



Willow Bend Farm & Spring Hope Dairy

A PARTNERSHIP OF PEOPLE & NATURE.

Fall 2015

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

We are back with another newsletter! Thank you to all who sent us a note or commented on the information we shared. We hope this form of communication will open up a greater dialogue about our family farm and the dairy industry in general –so please keep the comments coming!

Have you ever wondered what the connection is between Willow Bend Farm and Spring Hope Dairy? Well, it all started in 2003, when the Muellers, (the owners of Willow Bend Farm) decided to form a partnership with the Nedrows to take advantage of the strengths of each family and their businesses. It's proven to be a win-win situation with a successful merging of talents. Legally, both farms are under the name, Willow Bend Farm, LLC, however they operate independently, each having their own herd of cows and own milking parlor. Yet, all the calves are raised at Willow Bend Farm on County Road 7. (So that's the farm to bring your kids and grandkids to!) On the crop side of the businesses, there is one main field team, fleet of machinery and shop, which is stationed at Willow Bend Farm. And boy, they are working hard this time of year!

So thanks again for being terrific neighbors! Please, don't be a stranger. Stop by or give us a call. We'd love to hear from you!

-Our Farm Families

Our Abundant Harvest

We are blessed with rich and fertile soil here in the Finger Lakes. Our soil has just the right balance of stone, loam, sand and clay to handle most of what Mother Nature throws our way. It also allows us to grow a wide range of crops, from cabbage to grapes to dairy forages, which take up most of the tillable acres.

The two main crops we grow are alfalfa haylage and corn silage. We harvest alfalfa hay 3 or 4 times in the summer, and our corn is harvested in the fall. On a daily basis our cows eat over 100 pounds of this feed, supplemented with purchased feed such as corn meal, cottonseed, soybean meal, corn gluten and other fats and proteins. Our feed needs to be high in energy and protein, low in indigestible fibers to provide the nutrition a cow needs to be healthy. High quality feed means healthy cows, healthy cows means good

production of high quality milk for our customers. Our field team works hard with the land resources, crop consultants, seed companies, equipment reps and Mother Nature to produce the best feed possible.

This past year has been challenging. While trying to plant crops in June, we logged 10" of rain, where the average is 3". Wet ground and late plantings resulted in some fields that honestly look embarrassing with spotty germination, yellow color and variable height. However, in spite of the tough weather challenges, we think we will have a pretty good crop for our cows.

We just started harvesting corn. So as you see our equipment and trucks working in the fields and on the roads this fall, please keep this connection in mind: **high quality feed equals healthy cows which equals healthy, quality dairy**

CONTACT US ANYTIME!

We want to hear from you! Please let us know if you have any questions about our farm, or if there is anything we can do to be better neighbors.

Business Office
George & Mary Lue Mueller
315-462-3414

Willow Bend Farm
John Mueller
315-462-3177

Spring Hope Dairy
Kevin & Barb Nedrow
585-261-8182

Want to know more about us?
Check us out online at
willowbendfarms.com
springhopedairy.com

products. We appreciate your understanding and patience this harvest season.



Good feed means good milk.

Chapter Two. Willow Bend...Through the Years. As told by George Mueller.

A future farmer gets a chance. Folks are always saying, "You can't get started in farming now-a-days because of the high price of machinery, buildings and land." This is not true. Non-farmers are breaking into the business every day. But you have to be determined, hard working, persistent, patient, and smart, get along with people, frugal, able to save money, and earn the respect of a mentor. I don't think you can get started without someone who believes in you and gives you a chance to get started. My Uncle Norval was that mentor that believed in me and gave me that chance.

Uncle Norval Budd was in charge of marketing wheat, red kidney beans, hay and grain for G.L.F., a farmer's feed and supply co-op. In 1941, he bought a farm that was to change his and my life forever. It was a 160-acre gravel farm with a beautiful set of hip roof barns and a large Italianate farmhouse with a cupola on the top. The farm had been in the Smith family for many years and they had lost it in the "Great Depression". It was a great farm in a normal year and a wet year, although dry years were tough.

I couldn't have been blessed with a better mentor. Each summer, Aunt Peg and Uncle Norval took me in and let me work for his farm operator, Emmet Plyter. Those summers, from 1943 to 1950, I was taught farming by Mr. Plyter and introduced to agriculture by my Uncle Norval. Probably my biggest blessing was my Aunt Peg who did my laundry and fed me all those eight summers.

To be continued... We plan to share with you a little piece of our family's farm history in each issue of our newsletter. If you have any questions about our history, or wish to write George a note, please contact him at mmueller@fltg.net

Willow Bend Farm
Spring Hope Dairy
1378 King Road
Clifton Springs, NY 14432



My mentor, Uncle Norval, above, and below, me eating one of many meals prepared by Aunt Peg.



Are all Cows the Same?

With over 3,000 cows on our farms, we often hear from visitors, "How can you tell them apart?" The easiest way to tell our cows apart is by the numbered tag in their ear that is used much like a social security number. This number allows us to maintain records on each and every cow on our farm, such as their date of birth, if they were sick, when they had a baby, how much milk they produce, and more. But even without the eartag, all cows are uniquely different. They have different markings, different personalities, and different conformations - just like us humans.



Meet #4919.
At 4 years & 7 months old, she's fared well at Willow Bend Farm. She's had 3 heifer calves and is currently pregnant with another. Her first

daughter has had 2 daughters, making her a Grandma! And she's already produced 10,238 gallons of milk! That's enough to keep a lot of thirsty people happy! So while cows may just look black and white to you, each one is special to us.



The production of milk starts with the birth of a baby calf.
The future is bright as we have 10 calves born daily on our farm.