

MN Agriculture: Tom and Nancy Rys, Crop Farm and Pioneer Seed



Day 29 of my "30 Days of MN Agriculture" is Tom and Nancy Rys from Rock Creek, which is located in east central Minnesota. They also farm with their daughter and son-in-law, Cami and Joe Babolik and family, Macie 10, Milo, 8 Melia 4.

Social Media Sites:

Facebook: [Rys Farms](#)

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

Tom and Nancy began farming in 1989. In 1992, they built their current farmstead. This year their daughter Cami and her husband Joe Babolik joined the corporation. Joe came on the farm full time to ensure future continuation of the operation. Rys Farms Inc. crop farms 1,650 acres, half in corn and half in soybeans. In addition to crop farming, the Rys family owns and operates the local grain elevator where they assist 20-25 neighboring farmers to dry, store, and market their grain. Tom and Nancy also have had a Pioneer Seed agency for 13 years.

How long have you farmed or been in business?

Both coming from farm backgrounds, Tom grew up on a small farm west of Pine City. While his brother remained on the home farm, Tom ventured out working for local farmers in the Rock Creek area, where he decided to start farming on his own. Nancy's family owned the local implement business. It was a match made in the parts department. We began building the farmstead in the early 1990's.

Minnesota Farm Living

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

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

We are very service oriented. In addition to seed sales, we offer seed treatment, scouting service, marketing assistance and trucking. Cami is a crop insurance agent in addition to her own accounting business.

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

Most of our grain is shipped directly to river terminals in the Twin Cities or to processors in Mankato. Jennie-O Turkey feed mills are also an outlet for corn which provide a winter destination when the Mississippi River is closed to barge traffic.

What do you love most about farming/business?

We love the farm, we love the land. We love the lifestyle in which we were raised, raised our family, and now our grandchildren are being raised in the same manner. It is our goal to assist the next generation of young farmers to get started farming.

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

Because most consumers are multi-generations removed from agriculture, there is little sense of gratitude or respect for farmers today. Society looks to the grocery store as their source of food, however, often forgets the farmers working hard in all aspects of agriculture who do their part to ensure we have this abundant food supply.

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

East Central Minnesota is a unique area to agriculture. The lake effect from Lake Superior, nearly 100 miles away, often brings cool nights and early frost dates. No university studies or seed company trials are conducted here, so we do our own. Data is collected from several sources and results shared with area growers to educate us all to improve on practices.