

MN Agriculture: Luke Daninger, "Grass to Glass" Dairy



Day 10 of my "30 Days of MN Agriculture" is **Luke Daninger**. I met Luke when we were both part of Class VIII of [MARL](#) (Minnesota Ag Rural Leadership) program. Luke is a great person and since meeting him I found out that his family owns and operates a dairy farm and a dairy store near Forest Lake. Let me just state that I have added visit [Autumnwood Farm](#) to my bucket list! I love dairy products!

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

We milk sixty cows on our dairy farm and have a creamery where we process and bottle the milk to wholesale throughout the Twin Cities area. We currently are in about 60 retail stores and coffee shops, along with a store right on the farm as well.

Social Media Sites:

Facebook: [Autumnwood Farm](#)

How long have you farmed or been in business?

Our farm started in 1902 and the creamery started in 2008. I have actively been involved for my whole life.

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

We rotationally graze our cattle seasonally and so we have the motto from the "Grass to the

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Glass". We also run ground to grow corn silage and alfalfa for feed.

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

We market directly to the end user since we do all of the processing and distribution.

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

Due to our proximity to the metro area, we have been feeling pressure from development for several years now. Back in 2008, my parents decided to turn that from a disadvantage to an advantage and put up the creamery because there is a market for the product right in our back door. Currently we have a store on the farm, plus we are in about 60 retail grocery stores and coffee shops throughout the Twin Cities. We also host a lot of groups from an educational experience to let them experience where their milk comes from and how it gets to their table.

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

We started the creamery because it provides a steadier source of income than what just milking cows does currently. In the past, it seemed like you could make having a smaller dairy farm work but now you have to be more diversified.

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

I would say it would be to allow for more breaks away from the farm. Our goal is to become more efficient to allow for this into the future.

What do you love most about farming/business?

I love the fact that you get to work with family and you must be a team to succeed. I really enjoy that aspect of farming.

Who are your customers? Or what would you like to tell your customers?

Our customers tend to be people who care about knowing where their milk comes from and want to buy it from a local provider.

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

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They are missing out on the great diversity of seasons that we have with each one being very distinct.