

MN Agriculture: Linsey Prunty, From City Girl To Farm Girl

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Day 17 of my "30 Days of MN Agriculture" is Linsey Prunty. Linsey is from Pipestone, MN located in western Minnesota. After I read Linsey's story, I could totally relate to her. I also knew virtually nothing about agriculture until I met my future husband. And much of what she writes about her story, I have thought and felt the same thing. She has a special way to put her thoughts into words. Please take the time and read her story.

Tell me a little about your farm and/or business?

"This is a family farm business that I was fortunate enough to marry into. I am from Western South Dakota, Center of the Nation; home of many ranch families, The Black Hills, and the best Fourth of July celebration! I met my Knight in Shining Poop Boots in 2010 at the great school that invented Cookies n' Cream Ice Cream, South Dakota State University. In return I was exposed to farm life, which no one would have ever expected in my 20 years of life. Pigs, corn, soybeans; what is all that about?! I couldn't tell the difference between a farm and a ranch, soybean plant from a weed, or could have an opinion on Red or Green. The family farm has opened my eyes to a new way of life, literally. Starting to finishing pigs, sending them off to market, feeding those pigs with crops you've grown yourself, the impacts of the weather on all of those things, and the welfare of those animals. The farm currently consists of my husband's parents, his older brother, and my husband. It is out of this world to me and I know others, that it is just the four of them full time at the farm. They all have particular skills that are a *value* to the farm and make it run as effectively and efficiently as it does. They try to be as efficient and self dependent as they can especially when it comes to doing things for themselves rather than hiring it out. Broken combine head? Let's try to fix it first. Need something welded back together? No problem. Need to haul hogs to market or corn

to the elevator? Fire up the truck! It is amazing to see the many hats they all wear and how quickly they can change modes for different tasks."

How long have you farmed or been in business?

"Like I said above, I came from West River South Dakota. I grew up in a household of mother in the medical field, a retired military father, and an older brother who became a fireman. I never had farming or any agricultural business in my life. I had not a clue about farming and really didn't care to. I officially married into the farm life in 2014, but had been around it since we started dating in 2011. The family farm has been in business in its current location for 3+ generations."

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

"The family farm breeds the pigs, the sow has the cute little piglets, the piglets grow and then finish and then those little piglets are off to market. The family farm also does crops; corn and soybeans. When I first met him I had no idea that some farmers do all of this just to sustain their farm. I had no idea that you would grow corn, grind it, and feed it to the animals that you just saw. I didn't even know how corn came out of the field. Personally, I add the humor to the farm. Actually, I try to help in small ways, ease myself into it you could say, by feeding the pigs, watering the pigs, cleaning up, and just some general things around the farm where my muscles can be used and my supervision can be of use."

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

"The end consumer is you! I love knowing that the long harvest that makes many of us farm wives, widows for a couple months, feeds the pigs that we care for."

What is a most embarrassing moment you have had on the farm?

"I don't know that it is really embarrassing, but probably not something I will sign up for again. After the combine went through after my first harvest of dating, I was told by my now humorous father-in-law, that if I picked up the corn left in the fields that weren't picked up by combine on the corners, I'd be paid so many cents. I thought this would be as easy as picking apples up from my grandmother's lawn when I was a kid. After buckets of corn, bloody feet, some tears of frustration and few trips on the fresh cut corn stocks, I ended up with a nice crisp Ulysses Grant in my pocket. One day, I will do that with my kids."

What do you love most about farming/business?

I love that there are so many options a farm/business can chose. Not any farm is exactly alike, one

way of doing things may be no better than the next. Just those options in itself are great! What I love most though, is that these people have *passion* for what they do. A lot of people see people in agriculture anymore as people out to hurt the food you eat everyday with the way they care for the crops, what they feed the livestock, where they house the livestock, or what medicines the livestock receive; all for a bigger dollar amount. This really is not the case at all. This is their livelihood and income to feed, clothe, and house their families, but it is also their job to put out the best product they possibly can and in the healthiest way they can for not only the consumer but also the animals and the land. These animals and the crops are one of the *most important things* in a farmer's life."

"I sit in on morning coffee and 3 o'clock tea and I hear nothing but 'How can we better ____?' or 'How will this benefit ____?' Usually when you clock out of work at 5pm that's it, you leave work at work. Not when you are farmer. This is what passion is and what it looks like, a husband coming home covered in feed, callused hands, and thinking about what he will do the next day on the farm over pile of spaghetti at 8pm."

What is one thing about Minnesota that people from other areas do not know about or are missing because they don't live here?

"In my younger years I travelled a lot and to many different places, but never to neighboring Minnesota. I thought to myself that all that existed in Minnesota was the Mall of America and the Northern Minnesota lakes and wooded area. A lot of people miss out on the real Minnesota nice and the rural America here in Minnesota. The small rural towns that are overlooked but should really be experience such as Pipestone, Carver, St. Peter, or Lanesboro."

What is your favorite Minnesota location?

I have to pick Pipestone because it is home and these people have become family. As much as some that live here say 'Why pick here?!' Because this is where I will be calling home the rest of my life. People like myself, are the next generation that has to make it what it is going to be. I was fortunate enough to 'Adopt a Room' at the Historic Calumet Inn in Pipestone and redesign the space for the guests. This was just the tipping point for me finding my place in Pipestone. I was asked to be a feature in the paper for my business, was approached by the Preservation Alliance of Minnesota after attending a community meeting on reuse of a historic building, and actively being involved in the community, this is how you really start to find your purpose being a young transplant to rural Minnesota. You can probably credit the farm life to giving me the push and drive to not just sit here and wait for things to happen, but to actually get out and make something happen. This town has so much to offer; a slice of pizza at Dars, The Historic Calumet Inn, Pipestone Monument, the summer Ghost Walks, Watertower Festival, one of the great Calumet Players shows, and of course, the farmers of the area who always have a good story to share in the morning at Lange's Café over some world famous sour cream raisin pie.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

This is where I will add my story that doesn't quite apply to any of the question categories.

I'm a 25-year-old that never intended to ever be part of the agriculture world. I had big city dreams and planned to work for an architectural firm upon graduating from South Dakota State University with my Bachelors in Interior Design. Most don't see me as the typical 'farm wife.' I work three jobs; one at a locally owned retail store, teach ballet and jazz/hip-hop at a local dance studio, and I own my own business, LC Design. We live in town in a beautiful 102 year old Arts & Crafts style home, so my husband drives out to the family farm in rain, shine, or snow. I never knew anything about living the farm life and even though we don't currently live on the farm, it is such a large part of our life and my learning of how farming works. When I first met my husband I expected to go out to the farm and see chickens running around and cats crawling out of the seams. I showed up and it was just like an in town home sitting on a beautiful farm with no animals running amuck, except the two loving dogs and a few barn cats. I expected to see green tractors and didn't see a single one. I now own cowboy boots, some items of clothing that are deemed barn worthy, I feed pigs, clean up manure, I've learned to drive a small (red) tractor, and we even named our sweet puppy, which we sadly lost this harvest, Case. I have found myself discussing the welfare of animals and why some tactics are chosen over others with people who don't understand the different options and why GMO is something you really do not need to fear, but rather educate yourself in why if there wasn't anything genetically modified, we'd be sitting in a even hungrier world. I find myself standing up for a lifestyle I had no idea about and can now say is full of passion and pride, even if it is just by looking into a set of tired eyes and wind burned face. I love being an AGvocator! Through this, I hope people see that town kids can find a passion and place in agricultural, even when it is least expected or in the smallest ways. It is quite the transition and not an easy one at that, but it absolutely worth the knowledge you gain and the *love* you find in it.

Read the other people featured in my "[30 Days of MN Ag.](#)"

There are others that are also participating in the 30 Days of Blogging Challenge. Feel free to check these out:

- [Janice Person aka JP Loves Cotton: A Month of Memories](#)
- [Rural Route 2 – 30 Days of Farm Girl Faith](#)
- [Prairie Californian – 30 Days of Food](#)
- [Mackinson Dairy – Women in Dairy](#)