

# Farmer-Stockman®

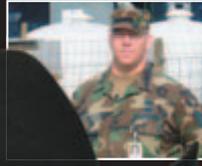
www.WesternFarmerStockman.com

**Alaska sows idea of potato sprout trade**



Page 18

**Producers seek consumers' trust**



Page 25

**FMD summit supports ID program**



Page 40

## Sweet success

By ROBERT WAGGENER

**T**IM Kellogg's business card reads "Meeteetse Chocolatier." It could easily read "Cowboy Chocolatier."

The Meeteetse, Wyo., ranch hand and rodeo cowboy was figuring out how to buy a new bronc saddle in 2004 when his mother, Jane, suggested he make some truffles and sell them at the summer art show in nearby Cody.

"I always told myself, 'You have to listen to your mother,'" he says.

Kellogg, who learned to make truffles with his grandmother, put those skills to use in his kitchen.

At the art show, the truffles sold out and he got orders for more. A few weeks later on Labor Day weekend, the candies were a hit again and more requests poured in.

Between calving, fencing, irrigating and performing other duties for M.C. Land & Cattle Co., west of Meeteetse, Kellogg would spend time filling orders and creating new recipes.

**Coors-flavored truffle a hit** "One started with a joke," Kellogg says of the truffle having a center flavored with Coors beer. That joke turned into a big hit, as did one flavored with Guinness stout.

Kellogg soon earned enough



**CANDY COWBOY:** Wyoming ranch hand and rodeo cowboy Tim Kellogg started making chocolate truffles to help pay for a new saddle. The truffles were so popular that Kellogg decided to open a chocolate store in Meeteetse, Wyo.

### Key Points

- Wyoming ranch hand opens chocolate store.
- Meeteetse Chocolatier is a big hit with locals and tourists
- Tim Kellogg now balances ranch duties, truffle making.

money to buy a saddle, and he figured it was time to get back to ranching and rodeoing.

But the townsfolk thought otherwise. The demand for his truffles was so high he opened a storefront on Saturdays in the tiny ranching and tourist town 30 miles southeast of Cody.

The locals and tourists were anxious to try new flavors: chocolates drops flavored with

lavender, and truffles with hints of key lime, espresso, sarsaparilla and sage.

"The top sellers are Coors and sage," he says. "Customers buy a sage truffle because it is unique, but they buy it again because it tastes good."

When business continued to grow, Kellogg slowly expanded store hours. He eventually decided to hire help and open seven days a week.

Wearing a black cowboy hat and Western shirt, Kellogg carefully places truffles in plastic wrap and then ties them off with baling twine. "There's nothing baling twine can't do; that's one of my secret ingredients," he says with a smile.

"If I'm not at the ranch, I'm

down here," adds Kellogg, who admits saddle bronc riding has taken a backseat to his growing business.

Customers constantly walk through the door, greeted with scents of cocoa butter and sounds of country music.

"A lot of the tourists are surprised a chocolatier can make it in such a small town like Meeteetse, but if you have a good product people will go anywhere for it," Kellogg says.

That goes for making truffles or raising cattle.

### Keen on Meeteetse

Kellogg was working for a cattle ranch in Colorado when the "For Sale" sign went up. He decided to head to Cody where

### They said it

"Tim jumped in with both feet. In addition to his ranch work, he was willing to take on a type of job in a little town that most people wouldn't have. His chocolate creations taste great, and they make wonderful gifts. Tim has done very well with his business."



**Kay Thomas,**  
restaurant waiter  
and house painter,  
Meeteetse, Wyo.



"Tim is very talented and very creative. He made some tarts last night, and they were to die for. He makes wonderful chocolate creations, and he now ships worldwide. He's been a wonderful addition to our little town."

**Alice Faye,** restaurant owner,  
Meeteetse, Wyo.

his parents were living, figuring that would be a good place to rodeo and find ranch work.

"On my way, I stopped in Meeteetse," Kellogg says. "Sometimes you 'feel' like you are in the right place, that that's where you belong."

Kellogg is now hooked on Meeteetse cattle country. "When I'm out there working, those are the best times of my week. I belong on the ranch. It's what I do. It's who I am."

The locals and tourists alike are hooked on the Meeteetse Chocolatier. "I have created a monster with this business," he admits. "If I closed down, some of my customers would hunt me down."

Check out the sweets online at Kellogg's Web site, [www.meeteetsechocolatier.com](http://www.meeteetsechocolatier.com).

Waggener writes from Laramie, Wyo.

**Need help with your subscription?**

Call (800) 441-1410

or e-mail

[circhelp@farmprogress.com](mailto:circhelp@farmprogress.com)