



### **Richard Beuth**



Paul (left) and Richard (right) Beuth

Richard Beuth of Leaf River, IL wears many hats throughout his day, including farmer, leader, conservationist, and advocate. Last Tuesday, when I had the chance to speak with him, he had his farmer “hat” on. The Beuth farm has been in the family for 5 generations. It all started in 1895 when Richards’s Great Grandfather, Enos, purchased the land where Richard grew up. Since then, it has been handed down from generation to generation. Richard began farming in partnership with his father in 1972. Richard, his wife Judy, and their son will operate the farm together until another generation is ready to take on the farm.

Paul, Beuth’s second youngest child, came back to the farm in 2006 to help his father. The farm has expanded and diversified greatly from the original 120 acres. They now farm corn, soybeans, and wheat on close to 1300 acres.

Up until 3 years ago, there had always been livestock on the farm. In 1970 The Beuth’s sold their dairy herd. They had a beef cattle and until 1998. They sold them after a large wind storm took down their barn. For the last 25 years, the Beuth’s had run a farrow to finish hog operation. As of three years ago however, they are now strictly grain farmers. Although the livestock is gone for now, there is bright hope for the farm’s future.

“My son Paul is very interested in the machinery and grain side of it,” said Beuth. “We decided to focus on that since he is starting to do more of the farming on his own.”

Besides his farming hat, Richard Beuth also has a leader hat. Richard is currently leading the Winnebago- Boone Farm Bureau as President. This is his second year in this role.

“I have been a Farm Bureau member for as long as I have farmed,” said Beuth. “When Judy and I first got married, we got really involved in the young leaders group. After being a part of that for a few years, I joined the board of directors.”

Beuth has been on and off the board a few times but being recently inducted as president he has realized “it takes a lot of time,” said Beuth. “I was pretty nervous running meetings the first few times but it has gotten easier because we have such a great board.”

“Each and every one of them could be doing this job,” said Beuth. “These people are all very educated and capable. My goal when I started this was to help the Boone County Board members and the Winnebago County board members to work together and I think it has gone real well.

“Myself being a Winnebago County member, I feel very comfortable with the Boone county members and I think they feel the same.”

Aside from the Farm Bureau Board, Beuth was a Winnebago County 4-H club leader for 17 years, Seward Ag Board member for 30 years, Seward Township Trustee for 35 years; he is on the Pec/Seward Multi Township Assessment District, and the Farm Service Agency Board.

In 2008, Richard Beuth was awarded the Conservation Farmer of the year. “We have always felt that conservation on the farm is very important,” said Beuth. He believes that because the soil has to be here to keep producing for many years down the road, it is his job to care of it as best as he can. “It has been in my family for so many years and I want to make sure it stays here for generations to come.”

When it comes down to Beuth’s view on the products he grows on his farm, he would like to reassure all consumers that “the food they get here in the United States is the safest and cheapest food anywhere in the world. Farmers go out of their way to ensure that consumers have the products they want and that they are safe and nutritious,” said Beuth.”

“It really bothers me when you see some internet conversations that talk about our food not being safe because it absolutely is. I would encourage everyone to do their research and just go straight to the source, ask a farmer. We as farmers eat the food too and it is safe for the American consumer and it’s efficient for the American Farmer. We are able to produce so much more food with less cost and in the end; it is keeping the cost of our food down.”

Richard Beuth stays very busy juggling all of the different hats he wears throughout the day. We, at the Winnebago-Boone Farm Bureau are so grateful for Richard's service and dedication to his community and the agriculture industry. (Published August 2, 2016)