

MN Agriculture: The Meyers, A Family Farm In The Truest Sense

Day 24 of my 30 Days of Ag "All Things Minnesota Agriculture" is Jordan Meyer and her family farm, Meyer Farms. Jordan is pig farmer from Welcome, MN. Her family farm runs a diversified corn, soybeans and pig farm. Jordan's parents are Steve and Lori and Brody is her brother. The Meyers raise pigs--Steve has 5000 head, Jordan has 925 head and Brady has 240 head. They also custom finish about 2000 head and crop farm around 1000 acres.

The Meyers have farmed for about 30 years. They have a rotation of 2/3 corn and 1/3 soybeans, which is not unusual for this part of the state. Much of that is due to the livestock feed requirements. Most of their corn is fed to the pigs. They use the pig manure as fertilizer for grain production. They mill about 60% of their own feed requirements. All of the pigs the Meyers raise are sold to Hormel in Austin, MN. Most of the soybeans are used for soybean meal and soy oil.

I personally have known the Meyers for many years. They are a true "family farm." I am particularly impressed with Jordan. She breaks many of the stereotypes of a farmer. She is young, smart, independent and female. And I might add, she does an *outstanding* job. She is not afraid to take on a task. Whether it be on her farm or with the local Martin County Pork Producer group where she is vice-president. She has a "take charge" attitude and is not afraid to get her hands dirty, both literally and non-literally. She will continue to be a leader in the pig industry, both on the farm and off.

Tell me a little bit about your farm.

"The farm we are on is the farm that Steve was born on. We have increased our business to include our children. We are proud that our farm was built from hard work and management. Even though the shovels don't wear out as fast, the daily commitment is the same or more."

What do you like about farming?

"To be a grower or producer, you have to appreciate watching the corn emerge, or stand in the alley of a new barn of pigs and watch, look, and listen to them like they are one of your own. Ag is a lifestyle - sometimes busier than other but it is all that we know and we intend on doing it well."

What would you like people to know about farming?

"Fix the misconception about ag. Especially in the pork industry, there is this widespread assumption that we don't take care of or abuse our animals. We wish that people would understand

the damage they do when they speak without knowing the facts. We not only have a financial interest in our animals, but we care deeply about them. They are our livelihood."

What else would you like to add?

We wish people knew about the stress of raising livestock. If you think you worry when your children get sick, try having a barn full of animals. You worry they might get sick, you worry more when they do get sick, you do everything in your power to help them feel better, and if it doesn't work you feel so helpless. Then there's the financial stress, of agriculture in general. You borrow the money, and if the market crashes or something happens to your herd or the weather isn't in your favor and you don't make any money you still have to repay the loan. It's not a 9-5 where you're always guaranteed a check. There's a lot of risk in farming.