

The Way We Live Award

Five Iowa farm families will be named as recipients of The Way We Live Award at the 2009 Iowa State Fair. Each family will be honored in an award ceremony during the Fair. "State Fair Time" runs August 13-23.

The Way We Live Award, new to this year's Fair, recognizes industrious Iowa families who demonstrate a daily dedication to animal agriculture and exemplify farm values derived from hard work and a love for the occupation of farming. Entrants were asked to submit a short essay describing how living on a farm and choosing the occupation of farming has shaped their family's life. Five recipients were chosen from a pool of 32 entries representing a variety of commodities and locations throughout Iowa.

In addition to being honored in award ceremonies during the Fair, each family will receive a prize package including admission to the Fair and \$150 cash. The Way We Live Awards are sponsored by Tractor Supply Company and NewsRadio 1040 WHO.

The Hansen Family Hudson, Iowa

The Hansen farm has passed through generations of family members since the land was purchased by their German ancestors in 1861. Jay and Jeanne Hansen took over operation and ownership in 1976. Today, they are in the process of passing on their stable, lucrative family business to their five adult children. The family began selling Hansen's Farm Fresh Dairy products directly to consumers in 2002. Currently, they produce enough to supply two family-owned stores in Waterloo and Cedar Falls as well as 25 other retail outlets, restaurants, coffee shops and retirement homes throughout the Cedar Valley area. Their pet kangaroo, Kiwi, serves as farm mascot and appears on their product labels. The family will be honored in an award ceremony on Thursday, August 13, at 10:30 a.m. in the Paul R. Knapp Animal Learning Center.

The Godbersen Family Arthur, Iowa

Robert and Twyla Godbersen and their children, Bryce and Leah, are committed to the production and care of healthy Hereford cattle. Their self-sustaining operation produces corn and alfalfa to feed their horses and cows which enjoy grazing in their extensive pastureland. Each member of the family is dedicated to celebrating the importance of Iowa agriculture through youth organizations like FFA and 4-H. Twyla and Leah continue to volunteer with 4-H at local county fairs and shows. Bryce is an enthusiastic member of Iowa Beef Producers and the Iowa Hereford Association Board. Several generations of Godbersen's have even garnered ribbons at the Iowa State Fair cattle shows. The family will be honored in an award ceremony on Saturday, August 15, at 10:30 a.m. in the Paul R. Knapp Animal Learning Center.

The Martz Family Blue Grass, Iowa

The Martz family established their farming operation in 1913. When Earl Martz married Phyllis Brus in 1957, the two added the Brus homestead to the already thriving Martz farm. Nearly twenty years later, eleven-year-old Keith Martz and his teenage brothers, David and Brian, began renting and farming their grandfather's land. The three harvested a bumper crop their very first year. Though Brian left to become a veterinarian, the two remaining Martz brothers have worked hard to diversify their

technique producing everything from corn, soybeans, oats and hay to ketchup tomatoes. Today, the Martz family maintains 1000 acres of crops, 2400 hogs and 90 stock cows. Though they cite the sunshine, rain and deep, fertile soil as their primary resources, their close family bonds and dedication to Iowa agriculture are their biggest blessings. The family will be honored in an award ceremony on Monday, August 17, at 10:30 a.m. in the Paul R. Knapp Animal Learning Center.

The Petersen Family
Knoxville, Iowa

Petersen parents James and Julie and their four children, Justin, Jacob, Joshua and Jenny, work 850 acres of crops and raise 800 head of ewes and cattle. Their farm has been in the family through several generations, and James' 79-year-old father continues to participate in daily farm work. They have been active in their local 4-H chapter and have entered several items in the 4-H division at the Iowa State Fair as well as livestock, horticulture and foods divisions. Every member of the family has earned a blue ribbon from the State Fair Food Department. The Petersens cite hope and tradition as their driving forces, paired with a commitment to producing healthy livestock and quality crops. Julie notes that their sense of humor continues to be a blessing, telling the story of how James surprised her with a silver-painted manure spreader for their 25th anniversary – traditionally a “silver” celebration. The family will be honored in an award ceremony on Wednesday, August 19, at 10:30 a.m. in the Paul R. Knapp Animal Learning Center.

The Van Manen Family
Kellogg, Iowa

The Van Manen family farm dates back to the late 1920s. Today, nearly a century later, parents Kevin and Julie and their children, Jacob and Emily, continue to maintain a sustainable operation raising Holstein steers and hogs. Each member of the family helps out with chores, fieldwork, gardening, mowing and preparing meals. In addition to their hectic schedule on the farm, both children are heavily involved in basketball and baseball leagues as well as their local 4-H chapters. Julie spends her mornings teaching math in the Sully Christian School District before heading back to the farm to help with public relations. The family's favorite part of farming is opening up their home to their non-farming neighbors – anyone from Boy Scout troops to city relatives. The family will be honored in an award ceremony on Saturday, August 22, at 10:30 a.m. in the Paul R. Knapp Animal Learning Center.