

.....“ She’s imparting a prairie survivor’s philosophy—an understanding of this land. ” see page 36 >>

+ farmstead

Junk to Gems

*Decorate your home with
a bit of agricultural history.*

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GENERALLY SPEAKING, FARMERS ARE HARD-WIRED

to hold on to whatever old tools and materials that might one day serve another purpose. As a result, barns, sheds and other outbuildings are often teeming with scraps of lumber, antique and rusty implements, broken whatchamacallits and the like.

You just never know when they’ll come in handy for a spontaneous project. That said, if you’re the type who’d much rather “make do” than buy new, consider these projects when surveying your stockpile.

Glass-Topped, Cast-Iron Side Table

If you’ve got or can find an old cast-iron base to a mechanical cream separator, centrifugal pump housing or parts from a small hammermill, then you can make a unique side table for your home or barn. These remnants are admirable for their heft and history—just the kind of item that deserves a place of honor in a farmhouse.

Chances are this cast-iron find will be rusty, so start by taking a wire brush to it. After thoroughly removing any unwanted blight, wipe it down with tack cloth to evaluate its condition. There may be traces of the machine’s previous painted finish you might want to preserve.

If so, apply mineral oil to the base, using a soft cloth; it will transform from rust to rich black or brown. Alternately, if the finish is not desirable, prime and spray paint it the color of your choice.

We recommend you use glass for the tabletop, which should be, ideally, at least $\frac{3}{8}$ inch thick and not extend more than 3 to 4 inches beyond the edge of the base. Consider whether or not you’d also like a beveled edge; this option will cost more but will enhance the aesthetics of the piece. Contact a few local glass shops for quotes.

Once your glass top is in hand, the last step is to affix a few tiny silicone dots (available at most hardware stores) around the top of the base for the glass to rest on; these will also serve to level the piece. >>

