



Daily Life on the Daly Farm

According to Food.com, July is National Grilling Month and this is specifically celebrated on July 22nd. Now as silly as this “holiday” may seem to some, grilling one activity that seems to make summer really feel like summer. It adds that smoky, mouthwatering aroma that makes the whole neighborhood turn their heads. However, depending what you put on your grill, David Daly, a beef cattle farmer of Pecatonica, might know a thing or two about how that juicy meat got to your cook-out.

Daily life on the Daly Farm is nothing short of fascinating. David and Carrie Daly definitely have their hands full not only raising their four children, but also keeping up the legacy of a 5th generation farm.

The farm that the Dalys operate was established by Carrie’s father in 1972. The Dalys became partners with her parents five years ago. They currently farm around 2,000 acres of corn, soybeans, wheat, and hay. They also have an 88 head cow/calf operation and run a large scale feedlot.



Promoting agriculture is nothing new to the Dalys. The family is faced with many regulations set by government programs. They are trying to bring awareness to the fact that it isn’t necessarily doable to keep the regulations and the rules so strict.

“There are some double edge swords for us livestock producers” said Daly. “Every building that livestock go into has to be engineered so that there is no run off from that yard. This means your animals are no longer going to be outside, enjoying the sunlight, and running through the grass.

So you have the people that are for the animal's wellbeing looking at us as cruel people. But, we are regulated to do this. We do not do anything that we are not forced to do that is not for the benefit of the animal. Our main goal is to provide the best environment for our animals to be in."

Daly's wife, Carrie, is also aware of these regulations and she is frustrated by similar situations. "Another thing that I think we, as livestock producers, have to worry about is all the misinformation on GMO's," said Mrs. Daly "If you look at animal science research, animal scientists who have done the studies have results that prove that there is no difference or detriments in feeding GMO's. But, people don't understand that. They just read an article about lab rats and assume the Genetically Modified Organisms affect everything."

"To anyone who asks me about the GMO's on my crops or the hormones in my cattle I will say, do your research and be careful about what you read on the internet because there is nothing that I don't consume myself and/or feed my children," said Daly.

The Dalys are BQA Certified. BQA stands for Beef Quality Assurance and anyone who handles beef must be certified. This program first started in the hog industry, but now beef producers are required to go through this program as well.

To achieve this certification, the Dalys attended an informative seminar and now certain aspects of their operation must pertain to these qualifications. For instance, the injections they give their cattle are done in the triangle area of the neck or the ears, no injections are given intramuscular (which means no injections are ever given in an area of consumption), the safe practices of handling the animals are enforced, and two different people walk through the cattle every day. This helps the cattle get used to people and producers are able to keep a close eye on their animals.



The Dalys are a special kind of family. They are so passionate about what they do not only in the agriculture industry, but in their family and their community. They care so much about the consumers ending up with their products and they are taking every step necessary to be the best producers that they can. They face the everyday struggles that all farmers do, but they overcome them with a smile on their face and a love for the industry in their heart. (Published July 15, 2015)