



June Dairy Month with Jermey Franseen

On Jeremy Franseen's farm in Poplar Grove, Ill, he does not milk traditional dairy, but instead, friendly dairy goats.

The Franseen family farm, which started out as a dairy cattle operation, began in 1994 when Franseen's grandfather, Ken, started farming on shares.

However, upon graduating from the University of Wisconsin-Platteville, Franseen decided he wanted to try his hand at a different type of dairy. Today, Franseen and his brother, Josh, milk 180 dairy goats twice a day.

"It is a lot less labor intensive," Franseen said. "It is still twice a day, 365 days a year, but it is a lot less intensive because you're dealing with an animal one tenth the size of a cow. It just seemed like a logical switch."

What's more, benefits of goat's milk are impressive, said Franseen.

"Many people who are lactose intolerant and can't drink cows' milk can drink goats' milk," Franseen said. "The fat particles in goats' milk are so small that if you leave a gallon of goats' milk in the refrigerator, there will only be about a half of an inch of fat that separates out. If you were to do that with cows' milk, you would end up with probably a couple inches of fat separated out."

The Franseens also offer handmade soaps, lotions and skin care products made from their goats' Milk.

"The soap is fairly labor intensive because we start out with five different oils," Franseen said. "The lotion is started with a lotion base and we add to it. We add milk and fragrance oils. Then we bottle it."

In the end, Franseen said it's his love of the industry and the opportunity to revolutionize the industry that keeps him coming back, day after day.

"I love the dairy goat industry because I can be an innovator," Franseen said. "I pride myself in the quality milk we ship out and I am always looking for ways to boost our production. That is what I love the most about the dairy industry. Not to say that you can't be an innovator with dairy cows, but people have been around the cow industry forever, so in the goat industry, it is a lot easier to do. We strive to not only produce quality milk, but produce a lot of it."

Franseen is a proud farmer who goes to great lengths to produce safe, quality milk.

"Morgan, my four-year-old, has been drinking my goat milk since she was six weeks old," Franseen said. "She is big and strong and there is obviously nothing that I would put into my kids or myself that I didn't think was safe. If I am willing to drink it and give it to my kids, I have no problem putting it into the food supply for consumers to have."

The Franseen family is hosting the 18th Annual Winnebago-Boone Farm Bureau® Foundation Farm Breakfast on June 20, 2015, at their farm, Friendly Franseen Acres, located at 22799 Highway 76, Poplar Grove, IL. Breakfast consisting of all-you-can-eat pancakes, whole hog sausage, applesauce, ice cream, milk and coffee will be served from 6:30 a.m. until 11 a.m. Activities include a milking demonstration, craft show, horse drawn wagon rides, children's games, petting zoo, Cow Pie Bingo, antique tractor display and more. New additions this year include live entertainment, honeybee display with an observation hive, and a model train display. The cost is \$6.00 for adults, \$3.00 children ages 6-10, and children under 5 are free.

For more information, visit www.winnebagoboonefarmbureau.org or call the Farm Bureau office at (815) 962-0653. (Published June 3, 2015)