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WOMEN FARMERS: HORSES, GOATS, POTATOES & MORE

Purk Tractor

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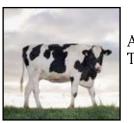
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Cheyenne, a fifth generation cattle rancher from Oglala, South Dakota

Meet Our Cover Girl! Front cover photo courtesy of Jodie Baxendale of Jodie B Photography





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A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

To our Pink Tractor readers,

This edition will mark our second year as a magazine and our first full year as a national publication. We would not be here today without our loyal readers. We are grateful that you have seen our magazine, related to our mission and that you have supported our goal to connect women in agriculture across the United States. We hope you enjoy the stories and articles we share. We hope the messages resonate with you and inspire you, and if nothing else, let you know that you are part of the big picture in agriculture. Women are part of the story of farming. And not from the kitchen or the office. From the field, right alongside the men.

So thank you for sticking with us. We are here because of you and we look forward to the fun, the challenges and the inspiration to come. Sincerely,

Amy Grammer

Amy Grammer

Editor, Pink Tractor Magazine



WHAT PLANTING MEANS for farmers

Planting season is the sign of a fresh start for so many. No matter what happened the year before, when it's time to plant, you get to start over. The soil gets new life. You are hanging on to the opportunity and potential for the future. Spring means planting for farmers. It means more sun and longer days. It means less layers and losing the gloves and the coats. It smells fresh. And we love it.

Planting means the snow has melted. It means you can smell the fresh soil. Nothing smells as good as fresh soil and grass, the smell of new beginnings.

Planting means you get a lot more sunshine in your life. The days are longer and you get to enjoy the Vitamin D.

Planting means an early wake up call.

Planting means you spend more time out in the field or in the barn. And less time in the house. It means piles of laundry and dishes and a Crock Pot that is getting overused.

Planting means the equipment comes out of the shed or the barn. It means we share the road with a tractor every now and then. It means everyone and everything is out of hibernation on the farm.

Planting means there is new life everywhere. Plants. Trees. Baby animals.

Planting means retiring your gloves and coat and finding your hat and sunglasses.

Planting means everyone is a little more stressed, but in the best way possible. It means having so much to do – the best kind of work!











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Barreling down Interstate 16 through the middle of Georgia you will see fields of cotton, and soybeans, and a little town called Cochran, where I grew up. As a young girl with divorced parents, living with my grandmother and mother in our house in the country, we had little money, but we were rich in love for each other and we cherished the land that has been in our family for five generations; that land, that kept us well fed even when



Pouven Georgia FARM GRL

Meet Dr. Lauren Ledbetter Griffeth, University of Georgia Extension Leadership Specialist.

the finances were tight. My grandmother Louise, daughter of a farmer, loved to keep my mother and me busy in the rows of her extensive garden. Spending summers picking squash, blueberries, and peas, I always had a close connection to the food that was grown outside my home.

As a young child watching the Georgia Farm Monitor on local television, I became fascinated with weather patterns,



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and personal commodity updates interviews. The farmers who were interviewed were seemingly everyday people doing extraordinary things by producing the food that feeds us. On the show and in our community, I watched these agricultural leaders and became fascinated not only by their lives but also by the lives of leaders all around me.

Later on as a 4-Her, through my county 4-H agent and other supportive mentors, I made a strong connection with the University of Georgia (UGA) and the College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences (CAES) and continued to discover my love for storytelling by studying agricultural communications and leadership development. Inspired to work in the field of agriculture, I started my professional career working for UGA Extension and attended graduate school. Through my PhD course work, I learned that my love for collecting stories could be channeled into high quality research. Consequently, I focused my dissertation project on studying women administrators of agriculture at landgrant institutions and what influenced their leadership skills. Today, I facilitate leadership development for UGA CAES specializing in women's agricultural leadership, and my husband and I are partners in a local vegetable business.

I cannot wait to dialogue with the readers of Pink Tractor about everything from how to be the best YOU in your career to the woes of the working woman, all based on the latest research of course! Thanks for inviting me to join this agri-women's community.

For more from Lauren, see page 16.

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Cheyenne South Dakota Farm Girl

By Mason Larimore

I love the fact that women have continued to shine in ownership roles in agriculture. We are no longer bound to the house or kitchen. We truly can do it all and it shows in everything we do.

Cheyenne Glade Wilson is a fifth generation cattle rancher in Oglala, South Dakota where she is an enrolled tribal member of Oglala Lakota Sioux on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. Cheyenne, her husband Shane, and their seven year old son, Stone, reside on C Lazy S Ranch. The ranch is made up of over 10,000 acres on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation and was established in the fall of 2005.

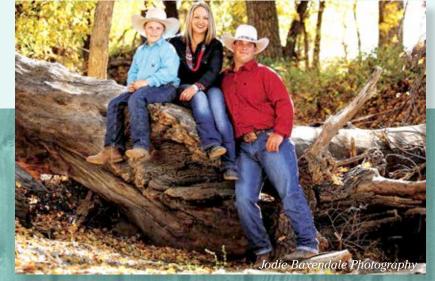
Cheyenne says that her family has been involved in cattle ranching and quarter



horses for as long as she can remember. "It's in my blood. We also grow hay for our livestock's consumption and my folks plant wheat. They live right up the road from us. I owe everything to my parents, in terms of helping us get started and teaching us all we need to know. Their work ethic has always been very strong. They have led by example of what it takes to be successful in agriculture and for that I am grateful," Cheyenne said.

Cheyenne works side-by-side with her

husband running their cattle operation. She is also raising her son just like she and her husband were raised. "He already has a love of





ranching and he understands what it takes. If you ask him, he will tell you that he wants to be a rancher when he grows up. We will support him in whatever he decides to do!"

Cheyenne has some opinions on being a woman in this industry. "I love the fact that women have continued to shine in ownership roles in agriculture. We are no longer bound to the house or kitchen. We truly can do it all and it shows in everything we do." Cheyenne explains, "It's important to showcase what we do and how we do it using social media to educate those near and far." Cheyenne is doing just that. Along with being a cattle rancher, she is a cowgirl, mom and wife, writer/blogger and entrepreneur. She uses her blog to discuss day-to-day ranch life and share her family's experiences on the ranch.

This cattle rancher took a hiatus from ranch life and left home after college to discover the big cities. She says she worked

You can check out Cheyenne's blog at www.TheNativeCowgirl.com. For more from Cheyenne, see page 42.

in several cities and "found that the grass is not greener on the other side. I came home after these experiences and I have never looked back. I know I am right where I am supposed to be and I view my role here as a very important one in terms of educating and perpetuating women in agriculture."

In her spare time, (when she happens to find spare time, that is), she enjoys competing in women's ranch rodeo. Her team won the Women's Ranch Rodeo Association Year End in 2015. Cheyenne is an amazing role model for women in ag. "We have come so far in the past years, but the sky is truly the limit for all of us gals." Thanks to Cheyenne

for sharing her story with us.



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Bull semen and cow beauty pageants

When I was 23 years old, I sold bull semen and cow embryos. Somehow people outside of farming find that to be quite funny. They bust into full-fledged laughter when I describe my airplane conversations around answering the question "so how do they get the semen?" which was always the first question after I explained my job.

(yes, you read that right!)

By Michele Payn

I didn't understand the humor in semen and embryos for quite some time; I thought it was quite serious business to know the cow families and breeders well enough to be able to adequately represent U.S. genetics. Likewise, it's back-breaking work to get show cattle ready. However, I find myself explaining dairy shows as cow beauty pageants, complete with the tubs we use as toilets while our sprayed and glittered cattle walk to the show ring (runway) - and people always start snickering.

Humor evokes emotion. Emotion results in human connection. Connection piques curiosity. We don't have to explain the complex business of farming in one line; we simply have to create a human connection. Laughter is a big part of that, so how can you explain our farm and ranch world in a way that makes it humorous - and relatable - to the general public? regular conversation, sending out a tweet or mentioning it on Facebook.

There's a lot of stress in the world today. People want to feel good about their food and connecting on a human level helps ease some of the tension. Consumers may not care about the pedigrees of selling bull semen, but they do care about the reproductive advancements bovines have brought to humans. How can you describe what you do or a practice that will beg for a question to be asked like "how do they get it?" in my selling example?

For example, if you grow hazelnuts in Oregon, you can say you are a Nutella grower. Or rather than describing yourself as a monogastric nutritionist, could you claim the title 'pig dietitian'? When we can evoke a question, we connect on a human level. That leads to curiosity, which gives you an opportunity to have a conversation as the other person starts asking questions.

"We don't have to explain the complex business of farming in one line; we simply have to create a human connection."

This was one of the greatest challenges I faced in writing *Food Truths from Farm to Table*, but I found that people's responses to little snippets would immediately give me an idea to what was funny outside of the farm or ranch world. Many times these were discovered through Keep it simple and relate on their terms, even if it means you have to describe cow beauty pageants. Your ability to take complex subjects and turn them into "normal" reference points is the ultimate test. If you succeed, the end result will be a conversation that leads to a consumer who thinks of you when they go to the grocery store!

Michele Payn lives on a small farm in west central Indiana, where she and her daughter enjoy all things pink while working with their Holsteins. Michele speaks from the intersection of farm and food, helping thousands of people around the world through her keynotes, books and training programs. Visit www.causematters.com or connect with @mpaynspeaker on social media channels. Her second book, Food Truths from Farm to Table, is expected early 2017.

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Women Leaders in the Agri-Workplace:

Communication from the Farm to the Firm

by Dr. Lauren Ledbetter Griffeth, Extension Leadership Specialist, University of Georgia

While working on a family farm or with an Ag business can certainly lend itself to all kinds of complicated communication scenarios, just learning more about how you communicate and how your team expects you to communicate will definitely enhance your overall effectiveness. If you are stepping into a leadership role formerly held by a male, then the workers around you may have a very different expectation of your communication style based on the person that held the position previously. Finding out the expectations of your communication from your team will allow you to fine tune your style to stay true to yourself while also giving your team what they need to be successful. "You're not the boss of me!" My cousin Heather, would say as I tried to convince her that my suggestions about Saturday morning play time were always in her best interest. At the ripe old age of 4, I was simply trying to guide her through life with my expert one-year older opinion on how "we" should operate. Watching the theatrics of Wrestlemania TV, playing outdoors on the swing set, and then creating our own dramatic reenactment of a musical fairytale with homemade props sounded like a schedule that I thought two young girls could get excited about.

From the time young children learn to socialize, gendered differences in communication begin to form as we unintentionally learn societal norms and expectations of our life-roles by watching personal models around us and tap into our genetic wiring.

Women and girls tend to use communication to build societal connections and foster relationships while men and boys tend to speak to exert dominance and to achieve a tangible outcome. Women normally strive to be more social or value togetherness, while men tend to value their independence.

Psychological differences in gendered communication are a heavily studied area of academia and it certainly plays into the perception of women in leadership roles.

Communication with a top down approach, or the I'm at the top talking down to you approach associated with a more masculine style, does not send a message of personal investment and compassion to today's employee base. While formerly managers could say, "JUMP!" and their workers would ask, "How high?," there is a new attitude emerging among workers that calls for mutual respect and power sharing of goals and ideas; this paradigm shift in the workplace lends itself to appreciating a feminine approach to communication and leadership.

As women, we can channel our value of togetherness to motivate our team to buy in to our organizational goals, which will provide a healthier company mindset in the long run. Learn the strengths and weaknesses of your communication style by asking your team what areas you excel in and what you could improve upon. Then, experiment by making adjustments to your style.

Whether "bossy" or "bewildered" or somewhere in between, being aware of your management style and trying new ways of communication will flex your leadership muscle and help you find your most effective voice to be in sync with your team.

At work, I can find myself thinking in many conversations, "just get to the point...what's the bottom line here?" Today's workplace culture is filled with the same amount of work with less people to complete it on a tighter budget than ever. Everyone has challenges with getting their work done; so, instead of wasting time talking about those (or how the XYZ department is a barrier to your success), we must move on to finding solutions to work together...and that takes effective communication.

TWO basic tips to up your communication game from the farm to the firm:

1) Speak so that others hear you.

Think about the delivery of your message from beginning to end. Is what you are saying important enough to be heard? If yes, be a student of your environment and learn how your message will be best received. You may need to talk to a single person one-on-one; call a staff meeting with opening remarks; or take your team to an offsite location where they can focus on the message. Practice by talking to yourself in the mirror. Would you want to hear yourself telling you this message in this way?

2) Quit taking things personally.

The truth is that many times in life we allow ourselves to be hurt by people who have no idea that they are hurting us. We create the fear, emotional baggage and other ugly stuff that comes along with bad communication when we could just choose to let it go. Silence can be an offspring of this long built up messiness between individuals. Decide that you are stronger and do not become a victim of negative thinking. Instead, be consistent with high quality work, positively persist on mission, and create happiness in both your workplace and personal space.



Dr. Lauren Ledbetter Griffeth is an Extension Leadership Specialist at the University of Georgia. She is a former 4-Her who loved spending summers picking squash, blueberries, and peas with her grandmother in their garden. Lauren specializes in women's agricultural leadership and she and her husband are partners in a local vegetable business. Connect with Lauren on Twitter: @laurengriffeth.



11 WAYS TO STAY SANE DURING PLANTING SEASON.



Keep yourself, your spouse and your kids well-fed. A grumpy family is no help!



Keep the coffee flowing!



Stay organized. You have to live out of your family calendar/ organizer.



Enjoy some wine or a relaxing bath after a hard day.

Planting season will wear you out, it will wear you thin and it could make you crazy. Our readers share their top eleven ways to stay sane during planting season.



Put on your favorite music in the tractor and embrace the alone time.



Say a lot of prayers and have some sweet tea.

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Keep your phone charged and keep it with you at all times.

Plan ahead. Plan out your days, plan for dinner, plan for everything. And then remember to be flexible when the plans don't always work.



Remind yourself that it will end. It does every year, even if it feels like forever!



Meet up for lunch with your spouse to take a much-needed break.



Remember that you could be stuck in an office, but you are doing the best job there is!



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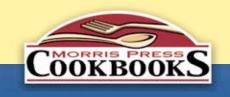
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Gylvia Maine Farm Girl

Women have always been a part of the farm in some way or another, but now we are being recognized and represented as the leaders and contributors we truly are. Sylvia LaBrie Corriveau is the fourth generation to work on LaBrie Farms, located in St. Agatha, Maine. LaBrie Farms was established by Sylvia's great grandfather in 1945 and the tradition has been passed down from generation to generation. Sylvia works alongside her father, uncle and brother. They currently plant 1,100 acres of potatoes, oats, and other small grains every year. Potatoes are their main crop and are used for processing, table stock and the seed potato market.





Sylvia has had dirt in her boots from day one. "Farming has been a part of my life ever since I can remember. As children on the farm, we were expected to help out during planting and harvest." After high school she ventured off the farm and went to college, never intending to go back to the farm. Sylvia graduated in 2012 with a bachelor's degree in business management and continued to work off of the farm for a couple of years. But, the notion of never returning back to the farm didn't stick. "It wasn't till I was 23 years old that I woke up one morning and thought, I want to be on the farm again, I want to be able to contribute to this family business that most people would love to be a part of." The farm has a way of calling us back, but the experiences we have while we are gone help build us. She said, "I will never regret working somewhere else before coming back to the farm; it has made me appreciate this truly rewarding industry."

Sylvia says that having a few people behind you that believe in you is a key part to being successful in the industry. "I believe having both men and women on the farm is the perfect balance to ensure a successful family business. My father, uncle and brother are constantly encouraging and pushing me to conquer new challenges. Without their support and trust, it would be harder for me to have the confidence to do what I do." She also points out how important it is for us to "educate future generations that there is no more 'that's a man's job.' A woman is more than capable of undertaking any 'man's job.' Women have always been a part of the farm in some way or another, but now we are being recognized and represented as the leaders and contributors we truly are."

In addition to working on her family's farm, Sylvia and her husband raise pigs, chickens and turkeys. "We believe being able to raise your own food is a privilege, and it is truly special to share a passion for farming with your spouse." She also loves spending time at the lake with her two dogs Tucker and Rosie.

"My favorite thing about being a farmer is the way it makes me feel. The satisfaction, pride, and rewards are something I will never again take for granted. Family is another big part of why I love my job so much. Some people only get to see their family once or twice a year maybe at holidays. I spend 9 to 14 hours a day with my family, and I wouldn't have it any other way. The opportunity to be able to work with them every day is the biggest blessing."

Thanks to Sylvia for sharing her story. You can check out their Facebook page at: www.facebook.com/labriefarms.





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There is a lot of talk these days about sharing your farm story and advocating for yourself and for farmers. As information becomes more widespread, consumers demand more – and they want it faster. So, how do you deliver your message to consumers? One of the easiest, most accessible ways is to use social media for your farm.

What is social media?

on Tube

Social

media

and

your farm

By Amy Grammer

For those who aren't already involved in social media, it is websites or applications (apps) that enable users to create and share content, from words to pictures. It is also a way to participate in a community and in networking. Some of the most popular social media sites are Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

How to use social media:

As a farmer, there are two really great way to share your farm story through social media. The first way is blogging about your farm and then posting across social media. Blogging allows you to open the door to your farm to strangers. It allows people to learn about you and your family and the way you run your business. Blogging allows you to find your voice whether your voice is passionate or humorous, it's a great way to connect to your potential customers. You are also encouraging a conversation about farming and hopefully creating an opportunity to teach people about what farming really is all about. The second way to use social media as a farmer is through pictures. Pictures are important for farmers because they tell the story without any words at all. If your goal is to sell more vegetables or beef, or open up your farm for farm tours, or anything in between, social media is an awesome way to get your name out there! Whether you share photos of your cows, photos of your kids helping out on the farm, photos of you running a combine - you are sharing what farming is really like. That's advocacy!

Six reasons to use social media

Exposure If you are actively engaged in your community or selling at the local farmers market, you may get exposure to current and potential consumers. But the exposure you can get from social media is much, much larger. Social media allows you to reach and interact with customers beyond those you meet face-to-face, creating relationships that reach far beyond your home.

Conversation Social media allows you to deliver your message to consumers. But more importantly, it allows you to hear your consumers. It allows a conversation and interaction so you can understand your audience better, and they can understand you! Sometimes that is positive (yay!) and sometimes it is negative. But the negative conversations are a good thing – they force you to hear another perspective and may even teach you something about yourself.

Increase customers Social media puts you in front of people you just can't reach in your community. It gives you an opportunity to reach and gain customers beyond your local area, which is a great thing! That also means you can reach people from many places, many age groups and many backgrounds. You are no longer limited to your town. When you increase customers – and you do it well – you increase customer loyalty!

Minimal cost Social media is mostly free. While your time to maintain social media definitely counts, there is not a fee to join most social media sites. You can pay to promote yourself and your products, but you don't have to, making it a minimal cost to participate.

Community Using social media expands your reach from your farm to the entire world! That's a big community! So whether you use it to connect to moms who want to know how beef cattle are raised or you use it to create a friendship with a farmer across the country, you have expanded the community around you. Having a bigger circle means sharing, teaching and learning.

Personalization The best part of social media is personalization. This is so important for farmers. Many consumers want to know where their food comes from which can include how do you even grow corn to how are the animals treated. Putting a face (yours and your animals) out in the world lets consumers know that your farm is not just a farm. It's a place where a family lives. It's real people working hard to help the consumer feed their families. And they feel good about knowing that!

Social media may sound like just another thing to spend time on. But if you are passionate about your animals and your farm and you have the desire to not only reach your customers, but learn from them and about them, social media is the way to go! Create a community, make a connection and build relationships.

arm homes, I imagine, mean different things to different folks. Maybe your dream was to live on a farm and you saved for a piece of land and a farm house. Maybe the farm has been in your family for many generations and hold many years of stories.

My home is over 150 years old and has been lived in by five generations of my family members now, four of which were women who engaged in agriculture. My great-grandmother picked this house out and the 500 acres behind it when it didn't even have indoor plumbing. She raised kids, chickens, peacocks and many cats and dogs over the years. She was a farm wife and an antique collector. Her daughter, my grandma, was raised in this house. My mom spent summers here helping farm, feeding animals, fishing and laying in the sun.

I also spent many summers here, with my great grandma who taught me to play cards, an appreciation for leisure activities and to always follow my heart. Whether we were dressed up for a night of bingo or getting our hands dirty in the garden, we were in this house on a dead-end road. We knew if we saw a car driving in the driveway they were either coming to see us, or they were lost.



I now live in the same house with my family. We watch the crops get planted, the garden grow, the endless foxes, deer and rabbits that graze in our yard. I have an organic greenhouse, goats and work in the ag industry professionally. I often think of all the things these wooden floors have seen. I wonder how many children's feet have pounded against it ready to go outside where the air

> seems clean and the big world seems far away. How many celebrations and heartaches these walls have felt. how many of seasons corn and beans these ceilings have known, how many prayers for rain it has heard. For me, this old house is a remembrance of where I have been, and where I am going and that farming runs deep. 🚜



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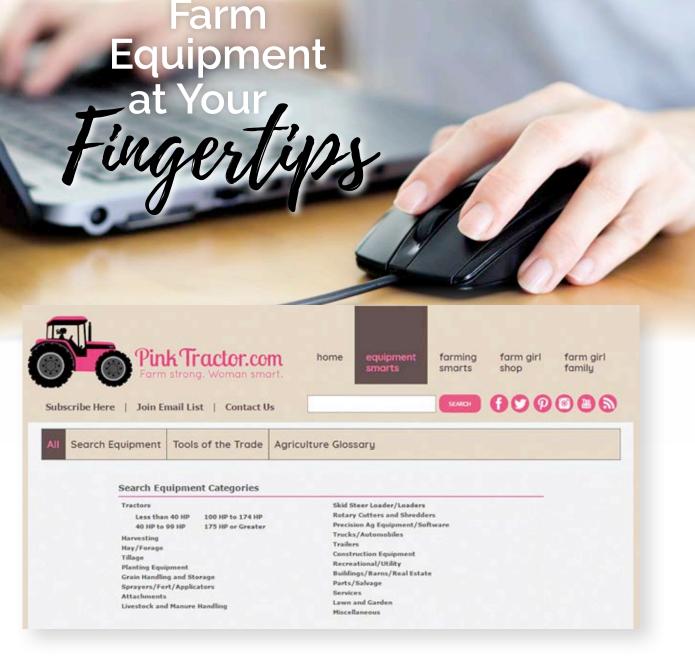


OUSE



Janeka is an agriculture blogger/ social media marketer for Show Me Shortline Company, an organic farmer, a mother, and a poet. Her books can be found on Amazon and her blog can be found at showmeshortlineblog.com/blog.





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PLANTING SAFETY TOP 7

You survived Winter and now it's time to get out in the field. Just because you have done it year after year, doesn't mean you don't need a refresher. It's important to be safe and smart with changing weather and large equipment. Here are the top 7 tips for a safe and successful planting season!

Bring the essentials. When you leave the house, bring the must-have items, from duct tape to gloves.

Take a break when you need to for food or rest.

Dress for the weather. Whether it's a hat or sunglasses or an extra coat if rain is in the forecast, it's better to be safe than sorry. Carry layers.

Wear sunscreen and drink water. No, coffee doesn't count as 'hydrating.'

Charge your cell phone and let others know where you will be. Check in regularly.

Tune up your vehicles or equipment before you get started.

Pay attention to what is around you when operating equipment. Be extra careful in the dark.

Here's to another safe and successful planting season!

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NORTH DAKOTA FARM GIRL

iton



To stand toe-to-toe with men in this field and be able to accomplish the same jobs they do is a great feeling.

Ashton Phillips is a Missouri native who now calls North Dakota home. Ashton got her start on the family farm, the P Bar Land and Cattle. It is made up of around 300 acres and has been in business for 22 years. They run around 80 pairs of commercial Black Angus and SimAngus cross cattle. Ashton explains, "This farm was started by my grandma and grandpa, Howard and Verlane Phillips. They didn't originally build the farm but moved there from Springfield. My grandpa ran the distributorship for KABA Select Sires in Missouri for 30 years and my grandmother helped with that also." Ashton's dad, Mark Phillips, was the one to follow in her grandpa's footsteps. He also worked for Select Sires for years. Ashton's parents had a farm located in Fair Grove, Missouri, where they also ran a portion of the cattle. They had Black Angus and Simmental/Angus cross commercial cattle herds at both locations.

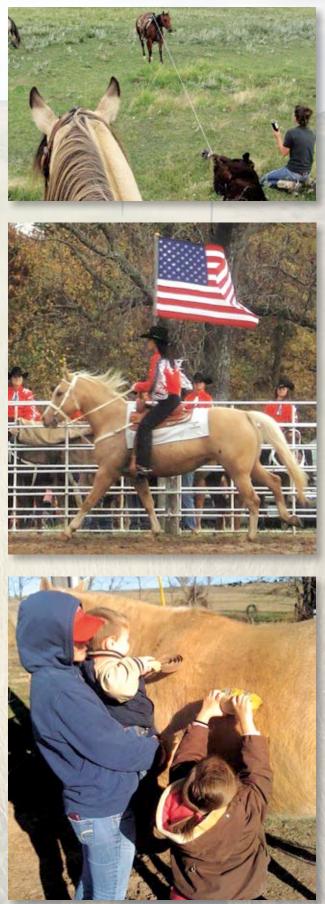
She has been in cattle and farming from a very young age. "It is safe to say that the majority of what I know today was all learned on the farm. In the summers, I would spend most of my time out with my grandparents. I could be found doing anything from opening the gates for my grandpa, putting on clips or staples in the fences, helping my grandma cook, catching tadpoles in the creek or being the first one on a new colt. There was always an adventure to be had at the farm." Ashton was taught how to care for the cattle, how to watch for illness or injury, how coyotes may be cute but they are a nuisance and was the unlucky one that got stuck "holding the tail" while the vet was castrating. "One of my fondest memories of the farm is all the knowledge and experience my grandpa gave me in training horses. We didn't train them to be all fancy and perfect, we trained them our way to do the jobs we needed on the farm and I wouldn't have it any other way."

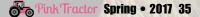
While Ashton pursued a college education, she spent time away from the farm. She attended College of the Ozarks in Branson, Missouri and double majored in Animal Science and Agribusiness. After graduating college she moved away from the farm completely to Leeds, North Dakota where she has been ever since. The move for her job working as a full time Ranch Hand for Kenner Simmental has made North Dakota her home.

Ashton's favorite thing about being a woman in the ag industry is knowing that she is in an industry that is not for everyone. "This job is not an easy one; it's not a 9-5 job and most likely never will be! So far for me I have had to try my best to prove that I belong in this industry and it has been difficult at times. To stand toe-to-toe with men in this field and be able to accomplish the same jobs they do is a great feeling."

Since she moved to North Dakota, Ashton had started her own herd and brand. Last December, she purchased her first open heifer that was truly her own. She now owns three cows and has two coming. "My brand is called Rockin P Bar. I wanted to keep the P Bar in my brand since it has been in my family for over 100 years."

This North Dakota cattle rancher leaves us with these words, "It is safe to say that I never would have gotten to where I am today if it weren't for my family. All of those countless hours on the farm my whole life have taught me more than any book could have. Being in an industry that requires you to be rough and tough and work for what you love is the perfect place for me. The people I have met along the way have also helped in more ways than I can explain. Each day in this life is a blessing and I wouldn't change it for the world!"





Heifers' Party

By Michele Payn

t was a steamy 95% humidity day when our heifers got out. You can imagine my joy as I walked out to find a knocked down fence that had stood for nearly a decade, a 4x4 corner post busted clean off and three strands of wire on the ground. Even worse the heifers were nowhere to be found.

It was the week between our county and state fairs and panic doesn't adequately describe my feelings. My daughter's beloved homebred show heifer Lucky, was gone and the thought of something happening to Lucky filled me with dread. I couldn't find a hoof mark anywhere or any clues that they had entered the cornfield next to their pasture.

The heifers' party included me shrieking through the house in my boots to place a panicked call to my neighbor and jumping in the Gator with my laughing office manager to search. We could not find the ornery moos until we were at the very back of the property, where they at least acted relieved to see



me. Thankfully, my fear of them getting on the road or having broken legs was unfounded; I herded them home with no problem. However, their antics were a reminder why farm animals are kept in a fence or barn - their safety.

While it's still a little hard to admit, chasing those heifers is pretty funny. It makes for a great story at the dinner table. Every time I've told my friends about the heifers' party and my resulting panic, they laugh. The story brings to life how annoying animals can be and how hard it is to care for them, especially when they are stupid. Sharing of a story isn't the only important thing around the table - it comes secondary to the sharing of a meal (whether you call it dinner or supper). Food should be a celebration, a time to bring people together. Meals are about connecting, whether it's a hot dog or gournet feast.

"The fondest memories are made gathered around the table" is a sign that hangs over our table. I believe preparing and sharing a meal is an act of love - a time to connect with friends and family. Sharing a meal is important throughout the year, and even moreso around the holidays.

What stories do you have to share around the dinner table? We get so wrapped up in work that it's hard to remember to share happenings of the farm or ranch.

While I really don't really need to relive the heifers' party, the story does amuse people - and helps give insight on some of the challenges of dealing with farm animals. Food should be a celebration, a time to bring people together. Meals are about connecting, whether it's a hot dog or gourmet feast.

Getting people back to the kitchen to enjoy meals together is not only important for families; it also can bring more reason to the conversation around food. USDA has some resources to help with family meals at https://healthymeals. nal.usda.gov/features-month/ august/family-meals-month, in case you'd like to share with others.

While you're at it, consider

what farm and ranch stories you can tell your friends or family when you share a meal. Bring some levity by way of animal antics or tractor trouble to Thanksgiving or Christmas. Yes, we work in a highly technical business, but it's also pretty funny when you consider the amount of manure, dirt and comedy of errors we handle. Look for those stories each day, but keep your fences up!

Michele Payn lives on a small farm in west central Indiana, where she and her daughter enjoy all things pink while working with their Holsteins. Michele speaks from the intersection of farm and food, helping thousands of people around the world through her keynotes, books and training programs. Visit www. causematters.com or connect with @mpaynspeaker on social media channels. Her second book, Food Truths from Farm to Table, is expected early 2017.

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Stephanie Hatton owns and operates Hatton's Feathered Nest, a farm of about 2.5 acres, in Fostoria, Ohio with her wife Stacy and their nine year old son Wyatt. They have been goat, chicken and turkey farmers since 2013. They just recently added an 8 month old mini-horse to the farm.

Fed up with living in town, the family moved to the country and started the farm from nothing. They first got chickens and turkeys. Then, about two years ago, Stephanie fell head-over-heels in love with goats. "I had heard that goats were just as smart, if not smarter, than dogs and I just really wanted to give goats a try. Additionally, my wife wanted the opportunity to make her own soaps, fudge, cheese, and ice cream with goat milk."

The family purchased two Nubian/Boer mixes in the spring of 2014 and "they have grown into being just the two most adorable and perfectly-behaved boys!" Next, they

Stephanie Ohio Farm Girl

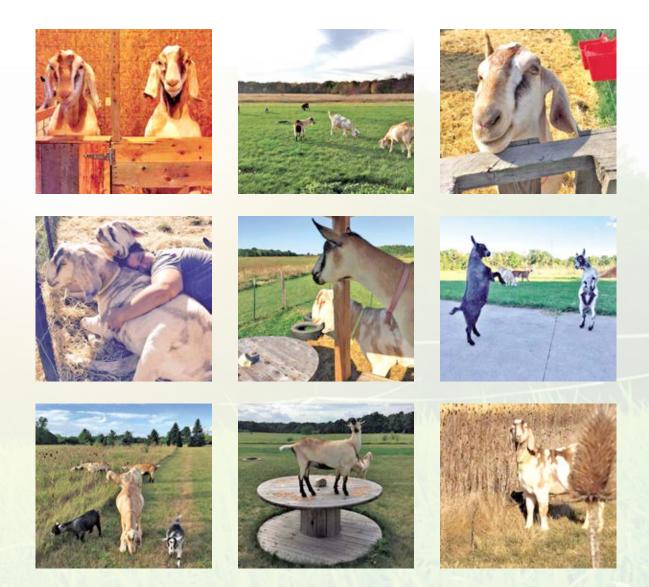
By Mason Larimore

Girls are just as strong, just as tough, and just as capable as their male counterparts when it comes to the heavy work that is involved in running a farm.

purchased two Alpine does for breeding and they added a rescue Nubian doe, two Pygmy goats and a Nubian/Oberhasli buck. The family is hoping to have several kids in the spring of 2017 from their three does.

"The biggest challenge thus far is the fact that we have puts lots of money into purchasing, caring for and feeding of our goats, but have only made a minimal amount. Once our does give birth, we will sell the baby goats and sell goat milk products. So, waiting for the sacrifices to begin paying off monetarily has been tough. Money going out and not coming in is stressful on any farm and when you are just beginning like we are, this is a necessary evil and all part of farming."

Stephanie believes increasing the number of women in agriculture means farming should be introduced much sooner. Stephanie said, "I think that girls should be encouraged and perhaps even recruited at younger ages to pursue their dreams of living on a farm, running a farm, etc. I know that FFA does a fantastic job of this in high schools all across America, but I would like to see girls in junior high and perhaps even



elementary school shown that you don't have to be a "farmer's wife." *You* yourself can be a farmer and whomever you decide to marry can be a farmer right along *with* you. Running a farm is a whole heck of a lot easier when you have someone to pitch in and help you with the dirty work! Girls are just as strong, just as tough, and just as capable as their male counterparts when it comes to the heavy work that is involved in running a farm."

A retired police officer, Stephanie works part-time teaching online criminal justice courses at Tiffin University. She teaches strictly online so that she can devote more time to the farm. "If I could farm full-time and make ends meet, I would. As much as I love teaching future law enforcement professionals, the call to farm is much, much stronger within me."

Stephanie's words of advice, "If you truly want to become a farmer, then do it now. Do not give up on your dream of farming, regardless of life's curve balls. You will regret never trying or putting forth the effort to find out just how great it is to live on and run a farm. It won't come easy, but it will be well worth whatever sacrifices you have to make."

PLANTING (and patience)

by Lisa Peterson

Good news! We are finally planting! As a person that has never been patient, waiting this time of year gets hard! Indeed the days prior are busy prepping the planter, greasing, cleaning tractor windows, picking up seed, and more. This all happens while watching the weather trying to find when the planting window will appear. The adrenaline starts to pump and you can't wait to actually get in the field! It is also heartbreaking to watch rain clouds roll in knowing spring rains will set our progress back a few more days.

The spring rains also bring a battle with our soils and getting them to dry out. Our soils are a heavy, dark black soil that retains moisture and can get "mucky" really easily. They are great for the middle of summer to hold moisture, but not so great planting after rain. Each year, farming teaches me more and more patience. It is hard to see our neighbors a few miles away starting to work ground and know

we have 1-2 more days before ours is fit.

Finally, we were able to get in the field and start working ground. That afternoon we started planting and one-half of a round later the planter broke down. Definitely not a great start to planting!

It still makes no sense to me that we can put a piece of machinery away in the shed in perfect working order for winter and when you pull it out in the spring it has mechanical problems! But it happens! Unfortunately, this time it was not a fix that we were able to do on our own as it was the system that supplies the down pressure to the press wheels on the planter. (Laymen's terms: A system that helps get the seed in the right depth in the ground.)





The system had two cracked airbags and a lift switch that went bad. We were unable to get the repair person and parts until Thursday morning and then most of the day was spent on the repair. Fortunately, the next three days we missed two rain showers and we were able to finish our corn by Sunday before we got a nice little rain. Perfect for germinating the corn and getting it growing!

The rain shower also gave us a few hours breathing room to switch the planter over to soybeans. After planting 23 acres, we have now been rained out for about a week. As I watch another storm approaching on the radar today, Mother Nature continues to teach me patience!

Farming takes patience from start to finish – waiting for the season to get here, waiting for the right time to plant, waiting to harvest, waiting for a little downtime. You have to be patient! Something we learn a little more every single year.







re you a tough woman? I have a feeling if you are reading this you are. A woman who reads a magazine dedicated to women in agriculture puts you in that category quite quickly. In my opinion, it's something to be very proud of. I know I wear that title like it's a crown...and for good reason, too.

I come from a long line of tough women. Each of the women before me in my family was tough in different ways. I bet you also have a lineage of them. Women didn't come through history being the "weaker" sex. I'm not sure who coined that phrase, but he was kidding himself. No jab towards men here, but we are equal. I know because I'm living it. In truth, so are you.

When I look back at the women who came before me in my family, I am filled with pride. I have German, Native American and Scottish heritage. Imagine the different ways of living these

women experienced. I grew up seeing my mom and grandmother never taking a day off. We all know that working in the agriculture industry means almost no days off. On the rare occasion that you do get away for a day or so, there is a lot of preparation. You need someone there to handle things while you are gone and there is always a lot of catching up to do when you return. I remember my grandmother saying she didn't need to "get away from it all" because all she ever wanted was right there every day. I loved that and I find that so true in my own life. The women in my family loved their lives. You could see it in everything they did. Both of my grandmothers have passed on, but their memory and legacy lives on. They both set a good example of what hard work and determination look like. My mom also did this for me. Not once do I ever remember my mom throwing her hands up in the air and giving up. Sometimes things didn't work out the way she hoped or planned, but she always found another way to get the job done. There was no quitting. I admire that!

When I looked up the definition of "tough," I thought it fit nicely with our way of living.

"Involving considerable difficulty or hardship, requiring great determination or effort," "durable," "made to last", "strong," and "resilient." I love this...so true! Agriculture is not for the faint of heart. However, the rewards from living such a life are reserved

for those tough enough to

By Cheyenne Glade Wilson

endure it. Do you agree?

Some folks might view the term "tough" as too rugged or masculine for women. I don't. I view tough as a compliment. I don't think you are born being tough. I believe you have to go through certain circumstances to become that way. It's like Eleanor Roosevelt said, "a woman is like a tea bag - you can't tell how strong she is until you put her in hot water." I know the women in my family faced tough times and came through them much wiser and stronger. It's those tough times that really show you just what you're made of. You can't keep a tough woman down. When you sit back and think about things for a minute, isn't it amazing all the things that women are capable of? We can bring life into the world. What a rewarding feeling that is! I think this is so important because children really are our future. They are always watching us. They learn by what we do. Think about how impactful we all are on the future right there. And what an honor to show future women in ag what is possible.

We can work side-by-side with our families. We all know in agriculture that this is not a oneperson show. It truly takes an army (or a couple of tough people, at least) to make it happen the way it needs to. We don't have a 9-5 job. We have a commitment and duty to our livelihood 24/7 and, in truth, we like it that way. We can run our own ranches, farms or businesses. The number of successful women in the world continues to grow and it's something to be really excited about. I love to see women lifting each other up instead of tearing each other down. As tough women, we truly can do whatever we choose to do.

So, are you a tough woman? I know for certain that I am. Not all of these tough women live and work in agriculture, but a lot of them do. What does that tell you? To me, it tells me that women with dirt under their fingernails are the kind of women I like to associate with. We are the salt of the earth and without tough women...none of us would be where we are at today. Cheers to all you toughies out there!

You can check out Cheyenne's blog at www.TheNativeCowgirl.com.

Photo by Tanna White of Tanna White Photography.

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We asked our readers why they love being women in agriculture and we received an overwhelming response! Comments of family, breaking stereotypes and an all-around love of animals poured in and we picked a few of our favorite answers!

"I love being able to provide for my family with my own two hands. Our food and our income rely on no one else but our little farm! Feeding ourselves and our community with real food makes my heart smile. Raising my children to be self-sufficient and encourage them to always yearn for knowledge." – Ashley

"The shock on people's faces when I tell them I drive heavy machinery." – Andraya

"Showing my two girls that there is nothing in this world that a woman cannot achieve if you believe in yourself and work hard. I also love the reaction from other people when they see me on the tractor the first time and they say 'Oh, so you are actually a farmer!' " – Bronwyn

"I love the freedom of the farm as well as the closeness an ag family can experience." – Cynthia "Fresh air, sunshine, rain and snow. The smell of fresh dug dirt and cut grass. The sound of the rooster crowing and the chicks chirping. And, at the end of the day, I go to bed exhausted but with a smile on my face because I get to do it all over again the next day!" – Daphne

"Being independent! If I want to build a shed for my farm animals or equipment I can go pick up the lumber in my truck and start building. I don't need to depend on or wait for someone else to do it for me. There's nothing that I can't do, thanks to my farmer grandfather for teaching me everything about farming." – Danielle

"I love the knowledge and support that women in ag tend to give each other, regardless of specialty." – Correy



"I love being a woman in ag, because it keeps my mind and soul always full, a farm is the best workplace, you can see the changing of the seasons, and you can feel it and enjoy it. And also, animals are the best co-workers!!" – Eli

"What I love most about being a woman in ag is the challenge and the drive to be the best caretaker for the land, for the animals, and for our future women in ag that I can be. I love hearing my little gal say 'Mom, I want to be a farmer when I grow up.' " – Elisha

- "Farming has taught me everything I know about having a good work ethic and being true to my passions no matter how hard I have to work for them!" – Jess
- "When people tell you that you can't do something and you show them you can!" - Ann
- "Being able to work next to the man I love and to raise our children to respect the earth and how to continue on the family legacy of farming." – Jennifer
- "I love everything about being a woman in ag. I love the freedoms I have to do what I love every single day. I also love the feeling of being needed because without me and many other farmers no one could eat or be clothed." – Hannah
- "My son and the other boys in his class think it's cool that I know how to drive a combine." – Monika
- "The fellowship of the other women brings everyone up." – Karen

"Educating others about the ag industry!" - Lily

"I think that the best thing about being a woman in ag is knowing that I get out what I put into a project or crop. Reap what you sow they always say." – Amanda



"We bring in a whole new dimension of creative problem solving." – Wendy

- "I love waking up, putting on my boots and not having to brush my hair or put makeup on. Animals don't judge! You can just be yourself every day!!!" – Lois
- "I'm not sure I could pick just one thing as my favorite part of being a woman in the ag industry. Two things that are very important to me are the sense of pride that I feel in carrying on the lifestyle and business that my family built generations before me. I hope to continue that legacy with a family of my own someday. I am also proud of my ability to almost completely care for our herd of dairy cattle on my own - a skill set that I am refining and adding to daily! Our healthy and happy cows provide a nutritious and readily available food source to others in our region, and that is another thing I am very proud of!" – Lauren

"It's the freedom to live and learn fun new things. I can now drive a tractor, auger a hole, lead a horse and muck a stall; none of which were on my bucket list, although now I'm proud of it. My new wardrobe consists of boots, overalls and a hat and I love them like my scrubs, dresses and fine leather purses. It's the opportunity to breathe and work with purpose. For me, working on our farm brings peace and contentment that doesn't compare to anything I've done in my life personally or professionally. I find humor in the conversations with our animals and nature. I think the animals do too. I am blessed to be a mom, daughter, wife, Gigi, aunt, RN and now a modern urban farmer. The best thing about being a woman in ag is the ability to be myself!" - Meta

"I love the feeling of accomplishment when you see your happy animals in the field. It is a great feeling knowing you raised them from babies to become a functioning productive part of your farm. Love raising animals!" – Shannon

"Working with the farm animals is my favorite thing about being a farmer. Who else is glad to see you just because you are carrying a 5 gallon plastic bucket?" – Sharron

"I love being different than everyone else. No heels and fancy dresses for work here!" – Jena

"Being able to handle a job in a man's world, but yet gentle enough to teach my girl the true meaning behind farming." – Amanda





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