

Family Farm Defenders

FFD President's Message

by Joel Greeno - Kendall, Wisconsin

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FFD Mission

Family Farm Defenders is a tax-deductible non-profit activist organization made up of farmers and concerned consumers. We are seeking ways to bring fair prices back to farmers and to insure a safe and sustainably produced food for consumers.



Berks County Community Rallies to Help Egg Farmers

BerksRegional News

The year 2019 Can Be Described in One Word:

LOW

2019 saw low milk prices, low cattle prices, low hog prices, low soybean and corn prices and the ongoing issues with factory farms.

Then came 2020!

No one knew what was about to happen. 2020 saw the usual problems arise and then with the onset of Covid 19 we had to deal with a whole new set of circumstances. Farmers were receiving phone calls forcing them to dump milk for questionable reasons, milk checks were being docked, produce rotted in the fields due to inadequate workforce due to Covid issues. Egg producers were forced to smash, throw away or let eggs rot that would have otherwise have been sold. Yet, at the same time, store shelves were empty and consumers were having a difficult time getting the supplies they needed. The chaos that engulfed every part of the nation was very time consuming process and an experience that had never been dealt with before. Yet through all of the hardship and negativity, a little bit of sunshine revealed a silver lining.

The 2020 Silver Lining for Farmers and Consumers

The silver lining was that consumers were able to seek our farmers directly and get the food they needed to feed their families. Farmers were able to show their true colors and prove their commitment by continuing to work hard to provide food supply when others had failed. Consumers were able to have a new respect for farmers and a better understanding of where food comes from. Farmers were able to educate consumers on a one-on-one basis and show them that the products they need can be purchased locally and can be more nutritional for their families. (Continued on pg.3)



Berks County Egg Farmers- Market & Creamery -Used Facebook to Sell their Eggs

inquirer.com

Consumers Became More Aware of Farm to Table Products

They learned that by investing in their local farmers they were investing back into their local communities. Families were unable to go out to eat multiple times a week and that need was filled by restaurants and other local food producers stepping up and creating meals to go. Families were able to enjoy healthy pre-packaged dinners, and local establishments were still able to survive. Local bakeries and meat lockers were able to provide consumers with products that were unobtainable in large grocery stores. In many cases, families who had never previously grown a garden planted and harvested their own food and learned first hand the dedicated hardwork farmers experience daily.

As society seemed to shut down and much produce was being wasted, farmers evolved into marketing machines. They learned how to promote their own products through social media and were able to build a local consumer base. Consumers responded by purchasing their products often at a lower price than they would have otherwise been forced to pay. Farmers



Consumers Cars Lining up to Purchase their Eggs

provided a direct route for goods and services.

I have read many stories of family farmers who had lines of cars waiting at their gate to pick up fresh milk and local produce. In Berks County, PA an egg farmer lost his corporate contract and was about to destroy 80,000 chickens. But then he was approached by another farmer and the two cooperated to sell eggs on their own. They used social media platforms to promote the egg sale and by the time the sale concluded over \$36,000 dollars

was generated and the number of consumers demanding eggs continues to be strong.

Milk Producers Sell Products

Milk producers who had "on farm pasteurization systems" were able to bottle and sell their products directly to consumer without having to dump large quantities of milk. The Pandemic led consumers and farmers to support each other, working together to keep their own families, farms and local economies afloat.

2020 Is Soon Coming to an End

As 2020 comes to an end, unknown troubles will continue to arise. But, rest assured that Family Farm Defenders, along with committed friends and numerous allies, will continue to work hard and achieve great things. Through Food Sovereignty, we can continue to grow and adapt to overcome the obstacles that come before us. Here's hoping that when 2021 arrives even more consumers will come to appreciate what farmers do for them every day. Stay safe, mask up and together we will get through this historic challenge.