

# Meet the Petersen Family

Hay Lakes, Alberta



**When a teacher and a veterinarian return to their agricultural roots, their passion fuels a conservation project that brings wildlife back to their land.**



## Returning home

Clarann and Stephen Petersen feel very connected, not just to the land, but also to the animals that roam it—perhaps not surprising considering Stephen's previous career as a veterinarian.

"We care about the land. We love our land. It's our life," says Clarann. "We love seeing the wildlife. We love to keep it healthy and plant about a thousand trees a year."

And their conservation efforts appear to be working. Since they came here the wildlife has increased. "We try to make the belts natural areas for them, now there are grouse and rabbits coming back. The swans and pelicans came back this year too."





### Always a different day

What's a typical day like for the Petersens? "There is no typical day," says Clarann. In addition to the crops and garden, the family keeps 10 cows on the property—as pets, "they are almost old enough to vote," so there's always something going on. But that's part of the appeal for Clarann.

"I love the freedom and diversity of work. It's never the same old, same old," she notes. Ben, their son, adds "it can be a lot of work when you're working long days and long hours, but the time you have off is also amazing."



## Looking to the future

Over the years, the Petersens have passed their love of the land onto their two children. "I was working with my dad a while ago and we just shut off the tractor and stared longingly up at the hills, the nice Alberta rolling hills," says their son Ben.

It's in moments like this that Ben can see farming in his own future. "I certainly see myself getting into farming. I think I'd be interested in the marketing side of it, spending time in the city and meeting the people you sell to. It would be amazing if more restaurants wanted to buy farm-fresh chicken. People want to know where their food is coming from," Ben notes. "If you could do that, raise your animals ethically and sell them direct, it would be amazing."







## Homegrown goodness

Having grown up on farms, the Petersen family can definitely notice a difference in the taste of farm-fresh foods.

For Ben his pick for best farm-fresh food is easy: eggs. For Clarann, she's reminded of the number of meals they've sat down to and thought, "wow, we've raised everything on this table except the butter."

While the Petersens operate an orchard and a grain farm, they also have a large garden that supplies them with peas, beans, corn, kale, potatoes, carrots, Swiss chard and cucumbers. They grow so much that they're regularly giving it away.

With such an incredible bounty, it's no wonder why the Petersens are so invested in giving back to the land they live on.



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# Dill Onion Yogurt Bread

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## Ingredients

½ cup water  
¾ cup plain yogurt  
3 tbsp olive oil  
1½ tsp sugar, or honey  
1 tbsp dried dill weed  
1 tbsp onion, dried or fresh  
1½ tsp salt  
3 cups bread flour  
2¼ tsp yeast

## Directions

Put all ingredients in bread maker.  
Set for white bread, medium crisp.

## Notes

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**Clarann Petersen**  
Hay Lakes, Alberta