maintenance.

The cart is 5 ft. long and 3 ft. wide. It's tracks are powered by an 8 hp. Briggs and Stratton engine through a 3 speed transmission with neutral and reverse. It'll carry 1,000 lbs. up a 60° slope and can be carried in the back of a pickup. The operator can walk behind it or ride on a stand-up



An outstanding feature is the ease with which the 1051 converts to road position.

"The machine rode like a dream over that rough land," Smith said. "This was despite travelling at 7½ mph in a light crop.

"I was also impressed with the strength of the cart that carried the front — it was robust enough to handle all the hard work we put the machine through and there were no problems whatsoever in that area."

The 1051 replaced an International Harvester 86 pto harvester with a 15-ft. front, but Russell Smith chose another pto harvester because he couldn't see any point in buying an SP machine when he could use his John Deere 4640 for seeding and harvesting.

According to Smith, he could double the crop cut in a certain time while working at the same speed as the International machine, because had an extra 8 ft. of cutting width and he did not have to unload as often (thanks to the bigger capacity bin).

(Reprinted from Power Farming Magazine).

platform.

The 5-ft. long, 3-ft. wide model sells for \$4,750.

Two other sizes, 30 and 24 in. wide, are also available.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Grant Sanstrom, Overland Carrier, Inc., P.O. Box 138, Parker, Wash. 98939 (ph 509 877-3688).