

AMERICAN Small Farm

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Good marketing is necessary for successful small-scale agricultural enterprises.

Improve Your Direct Marketing 6

Want to keep more of that hard-earned retail dollar? Then direct marketing is where it is.

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"Having our own state-inspected processing facility has been a powerful marketing tool in establishing a high-end customer base," according to Steve Edwards. "We could not operate without it."

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As large producers become bigger factors in the pork industry, farmers who raise hogs using alternative methods are finding niche markets opening up, according to one of the nation's leading experts on sustainable swine production systems.

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For small or minority farmers, marketing can be a key component for success or failure.

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Some day soon, Chuck Ehlers wants Iowans to have the ability to buy fresh fish at their local grocery store as readily as they might buy their favorite cut of beef or pork. He and other Iowa farmers are working to achieve that goal.

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The carrying capacity of a trout production unit depends on fish size and water quality factors such as oxygen content, temperature, water flow and volume.

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We can learn a lot by watching the wonderful qualities of our dogs during the "dog days" of summer.



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About the cover

Our cover photo was taken in Tennessee. It is from USDA's photo library. If you recognize the farm, please let us know about it. We picked the photo because we have an Aquatic Farmer Section in this issue. Here's some information that may be of interest to you: USDA's Agricultural Research Service has 323 national projects dealing with water quality and management. Part of the research on watershed management will promote more effective use of precipitation, optional allocation and improved assessment of available water resources, and hydraulic advances in integrated ecosystem management. Research also will focus on improving the hydraulic efficiency and safety of structures used to store and regulate water flows.