

# Potato Farm Provides Hands-On Learning for Kids

## Adams-Friendship 4th Graders Tour Heartland Farms Along with Dairy and Tree Farms

Fourth graders from Adams-Friendship Elementary School learned a great deal about farming in central Wisconsin on Friday, April 27, 2012.

Fourth grade teacher Peggy Werner coordinated a field trip with visits to Heartland Farms, Full Cycle Tree Farm and Milk Source. Some 69 students

took part in the trip where they received hands-on learning at the potato, dairy and tree farms.

"The kids were very excited about going on this field trip," said Werner. "It seems that more and more families don't know where their food comes from, so we really feel it's important to teach the

children about farming and get them closer to their food source."

Heartland Farms, Inc., in Hancock, Wisconsin, is a 14,000-acre irrigated potato and vegetable farm. Specializing in chipping potatoes, this fifth-generation farm has been recognized as a top supplier to the Frito-Lay company.



Fourth-graders from Adams-Friendship Elementary School climb aboard one of the six Lenco harvesters used by Heartland Farms.



Heartland Farms President Jeremie Pavelski (right) describes how irrigation systems work on his 14,000-acre potato farm in Hancock. Pavelski led a tour of the farm for fourth grade students from Adams-Friendship Elementary School on April 27, 2012.



TJ Kennedy of Heartland Farms explains to fourth-graders and their teachers and parents how potato storage bins are computer-controlled.

CEO Richard Pavelski runs the farm along with his son, Jeremie, who serves as company President. In January of 2012, Heartland Farms was named the winner of the National Potato Council's Environmental Stewardship Award for

its strong commitment to environmental stewardship and sustainability.

As part of the tour for the fourth graders, Jeremie Pavelski and his wife, Alicia, provided tractors, planters and harvesters for the kids to investigate. In addition to learning about planting and growing potatoes, the tour at Heartland Farms also showcased irrigation and storage technology.

in the United States, yet we are relied upon to feed the other 98% of the population, in addition to exporting food to other countries. Field trips such as this are great opportunities to teach not only the children, but their teachers and chaperones about today's farming practices, and the importance of food production."

At Full Cycle Tree Farm, owner Nancy Livingston has been hosting the Adams-Friendship fourth-graders for the past ten years. With help from the Adams County DNR forester, the children

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Tom Prasalowicz of Heartland Farms uncovers potato seed pieces that had been planted in a field near the farm's headquarters in Hancock. Prasalowicz fielded a wide range of questions from the children who were excited to spend the day learning about agriculture.

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learned about tree planting and tree identification. Livingston, who was named the 2005 Wisconsin Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year, also put on a sawmill demonstration.

With Friday, April 27 also being Arbor Day, the state donates a tree for every fourth grader, which the kids got to plant in an open demonstration forest.

The field trip then headed to Milk Source's New Chester Dairy in Grand Marsh. After eating the lunch provided by Milk Source, the kids went into the milking parlor with an 80-cow carousel. They were also allowed into a viewing room above the milking parlor, where they were treated to ice cream sandwiches. They also took a tour of the dairy's large, climate-controlled barn, and visited the feed pad and commodities shed to observe the feed mixing process.

"The New Chester Dairy is Milk Source's newest dairy," said Bill Harke, Director of Public Affairs for Milk Source. "This dairy just started milking in March and will have 4,300 cows when it's completed."

Harke said Milk Source operates four dairies and a calf farm. They milk 22,000 cows and produce over 1.5 million pounds of milk per day.

Werner specifically thanked Heartland Farms, Full Cycle Tree Farm and Milk Source for their financial contributions toward the field trip.



Bill Schleizer of Heartland Farms shows kids how tractors, planters, harvesters and other large equipment play a key role in raising a quality crop of potatoes and vegetables.

"With all the recent budget cuts, we could not have done this field trip without the support of these farm operations," Werner said. "Heartland Farms paid for the transportation and Milk Source provided lunch. So this trip was done at no cost to the Adams-Friendship School District. We really want to thank them for their generous donations." **CT**

Below Left: Adams-Friendship Elementary School fourth graders watch as teacher Peggy Werner (left) demonstrates how to use a crosscut saw with her husband, Roy. The Werners are pictured at Nancy Livingston's Full Cycle Tree Farm in Hancock.

Below Right: A portable saw mill operated by Roy Werner cuts a pine log into boards, while fourth graders look on. In the green coat is Nancy Livingston, owner of Full Cycle Tree Farm.



As part of the field trip to Full Cycle Tree Farm, children were given trees to plant on Arbor Day. These two Adams-Friendship fourth-graders are pleased to plant their pine trees.

