

Meet the Lees Family

Arcola, Saskatchewan



Home is where the heart is for Valerie and Duncan who have raised cattle, a family, and a lot of love on their century-old family farm.

45 years and counting

After 45 years of marriage, Duncan and Valerie have been through a lot together. Not only have they run a farm and raised a family, but Valerie was also a full-time teacher. But even as they each had individual responsibilities on and off the farm, they always understood the importance of sharing responsibilities at home—including raising their four boys. According to Valerie, the secret to a successful relationship is patience. But if you ask Duncan, a lot of it comes down to “stubbornness.” What they do agree on, however, is that they are always there for each other.





Loving what you do

As a sixth generation farmer, Duncan has spent a lifetime on the land. And, just as his father passed the tradition onto him, he is passing it on to his own son, Jeff, who now runs the family farm. "I think every father would want his son to enjoy what he did. I think if your father enjoyed his work, he'd want his son to enjoy it the same way. We are a natural cattle people. We've done it for a long time."



Local and fresh

For the Lees family, there's nothing like homegrown food, whether it's from your own garden or a local farm. As Valerie says: "The produce that you get, for example fresh cabbage, is so tasty compared to commercially bought produce. It's picked ripe, instead of green and shipped." But if you ask Duncan, "I find that homegrown pork is the biggest difference. There aren't many people that run their own pigs anymore, but if you can get them from a farm it's much better. It's just a different taste."



Raising cattle

The Lees raise Hereford cattle (they have about 450 heads), which are “one of the heartier beef breeds,” explains Duncan. “They are distinctive with their white face and their body hair is what we call ‘red.’ Red with white face.”

Over the years, the Lees family has shown Hereford cattle not just locally, but across the country and have even sold purebred stock to places as far away as England, Japan, Russia and Kazakhstan. Also a livestock judge, Duncan knows how to work with the animals to get them socialized. “By the time we get them ready for a show, our animals are very tame,” says Duncan.

After raising cattle, a family and a life together over the past 45 years, it’s obvious Valerie and Duncan wouldn’t trade this life for anything.





Baked Potato Casserole

Ingredients

8 large potatoes,
cut into cubes
1 tsp salt
1 cup sour cream
1 cup mayonnaise
1 cup shredded
cheddar cheese
3 green onions, chopped

Directions

Boil cubed potatoes in salted water for 10 minutes. In a mixing bowl, add sour cream, mayo, $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of the shredded cheese and green onions. Drain the potatoes and add into the mixed ingredients.

Grease a 9 × 13" pan and add in mixture. Top with reserved $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of cheese.

Bake at 350°F for 20 – 25 minutes. Can be frozen.

Notes

Valerie & Duncan Lees
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