

Written Profile

Farm: Henningstead Holsteins
Location: Nimble Hill, Mehoopany, Pennsylvania
Date of Origination: 1847
Industry Sector(s): Dairy Cattle



"Farming isn't just a business. It is a way of life and a way of thinking," explains Stephen Henning, of Henningstead Holsteins. "You can take the farmer out of the fields, but you can't take the love of the land out of the farmer." A true love of the land runs deep in the Henning family, enabling the family farming operation to thrive for over 150 years. We are excited to share the story of Henningstead Holsteins and their contribution to **Agriculture's Lasting Heritage**.

The original farmland on which Henningstead Holsteins operates was purchased by Stephen's ancestors after they immigrated from Germany. Today the family operates an organic dairy cattle business, which has evolved over time. In 2000 the family diversified their operation by adding beef cattle. In 2006 they made the change to organic dairy production. "Our family was using environmental improvements before the [Environmental Protection Agency] was even developed. If you care for the land, it will take care of you." The Hennings believe that this mantra enabled them to easily switch from conventional to organic production in a smooth transition. Switching the farm to full organic production, Stephen believes, was a decision that ultimately saved their farm.

The Henning family acknowledges that one has to be willing to change with the times. Recognizing it is not effective to maintain the status quo of the past, they embrace changes to achieve success in the future. Unfortunately change is not always invited. The Henningstead family has faced significant challenges over the years. The loss of the head of the family when the next generation was still young was a challenge that would impact any family. Low dairy prices for many years have also posed an economic challenge, yet the family operation remains sustainable.

Farm Bureau has played an integral role in the long term viability of the family farm. "Pennsylvania Farm Bureau has provided us with many resources that allowed us to save money," shares Stephen. Additional Farm Bureau guidance helped Henningstead Holsteins budget accurately when there was, "a lot of money going out and not so much coming in".

The Henning family brings to life the passion that farmers have for their animals and their land. Their purposeful decisions over time have led to family farm sustainability, and we congratulate Henningstead Holsteins on their contribution to **Agriculture's Lasting Heritage**.



Henningstead Holsteins received the prestigious award of "Premier Exhibitor" at the County Fair in 2006.