

# THE FARM BILL

Hiya, my favorite APOP readers! This newsletter is slightly different as I'm giving you a front row seat recap to my recent New York trip with the American Farm Bureau!

Think of this newspaper flyer as something to read with your morning coffee. I'm sure that 99% (maybe even a 100% if I'm being honest), are reading from a device. But pretend for my sake that this was printed, sitting at the end of your drive, delivered by a paper boy, just waiting for you to dive in.

So let's hop to it and get to why I was in New York for 24hrs. I was learning about the Farm Bill! *Did you know the US had a Farm Bill!?!?*

As a Michigander, I am pretty familiar with the importance of agriculture (especially in Michigan.) But I didn't know we had a **FARM BILL!**

As you read through this very literal Paige Press, I encourage you to absorb the information and share with others. I'd love to chat with you all at length about this incredible experience. Feel free to send me an email at (apaigeofpositivity@gmail.com) or send me a message on Instagram.

We ALL enjoy food (you are subscribed to a food blogger's email list, after all!) We ALL eat! We all need farmers and it's important to understand the impact they have on our food system & land. Let's dive in, shall we?

## DAIRY FARM

**DUTCH HALLOW FARM**  
One of the coolest experiences of the day was watching a baby Jersey Calf being born at Dutch Hallow Farm! No Labor & Delivery certification needed to watch the magic. It was our last stop of the day and incredible.

Dairy farmers are at the mercy of industry prices AND a short shelf life for the product. Every ounce of milk that is produced leaves the farm within 48hr hours. This is a strict regulation and strongly enforced by the USDA (two strikes, you don't produce milk anymore)



Look at this cutie! A Jersey Cow living her best life!

## EDUCATION

HUDSON VALLEY RESEARCH LAB

We kicked off our morning at Hudson Valley Research Lab where we met with industry professionals & learned about how agriculture research is so important! From ever changing climate conditions and invasive species on crops, this lab works diligently on providing farmers with the information they need to navigate the circumstances.

**Fun fact:** The Spotted Lanternfly resembles a butterfly when it's wings are spread, but is a threat to many fruit crops and trees.

***"We need more precise and timely information now more than ever"***

- Jared Buono, Director  
Hudson Valley Research Laboratory



(L to R) Courtney Paige, me (@apaigeofpositivity) & Lauren Grant (@zestfultkitchen) learning about invasive species on a tree log!

**How does the Farm Bill support research?** It funds it. If not for the farm bill, there would be no public funding. There is a huge investment from growers and private money funds. Leveraged together, they work in tandem and so well.

# WE LOVE FARMERS

## AMERICA'S APPLES DRESSSEL FARMS



We toured Dressel Farms & had an inside look at their state-of-the-art temperature controlled apple storage facility. Each room can hold about 1/2 million pounds of APPLES! Last year, they filled 4 of their 10 rooms. The rest of the crop was damaged. Because of the wide variety of apples, it's hard for farmers to predict which varieties will sell best. Markets vary and it's not as simple as just planting a new variety. They take years to be fruitful.

**Challenge!** Next time you're in the grocery store, look at where the food is coming from. Is it local? From America? Other countries? Could you buy produce from a local farmer's stand or market instead? Directly support your local and state farmers!

Even though crops grow seasonally, farmers and ranchers tend and care **to the land 365 days a year**. It's a never ending job. **It's about the only job where you can do everything perfectly, and the weather can still ruin the outcome.** Think about that for a second. The dedication and care farmers give is so impressive! The Farm Bill supports crop insurance. Something farmers don't want to use, but have to when crops are damaged.

Dressel Farms Sparkling Cider. So fresh & flavorful, made with a variety of apple blends.

(L to R) Lauren Grant (@zestfulkitchen), Me (@apaigeofpositivity), Emily Schaapman (@Dairygirlfitness)

We learned how to prune vines for Reisling wine. It's true; only the strongest vines survive!



*"Seeing an early frost (in March) is like finding out you're not getting paid for the year"*  
- Sarah Dressell, Co-Owner Dressel Farms, since 1957



Example of apples that are unable to be sold because an early frost killed the seeds. We'd never see an apple like this in a grocery store. This is why crop insurance is important for farmers! They can capture some of their money back from damaged crops with crop insurance.

## DID YOU KNOW?



There are over 2,500 varieties of apples! There is actually a variety called: Ludacrisp (not to be confused with the rapper - ha!)



farmers account for ~2% of our population, but account for 90% of total agricultural production & value.



about 6% of U.S. farms market foods locally through direct-to-consumer sales



~80% of the Farm Bill is actually dedicated to nutrition & education...so the 20% that does support farmers and ranchers is SO important



nearly 300 million acres of US farmland are dedicated to conservation efforts! Farmers are committed to leaving the land better than they found it