

Written Profile

Farm: Wegner Farm
Location: Merrill, Wisconsin
Date of Origination: 1901
Industry Sector(s): Dairy



“If you take care of it, it will take care of you,” shares Scott Wegner of Wegner Farms. Scott currently owns the family farm and takes pride in the investment made by his family over time. Rich in history and family ties, Wegner farm is a perfect example of **Agriculture’s Lasting Heritage**.

In 1901, William Wegner purchased a 160 acre parcel through the Homestead Act made possible by President Teddy Roosevelt. He had been married seven years to Emma Prochnow when they invested in the property that would form the foundation for the century farm we celebrate today. Emma and William had 13 children, and their passion for agriculture coupled with purposeful planning enabled them to equip each of their children with 80 acres on which to farm, in addition to the home farm.

It is no surprise that William and Emma faced hardships along the way. A family historical document tells that, “at one time, William got hurt up in the woods. They filled the sleigh with straw and took him to a doctor in town.” The family lost their first barn in a fire, and a second barn built in 1918 shifted off of its foundation two times because of strong winds! Yet the farm also proved to be a safe haven for local townspeople, when a large fire displaced many on both sides of Wegner road in 1933.

Transition of ownership within any business can be challenging, but the Wegners made sure that the farm stayed within the family during these times of change. In 1934 the farm was sold to William and Emma’s son George. George and his wife Emma built a new house in 1938 with granite rocks hauled from the local quarry and unloaded by hand. The basement was dug by hand as well. George and Emma’s boys plowed the fields of the home place with two horses and one bottom plow, and son Harold was expected to milk six cows daily when he was just seven years old. The farm was turned over to Bill and Shirley Wegner in 1956 and sold to their son Scott in 1993.

Today Scott and his wife Laurie (Woller) live on the original homestead which is still farmed and logged. They farm is now 210 acres. Scott hopes that others appreciate the importance of farms that are passed on from generation to generation. He plans to farm until his retirement, at which time he hopes to pass the farm on to someone else in his family.

The Wegner’s story is a testament to the hard work and investment early agriculturists made in our nation. A strong dedication to family and to the land has allowed the Wegners to make a profound impact on **Agriculture’s Lasting Heritage**.