

MN Agriculture: Hugoson Pork, Five Generations Later

Day 26 of my 30 Days of Ag "All Things Minnesota Agriculture" is Hugoson Pork. Hugoson Pork is owned by Kevin & Mary Hugoson, Eric Hugoson, and Cody, Angie, Addison & Kylie Toothaker. They are located in East Chain, MN. I have known the Hugosons for many years. They are upstanding members and leaders of the community.

I would like to share a story from many years ago:

When our county started to expand in pigs, a number of younger pig farmers decided to meet informally on a regular schedule. It was a group of about eight farmers. Kevin Hugoson, along with my husband, were members of this group. Why did they meet? Each of them brought their production records to share with the sole purpose of **learning from each other**. They wanted to know what worked and what didn't work on each of their individual farms.

Their ultimate goal? To be *better* farmers.

No organization or business were behind these meetings. They met because they wanted to and *knew* it would be key to their success. *And it was. . .*

The Hugoson family farm has been in the family since 1881. It began when Kevin's great-grandparents immigrated to the United States from Sweden. The farm, which was homesteaded in 1888, has been passed down through many generations.

Most recently, Kevin and Mary Hugoson purchased the farm in 1985 from Kevin's parents, Leighton and Ardis Hugoson. At the time of purchase, the Hugoson farm was a 200 sow farrow-to-finish operation. Today the Hugoson Family farm is a fifth generation farm. It is a farrow-to-finish operation which consists of 5 sow farms. The Hugosons are the owners of 15,000 wean-to-finish spaces. They have 25 contract growers and 50 full-time and part-time employees. They also grow corn and soybeans. Kevin and Mary live in the farmhouse Kevin's great-grandparents built after arriving from Sweden. They farm with their son Eric and daughter Angie and son-in-law Cody. Angie and Cody have two daughters, Addison & Kylie.

Social Media Sites:

Facebook: www.facebook.com/HugosonPork

Volunteering in Community

The Hugosons are involved with the East Chain Evangelical Free Church, Martin County Pork Producers, Fairmont Teen Community Bible Study, Fairmont Fellowship of Christian Athletes and

MN Pork Producers Association. Kevin is the former Minnesota Pork Producers Association President. When Eric and Angie were younger, they were also very involved with the East Chain 4-H Club.

Tell me a little about what you grow/raise/produce/or service provided.

"Pigs (farrow-to-finish) and corn and soybeans."

Where do you sell or provide services to? Who is your end consumer?

"Hormel, Tyson, John Morrell – end consumer is the general public!"

Our business is about family. Raising pigs is our livelihood. ***It's our passion.*** We love what we do. We wake up every day and ask ourselves what can we do better. I think the farther our society gets from the farm, the harder our job becomes. On top of trying to do the best we can to raise our animals, it seems like we spend more and more time to properly educate our consumers. If we do not get out and tell our story, someone else is going to do it for us, and it isn't always the truth. It seems like our society has become comfortable creating all of their opinions based on what they read on social media or heard Dr. Oz say, rather than asking a farmer for themselves. Do we all have to agree on everything? No. But at the end of the day, all we ask is before people create a strong opinion one way or the other, that they get the facts straight from the source.

We live in the most pig dense county in the state and at times that can be daunting when it comes to herd health, but it also can be exciting and challenging. We take biosecurity seriously to make sure that we keep our animals healthy. With harsh winters and hot summers it is important that every single one of our animals is in a climate controlled environment. Our pigs have access to feed and water at all times. *We care* about every single animal that we have!

Despite being a fifth generation family farm, we wouldn't be where we are without the help of our outstanding team of employees. They are an integral part of what we do and who we are. We are so thankful that we have been blessed and hope to continue our family business for many generations to come. *We are proud to be a small part in feeding our world!*

Did you know?

If you have been to the Minnesota State Fair's Oink Booth or other events where the Minnesota Pork Producers are represented, you may have seen the "virtual farmer." Well, the face behind the "virtual farmer" is Eric Hugoson. And now you know!

Minnesota Farm Living

Connecting Consumers with those who grow your food

<http://www.mnfarmliving.com>
