



MORRISON COUNTY

Record Farm & Country

Serving Morrison County and Surrounding Communities

Carrier Route Presort
STD
Little Falls, MN
56345
Permit No. 33
Postal Customer
ECRWSS

Volume 53, No. 13

216 S.E. 1st Street, Little Falls, MN • 320-632-2345

www.mcrecord.com • May 30, 2021

Bowlus family returns to roots of farming

By SHEILA BERGREN
Staff Writer
sheila.bergren@apgecm.com

Sitting down on the porch and having a cup of coffee with his wife, Ashley, while watching their four children, Matthew, Anastasia, Vincent and Michael, joyfully jump around the yard like little calves playing in the pasture is one of many joys of being a farmer to Michael Jacobs of Bowlus. To simply know God is with them, no matter what comes their way, he said.

“When you are born to be a farmer, God puts it in you and you’ll do anything in order to make it happen,” Michael said.

On their 150-acre family farm, he and Ashley raise black and red Angus, including some Hereford/Angus cross. They have a herd of about 100 cows and as a result, about 100 calves are born each year in February or March. With a heart for keeping farming traditional in the sense of how their animals are kept and fed, the herd grazes large areas with plenty of clover grass. In the winter months, the animals are fed hay.

“They are a legume animal and they seem to do best on hay. The healthiest meat you can eat is grass fed.”

—Michael Jacobs

“They are a legume animal and they seem to do best on hay. The healthiest meat you can eat is grass fed,” Michael said.

It’s important to Michael and Ashley that their animals are not fed with any feed, such as soy or corn, that has been genetically modified (GMO). The cattle are only given minerals, vitamins and garlic salt.

Michael said the garlic works as a natural dewormer and helps keep the cattle healthy. It’s also beneficial to the soil as the manure the cattle leaves behind keeps the ground nutritious and healthy.

The family raises the cattle to finish and then markets the meat directly to the consumer. The customers then let the Jacobs know whether they would like to purchase a quarter, half or a whole animal and then they bring it to the local butcher shop to be processed.



(053021-JacobsFamily)

Staff photo by Sheila Bergren

The Jacobs family raises black and red Angus on their farm in Bowlus. Pictured are front, (from left): Vincent, Anastasia and Matthew Jacobs. Back row: Michael holding their son, Michael, and Ashley.

As the family eats their own beef, Michael said there is nothing like it. The meat can also be turned into a variety of products, such as beef jerky, steaks, ground beef, summer sausage, breakfast sausage, hot dogs and more.

“The meat is very tasty,” he said.

The Jacobs believe in marketing directly to the consumer. That way,

the consumers know exactly where their animal came from as well as how it was

raised. By keeping it local, they also help other businesses in the community.

“It’s good for them, it’s good for us and it’s good for small communities,” Michael said.

As being a good steward of the land is important to the family, the cattle are rotationally grazed and moved weekly to a new parcel. The cattle are used to being handled by Michael and are easily moved. They simply listen to his voice when he calls them and follow where he leads them.

Besides raising cattle, the family also raises six pigs for consumption. The pigs are free ranged and besides

eating what’s on the ground, such as grass and clover, the Jacobs feed them some fermented slop from time to time, as well as minerals.

The Jacobs grow their own garden and focus on eating mostly vegetables, meat and homemade dairy products, such as cheese, cream and butter. They also avoid consuming sugar and processed foods.

Michael said the love for farming began when he was a child. Growing up on a farm, it was simply in his blood as his dad, grandfather and great-grandfather had farmed.

The initial family farm (Continued on Page 4F)



(053021-JacobsHerd)

Staff photo by Sheila Bergren

The Jacobs family’s cattle are strictly grass fed and only given minerals to ensure a healthy meat product, free of genetically modified organisms.

DNR stresses urgency in addressing chronic wasting disease in Minnesota

Courtesy of the Department of Natural Resources

The Minnesota Board of Animal Health (BAH) recently announced that 12 additional white-tailed deer tested positive for chronic wasting disease (CWD) as part of its ongoing investigation of a farm in Beltrami County. The DNR believes the situation at the Beltrami County deer farm significantly changes the risk assessment and concern about CWD in Minnesota.

Following the discovery of the initial positive case in the Beltrami County herd, deer remains from that farm were discovered on adjacent county-managed land, elevating the risk to wild deer. The DNR and University of Minnesota researchers immediately surveyed the land for additional remains and confirmed the presence of CWD-causing prions in at least one bone.

Based on the findings in Beltrami County, last week BAH quarantined five additional farmed deer herds because of possible CWD exposure. These additional herds are located in the following Minnesota counties: Hennepin, Kanabec, Mille Lacs, Morrison and Mower.

The DNR is fully committed to limiting the spread of CWD in wild deer and to the health of Minnesota’s wild deer herd.

The DNR believes this situation is urgent and that it requires a comprehensive approach in order to protect the health of Minnesota’s wild deer. Minnesota must take a strong, proactive stance to achieve three goals:

- Address the site of the deer remains in Beltrami County;

- Reduce additional risk from Beltrami County through herd quarantine and thorough trace-outs to other herds; and

- Move to a more proactive and preventative approach to addressing systemic gaps in the farmed deer system.

- Recognizing the significance of this development, DNR is coordinating with partners at the federal, state and local level to ensure an assertive and nimble response. This includes working with:

- Beltrami County to coordinate containment of the contaminated site on county-managed land where the deer remains were discovered;

- Center for Prion Research and Outreach at the University of Minnesota to test the deer remains at the site and nearby soil samples for presence of CWD prions;

- BAH on its management of the nearby CWD contaminated deer farm and trace-outs to other farms;

- U. S. Department of Agriculture’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service on prion-contaminated site remediation; and

- Leech Lake, Red Lake and White Earth bands of Ojibwe on information exchange and plans for sampling hunter-harvested deer and data collection this fall.

For more information and updates on CWD management at the DNR, visit www.dnr.state.mn.us/cwd/index.html.

Gessell wins re-election to MN Turkey Council

Minnesota turkey growers from across the state voted to re-elect Lynette Gessell of Little Falls to the Minnesota Turkey Research and Promotion Council (MTRPC). Gessell will serve a term of three years representing Minnesota turkey growers.

“Lynette’s problem-solving skills have been instrumental to the organization as we have navigated the pandemic this last year. We are grateful to have her talent and can-do attitude helping to guide the Council,” said Executive Director Sarah Anderson.

Gessell and her husband, John, have been involved in the turkey industry for 39 years. They raise light hens in Morrison County, and she previously blogged for the Minnesota Turkey Growers Association.

To Gessell, it is important that agriculture is viewed favorably by the general public and that established farmers and the community work to support and mentor young, first-time farmers. In addition, she’d like to see that the workforce is trained for the skills needed in the farming community.

The Gessells have three children and two grandchildren. She enjoys the great outdoors, high school sports and activities, gardening, music, cooking, reading, entertaining, socializing and spending time with friends and family.



Lynette Gessell

MTRPC is the oldest check-off based commodity organization in Minnesota, celebrating 56 years. Growers voluntarily support the programming of MTRPC through dues paid via the check-off. Since 1965, the MTRPC has worked diligently to encourage consumers to eat more turkey year-round, sponsor innovative turkey research and educate a variety of audiences about the benefits of turkey.

To learn more about MTRPC visit www.minnesotaturkey.com.

DRAIN CLEANING • PUMPS IRRIGATION
Mike Lehrke's
Call (320) 630-9149 Repair LLC

If you ate today, Thank a Farmer.
If you got your food from the store, Thank a Trucker.
If you ate in peace, Thank a Veteran.
God Bless Our HEROES!

FUEL WITH MUSCLE

RAHN'S OIL & PROPANE

320-256-3680
www.rahnfuels.com

DRAIN CLEANING • PUMPS IRRIGATION
Mike Lehrke's
Call (320) 630-9149 Repair LLC