



Farm Preservation

HALL FARM



SUPPORTING COMMUNITY AGRICULTURE

Dawn Hall cannot say enough about the values of country living and farm life and what they mean to her and her family—husband Denny and their two sons. “Our kids have learned irreplaceable family values,” she explains. “When younger, they had their own farm stand. Both love the land, the farm, and the animals and want to pursue careers in agriculture with their own farms someday. Now when they return home from college, they immediately start in on chores without anyone asking,” she laughs.

It is easy to see where the Hall brothers found that passion. Both Denny and Dawn share it. Denny’s father and grandfather grew up on a farm, as did both of Dawn’s parents. Dawn was raised in the country, had animals, and participated in 4H.

“It’s not just a business for us, it’s a way of life and a great way to bring up a family,” she adds.

Denny and Dawn participated in the federal Beginning Farmer program and purchased Hall Farm in 2010 where they raise beef cattle, hay and corn on their property and also land they lease.

To permanently protect the farm from development, they chose to sell their development rights.

FARM FACTS

PROPRIETORS

Denny and Dawn Hall

FARM SIZE

70 acres

LOCATION

Kent County, Michigan

PRODUCTS

Beef cattle, hay and corn

FARMLAND PROTECTED

Development rights were purchased and a conservation easement placed on the property through Kent County’s Farmland Preservation Program with funds from the Wege Foundation.

“Owning this farm has been great for our family to work and learn together. Just as our parents love for farm life influenced us, we believe our sons also learned to love this way of life and will be farmers too.”



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"It gives us and our neighbors great peace of mind to know that the land won't ever be developed," says Dawn. "We were fortunate enough to visit and learn the history of the farm from its previous owner so we understand how much this land is valued by the community as farmland."

They also recognize that their action is a great model for others as a means of helping to keep the local agriculture economy going by protecting blocks of farmland.

Just as importantly, Denny and Dawn gained confidence in their business as the proceeds from the sale of the development rights were used to pay down the farm mortgage. "We're just getting into the swing of things and finding new avenues to market our beef. If we can pay more of the farm off, it frees up money for us to learn more and grow our farm with the possibility of purchasing additional land in the future instead of leasing."



Besides permanently protecting their farm, the Hall farm is also verified under the Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP). MAEAP is an innovative and voluntary partnership program that helps farms of all sizes and all commodities voluntarily prevent or minimize agricultural pollution risks. Partners include state and federal agencies, Michigan State University, and environmental and conservation organizations. Farms, like the Halls', complete three phases to earn the right to display the MAEAP sign, including on-farm verification that ensure the farmer has implemented environmentally sound practices.

Dawn and Denny take great pride in raising locally grown beef. "We believe by permanently protecting our farm, we protect the rural and scenic character of the area while raising enough beef to offer home grown, local food."

And as they grow their farm, they may be raising at least two members of the next generation of farmers. "Owning this farm has been great for our family to work and learn together. Just as our parents love for farm life influenced us, we believe our sons also learned to love this way of life and will be farmers too."

