

MN Agriculture: Andrew and Chelsa Goldberg,



Day 21 of my "30 Days of MN Agriculture" is Andrew and Chelsa Goldberg of Deer Creek. Andrew and Chelsa are first generation dairy farmers and they sell their milk to First District Association where most of it goes to Bongaards Creamery and made into cheese. This is the cheese I buy at my local HyVee store!

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

We have a 200 cow dairy. We milk three times a day, raise all of our replacements and farm about 500 acres of corn and alfalfa.

How long have you farmed or been in business?

11 years this October!! My husband, Andrew, started the dairy with his parents in 2005, the year before we graduated from the University of Minnesota. They began by renovating an old tie stall barn and put in a swing 10 parlor and bought a herd of 50 cows. We moved to the farm after graduating in 2006 and officially bought out his parents in 2009. Every year we have expanded and or made significant changes to improve our cow comfort, workplace enjoyment, productivity and efficiency.

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

Since we have a dairy farm and milk is our main product all of the crops we raise go towards feeding our own animals.

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

We sell our milk to First District Association, most of it goes to Bongards Creamery in Perham, MN and is made into cheese.

What makes your farm/business unique or special? What are you proud of?

We are a first generation dairy farm. This means that we have had to learn the business, establish working relationships and experience most everything for the first time.

Why do you grow/raise/produce? What went into your decision to do what you do?

My husband, Andrew, has always had a passion for it, he has wanted to dairy farm since about the age of five!! His parents encouraged him to attend college so he would have a degree in agriculture as well, and it only solidified his decision. In the beginning of our relationship he asked me if I was really "ok" with what he wanted to do for a living? (I had no clue what I was getting into...) but I told him that as long as he could wake up every morning doing a job that he enjoyed that's all that mattered.

If there is one thing you could change about farming it would be . . .

To get paid more for what we do, most of the time it's a real struggle financially and with all the time and hard work we put in it can be very discouraging to not be able to pay your bills.

What do you love most about farming/business?

It's not boring! Every day is a challenge. A lot of planning and calculating goes into every decision and there are so many areas of a dairy farm that even though there are certain jobs you do every day, there are many things that change every day as well. There is room for family members to be a part of it in ways they enjoy as well.

What is one thing you wish consumers knew about what you do or your farm/business?

How much we strive to make our cows comfortable and happy. Every day their needs are at the top of the list and we truly care about their quality of life. They are like big pets to us.

What makes Minnesota the place to farm/grow/raise/produce/service?

There is a good market for milk here and abundant feed resources.

Minnesota Farm Living

A guide for navigating where your food comes from
<http://www.mnfarmliving.com>

Enjoy the additional pictures!