

MY LIFE, MY PASSION, MY FARM

By Clarissa Ulness

Living on a farm has provided me with endless opportunities. I am one of the few kids in my class that resides on a registered Holstein farm. Being raised on a farm helps me to be responsible, work hard, and understand the cycle of life. It exposes me to opportunities that I could not experience if I did not live on a farm, in the dairy state of Wisconsin! The dairy community encourages me to speak up for agriculture, helps me to develop leadership skills, and allows me to meet new people that share similar interests.

Living on a farm enhances my critical thinking skills. I can make clear judgements about whether an animal is sick or not, which is very important when caring for animals. Animal health is a very high priority when caring for cattle on a dairy farm. My parents have taught me how to give pills to sick calves, draw out vaccines and administer shots. When I grow up I want to continue my education and earn a degree in Veterinary Medicine. Therefore, all of these skills not only make me passionate about the dairy industry, it also gives me a path to achieve my goals.

My decision-making skills have also developed because I live on a farm. Dairy judging, dairy quiz bowl, dairy jeopardy and other 4-H activities have all helped me to improve these skills, by studying facts, practicing and competing, as well as by visiting other dairy farms while preparing for a dairy judging contest.

Being a part of the dairy industry has helped me become more understanding. Our family works hard daily to care for our cattle, be stewards of the land, and produce high-quality milk, often making sacrifices to do this. I have learned to adapt to a change of plans in the middle of the day if something breaks down, or understand that we might be late to an event if an unexpected calving occurs. I know the importance of hard work and giving full effort into projects, something that spills over in my school work as well.

I am so lucky and have so much pride living on a farm. I have become a very passionate person knowing that together as a family we work hard to achieve our goals. Fortunately, the dairy community is made up of a huge support system of farmers, professionals and educators that help shape my character. I have terrific parents, coaches, and extended family that are always willing to help me learn and grow.

The dairy community is a great place where I can learn by both winning and losing. I have gained valuable life skills in public speaking, leadership, and teamwork. I look forward to the endless opportunities in dairy and agriculture, knowing that with passion, hard work, and determination, the sky is the limit and I am so excited to see where it takes me.