

MN Agriculture: Brian and Karla Randolph, All Things Sheep and Chickens

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Day 1 of my 30 Days of MN Agriculture is Brian and Karla Randolph of [Lil Ass Farm](#). If you are wondering the meaning behind their farm name, look no further than to Karla. Karla had mini donkeys when Brian met her.

The Randolphs live in Randolph, MN. How ironic that they live in the same town as their last name! And it has no significance other than coincidence. Randolph, MN is located southeast of Minneapolis.

Brian and Karla raise a few head of sheep, raise laying hens for egg production and also raise 75 or so broiler chickens per year for local customers. They also rent their farm land to Brian's in-laws.

I first met Brian "virtually" through social media, but was fortunate in meeting him "in real life" at a Farm Bureau conference. Let me just add - there is no doubt in my mind that he is very passionate about agriculture.

Social Media Site:

Facebook - [Lil A Farm](#)

Blog - [Lil A Farm Blog](#)

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

"We have lived on our farm since 2006. Karla grew up on a dairy feedlot/crop farm and Brian was raised on a beef cattle farm."

How long have you farmed or been in business?

"We have lived on this farm since 2006, Karla grew up on a dairy feedlot/crop farm and I was raised with beef cattle."

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

"We like to provide our friends with good quality chicken and eggs from our farm. If we had the room, I believe we could raise and sell many more broiler chickens because the demand is so great for locally sourced meat."

In addition, Brian also judges 4-H exhibits at county fairs. He judges animal science, vet science, youth leadership, livestock interviews, and self-determined projects.

Where do you sell your produce to? Who is your end consumer?

"We sell mainly to friends and family and they are our end consumer."

What makes Minnesota the place to farm?

"The seasons. Not sure if that makes sense, but there is nothing better than fall harvest, but if there is, it'd be spring planting. The hustle and bustle around the farm is exciting."

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

"Not to be redundant, but they are missing the four seasons, the joy and smell of fresh dirt being worked up on the spring, seeing the crops and animals grow through the summer, the bountiful harvest in the fall, and the slow pace of winter."

What is your favorite Minnesota location?

"Probably Duluth or any lake up north, we love the water."

What is one ag-related and one non-ag related place in Minnesota that other need to know about?

"For ag-related, it would be Farmfest. If you have never been there and enjoy learning about new products, technologies, seed, etc. you need to go."

"For non-ag, I'd say a Minnesota Wild game at the Xcel Energy Center. The environment and feel in that arena is electric!"

Why do you raise chickens and what went into your decision to raise them?

"We decided to raise chickens for meat because they are so quick and easy to raise/sell. It takes 8 weeks to raise them from chicks to full-grown. It's amazing how fast they grow!"

What is an embarrassing moment you had on the farm?

"Once after an ice storm, I was out checking to see if we had water in the cattle water tanks (when my in-laws still had cattle at our farm), there was an incline up to the barn and I tried three times to walk up that incline and each time I landed on my rear end!"

What do you love most about farming?

"The concept of knowing that the livestock I'm producing is going to end up in a consumer's freezer or fridge and hearing how much they enjoy it."

What is one thing you wish consumers knew about what you do?

"That we are constantly worrying about our animals; whether it be a hot day or extreme cold or in between, we constantly wonder if they are being handled properly and have everything they need. My wife takes better care of her sheep than she does herself!"

What is one thing no one know about your farm?

"We love all species of livestock, except for maybe ducks, we tried raising them this year and they are DIRTY!"

Anything else?

"We're not a large farm, actually very small, but we have a *passion* for farming and agriculture. I enjoy being involved with the MN Farm Bureau, volunteering with Randolph FFA Alumni and 4-H."

There are others who are also embarking on the "30 Days of Blogging Challenge." Feel free to follow them also:

Minnesota Farm Living

Connecting Consumers with those who grow your food

<http://www.mnfarmliving.com>

- [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](#)