

My family is a dairy farming family. I am the seventh generation on the farm. I was born on the farm where my father worked with his father and mother. My first animal was a Holstein heifer named May that my father gave to me. I now have Brown Swiss, Holstein, Jersey and Milking Shorthorn.

My favorite part about farming is the animals. I enjoy being around them. I enjoy the different "personalities" of each one.

Farming is important because it provides good foods like dairy products, grains, vegetables and meat. Most farms help with conservation and the environment. Our farm works with the NYC Watershed to help keep the water clean.

Farming is very important to the economy. Many people do not realize how much farms support the local businesses just by being there. They are customers of machinery dealers, repair shops, feed dealers, fuel companies, restaurants, coffee shops, hardware stores, grocery stores, convenience stores, and on and on. Without farms, those business lose too.

It is difficult to see the decline of the family farm. Low milk prices and rising costs make it difficult to farms to survive. Love of the animals, this land and this life keep us going.

Jeffrey Palmatier