

## "Muffler" Milk Chip Latest New Health Food

"You can't eat just one. They're so good they're almost addictive," says Harold Thomas, Barneveld, Wis., about the new milk chip health food snack that he and his son Doug say is the latest new competition for potato chips, pretzels, popcorn and other snack foods. The difference between their milk chips and other snack foods is that they're made from 100% natural dairy ingredients so they're good for you.

Harold's brother Walter invented the new snack food but died about a year ago before his invention had received its patent. It has now attracted the attention of a major national food company, which is testing the product for market.

The idea is to mix low-fat cottage cheese with water, dry the mixture into hard chips and then "puff" them up using hot air. The first part was relatively easy. They used a blender to combine cottage cheese and water, and then spread the mixture out on a cookie sheet in a 1/8-in. layer to dry. They then broke the hardened cheese mix into chips and fried them in oil. The chips almost instantly swelled up into crispy chips about 3 times their original size. They tasted and looked great, says Harold, but using oil added too much fat to the food. They had to find another way to cook them.

They tried fans, heater-blowers, vacuum pumps and a variety of other methods but nothing worked. Finally Walter got a crazy idea. He cut out the top and bottom of a 1-lb. coffee can, covered either end with wire mesh and put the chips inside. Then he held the can over the warmed-up exhaust pipe of his 1950 Allis Chalmers WD45 tractor. It worked perfectly, puffing the chips up without adding a single calorie.



"They stay crisp a long time. They could be flavored many different ways and you can add salt or not. They're good both ways," says Harold, noting that the exhaust of other tractors didn't seem to work. The WD45 had just the right amount of air flow and heat to almost instantly puff the chip.

Harold and Doug says the food company looking at the chip is experimenting with other ways of making the chip, including microwaves. He says it's likely the company will invent a machine that'll duplicate the air flow and heat of the tractor's exhaust to produce the commercial product.

"We think they taste great and so does everyone else who's tried them. This product could provide a wonderful boost to the dairy industry," Harold told FARM SHOW.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Harold Thomas, Rt. 1, Box 123, Barneveld, Wis. 53507 (ph 608 924-5474).

## Build-It-Yourself "Slow-Speed" Generator

If you've got a good source of water or wind power on your farm, you'll want to take a look at this new "slow speed generator" designed and built by New Zealand inventor Alfred Forbes.

Forbes first built the new-style generator for use on his self-sufficient homestead where he produced nearly everything he and his wife Julia needed, including electricity. The trouble with conventional electric generators is that they don't work well at slower speeds, they have extremely close tolerances so they must be kept in like-new condition, and they're generally not built for full-time use.

Forbes built the first-of-its-kind generator using all hand tools. The resulting machine is simple to maintain, long lasting, and can generate 1 kw of power at just 500 to 600 rpm's powered by a windmill, stream, small engine, or even a bicycle.

"It's much more efficient than a conventional generator. Less horsepower is needed to produce the same electrical output," says Forbes. "Conventional small and medium generators have precision made rotors that spin between stator units with a clearance of only a few thousandths of an inch. If the bearings are the slightest bit off center, it won't work. This basic design hasn't changed since the turn of the century. My new home-built generator was made possible by the development in the past 20 years of powerful strontium ferrite ceramic magnets which can jump large air gaps."

The only maintenance required is an occasional shot of grease to the unit's two bearings. There are no brushes to wear out and no sparking to cause radio or TV inter-

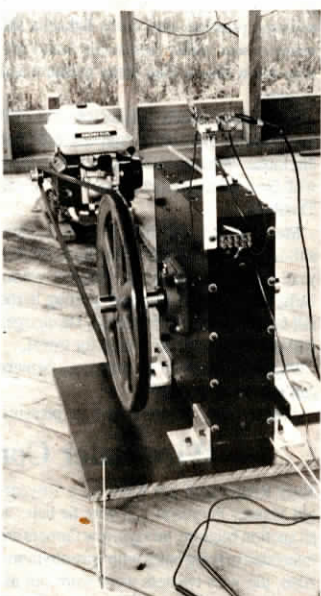


Photo shows a small gas engine driving one of Forbes' home-built generators.

ference.

Forbes has published a detailed book explaining in detail how to build your own slow speed generator and he's willing to work by mail with anyone who wants to tackle the project.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Alfred Forbes, P.O. Box 3919, Auckland, New Zealand.

## Pet Burial Service

"We got the idea when a friend asked to bury his pet on our land. We planted a tree over the pet and as it grew we realized that people in town would pay for the service," says Ben Larsen, Bowie, Texas, who started Pine Hill Pet Park about a year ago with his wife Debbie.

The majority of pets that die or are put to sleep end up in a landfill or at a rendering company. That can cost a lot of money and upsets people who are close to their pets. Pet cemeteries, where owners lease a plot of ground the way they would in a human cemetery, cost more money than most people can justify. For just a \$25 fee (\$20 for senior citizens), the Larsens will bury a pet on their farm and plant an evergreen over it. They will also send out a death certificate and let pet owners visit the gravesite.

"There's a real need for this service. We offer a daily pickup service and most people think our fee is very reasonable," says Debbie, noting that much of their business comes from veterinary clinics. They charge \$5 per pet at clinics plus a pickup charge of \$20. Vets let their customers choose between the burial service or a rendering plant. If they choose to have their pet buried, the Larsens send the vet customer a death certificate.

## Seat Belt Gate "Latch"

"Seat belts work better to keep corral gates shut than anything else I've ever tried," says Daryl Mauier, Grenfell, Sask., who takes old belts out of cars, trucks and tractors and bolts them to gates.

"One of the things I like best is that they're easy to do and undo in even the coldest weather when you've got mitts on. And when the belt's closed on the gate, it won't come open no matter how strong the wind gets. It's fool-proof," says Mauier.

Older style belts with metal ends that bolt

Pets are buried about 5 ft. apart with a pine seedling planted above each one. About 1,700 animals can be buried per acre. The tree on each grave is offered to the pet owner in 6 or 7 years at a cost of \$10 for use as a Christmas tree. No permanent marker is placed on each grave but the Larsens keep a burial chart showing where each pet is buried.

Potential income per acre is \$42,500 (1,700 pets at \$25 apiece) plus \$17,000 for the trees when they mature (\$10 each). Fees for horses and other large pets are higher.

The Larsens buried 340 pets in their first year. Most of their business comes from the nearby Dallas-Ft. Worth area. They've also put together a complete information package for other farmers who might be interested in starting their own burial service. It includes information on legal restrictions (some states and municipalities have regulations on what can be buried and where), advertising and marketing, landscaping, forms and paperwork, and one year free consultation with the Larsens. Their do-yourself-package sells for \$99.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Pine Hill Pet Park, Rt. 3, Box 450, Bowie, Texas 76230 (ph toll-free 800 442-7387).



to the floor of the vehicle work best, according to Mauier. He puts a lag bolt through both ends and bolts them together to one of the gate uprights.

## Cultivation Costs Less Than Herbicides

You can cultivate corn and beans for less than the price of herbicides, according to a report by Jim Dickrell in THE FARMER magazine.

Dickrell talked to farmer Ed Van Gerpen who says it costs him 70¢/acre for fuel to cultivate twice a season. "You'd have to buy herbicide awfully cheap to beat cultivation," he says.

Although cultivation requires extra labor, Van Gerpen reasons that he and his two sons can cultivate when other labor demands are low. They keep machinery costs low by

using rebuilt cultivators.

In addition to the cost savings, Van Gerpen says he likes the fact that cultivation aids soil aeration, particularly on clay soils. They also take advantage of the second corn cultivation to sidedress about 30 units or more of nitrogen, depending on how the crop looks at the time.

Last year the Van Gerpens spent just \$3/acre for herbicides which consisted of a 9-in. band of Lasso applied with the planter. They also spent about \$1/acre in beans to spot spray with Roundup.

## He Makes Terraces With A Moldboard Plow

"It's an inexpensive way to make terraces with equipment you already own," says Frank Ptacek, Bruno, Neb., who's practiced "conservation tillage" for 40 years.

Ptacek makes terraces in his fields with a 4-bottom plow by simply making several passes around a common dead furrow. He says 5 to 6 passes are enough to move dirt into a terrace that does the job as well as expensive earth-moving equipment. Ptacek does "maintenance" on the terraces with a tractor 3-pt. blade.

"I've tried to show this idea to the Soil Conservation Service but they're not interested. They keep sponsoring meetings with companies that use big, expensive equipment. They don't seem to want to hear that all you need to make good terraces is a plow and a blade," says Ptacek.

Ptacek is well-known among local farm-

ers for his innovative soil conserving strategies. He puts his crop in with a plow-plant method. It consists simply of plowing and then planting with no disking or harrowing in between. By only slightly modifying his Deere Max Emerge planter (he mounts three cultivator shovels just ahead of each furrow opener on two bars attached to the front of the planter), he says he gets just as good a stand in the rougher ground as farmers who plant conventionally. The benefits - in addition to savings from eliminating trips through the field - include reduced erosion due to better moisture retention by the rougher fields. "I get no cross-ditches on hillsides where I plant on the contour," he notes.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Frank Ptacek, Box 60, Bruno, Neb. 68014 (ph 402 543-2458).