

KEEP FAMILIES FARMING

**WE OPPOSE THE
DEPARTMENT OF
LABOR'S
REVISED AG YOUTH
LABOR RULES!**

If these rules are finalized in their current form, our children will not have the opportunity to learn the important skills and values that life on the farm instills in them.



Ohio Farm Bureau's official comments filed jointly with Ohio Association of Agricultural Educators with the Department of Labor.



December 1, 2011

Wage and Hour Division
U.S. Department of Labor
Room S-3502
200 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20210

RE: RIN 1235-AA06 Child Labor Regulations, Orders and Statements of Interpretation; Child Labor Violations – Civil Money Penalties; Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and Request for Comments

The Ohio Farm Bureau Federation (OFBF) is the largest general farm organization in the state of Ohio with more than 200,000 members located across all of Ohio's 88 counties. Our members produce virtually every kind of agricultural commodity and as a result, OFBF is very interested in the nation's agricultural youth labor policies. We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the above-captioned rulemaking.

The Ohio Association of Agricultural Educators (OAAE) is Ohio's largest organization of agricultural educators. OAAE's mission is to positively impact, promote, and develop professional interests of agricultural educators for the benefit of students.

Because our organizations strongly believe that there are many age appropriate work opportunities in Ohio agriculture, we support protective safety regulations and strive to increase awareness of potential occupational hazards on our farms. However, we believe this rule, as written, will result in an effective total ban on youth employment on farms and that contrary to statements in the preamble, we believe that actual language in the rule will significantly narrow the "family" exemption as it has been understood by the industry for decades. The new rule would change a "family" exemption to a "parental" exemption, which falls out of line with the practical state of modern farm operations.

In Ohio, we are particularly concerned about the impact this proposed rule will have on agricultural education programs like the National FFA Organization and FFA programs and Ohio State University Extension & 4-H programs.

Agricultural educators are very concerned about modifications to current exemptions that allow for training and educating young people who want to gain practical experience on farms and in agri-business. The new rule substantially narrows these exemptions. For example, provisions would not allow youth under 16 to operate any power-driven equipment which is defined as anything other than hand or foot power. This could go as far as to effectively ban the use of flashlights or weed whackers by youth of a certain age.

OFBF and the OAAE are very concerned about the impact this rule would have on the Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) program. SAEs are an integral part of the agricultural education program which includes classroom instruction, FFA, and SAEs. These are the pillars of the overall Agricultural Education Program.

SAEs tie what is learned in the classroom to what the students do at home – it creates a truly vocational education. This program allows students to use situations they encounter outside the classroom to reinforce and further study specific topics. These supervised programs give students the opportunity to make decisions, develop work ethic, manage and balance finance, establish contracts and agreements, develop technical skills, earn and save money, operate machinery, produce healthy food, connect with industry, gain employment, earn educational credits and strive towards specific awards and achievements. SAEs also are directly related with record keeping, safety, leadership and customer relations education. Every aspect of agricultural education classroom programs reinforces SAEs and experience in these projects contributes to classroom learning. They allow students to further their experience and skills in the area they choose.

If this rule is passed, the OAAE and OFBF believe that SAE opportunities will decrease, as it will make it much harder to find appropriate, profitable options for projects as students will not be able to perform all tasks required of the employer. Some employers will simply look elsewhere when hiring. Jobs and practical work experiences are already limited for high school age students and will become more so due to this rule. Students also receive credit for these SAE projects, so a student's ability to complete program requirements is jeopardized. In addition to the decrease in educational value of the SAE program, such limitations on the students experience will impact community support for agricultural education programs. Community members currently cooperate with these programs to provide students with these experience opportunities. This local support is key to the long term viability of these programs. Students who own or operate their own SAE project also often contribute to the local economy as they patronize local businesses through the course of their study. So there would be some limited but important impact to local business.

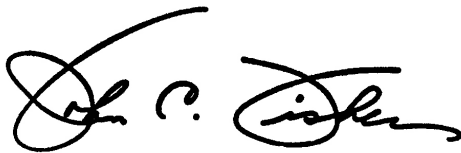
Students respond to achievement and reward as well, and limiting their ability with SAE's reduces their chances of earning State or American FFA Degrees, which are a key mark of success and a reward for these young people. Some agricultural education programs operate

school owned farms that require youths to work with breeding animals, operate machinery and work related experience. These programs will be specifically impacted by changes in this rule. Collectively, the changes proposed in this rule package would severely limit a student's opportunity to gain valuable work experience and hinder their career options. Such impact will make the job of Ohio's agricultural educators much more difficult because it is much harder to provide meaningful experimental learning if such opportunities are severely limited.

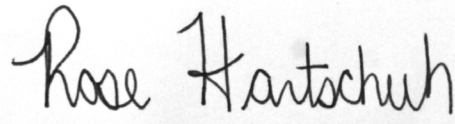
Another segment of the Ohio agricultural community that will suffer from impacts of this rule as proposed is our Amish community. Many members of our Amish community rely on family and youth employment to provide the necessary labor for their farms and agricultural businesses. This proposed rule could have a significant impact on this community's ability to introduce youth to agricultural work experiences and for these youth to develop valuable on-the-job skills.

In summary, this rule seems to miss the mark if its aim is to focus on youth safety in relation to American agriculture. Under the rule, a young person could use his family's lawn mower to make extra cash from the neighbors, but a farmer could not hire that same youth to mow his or her lawn using the farmer's equipment. We continue to support appropriate safety regulations, however this rule, as written, will prove to be more effective as an outright ban on youth employment on farms rather than a safeguard for youth. We encourage the Department of Labor to seriously reconsider this measure or to work closely with the agricultural community to develop more meaningful standards. OFBF and the OAAE appreciate the opportunity to submit comments on the proposed rule.

Sincerely,



John C. Fisher
Executive Vice President
Ohio Farm Bureau Federation



Rose Hartschuh
President
Ohio Association of Agricultural Educators

Cc: Steve Hirsch, President, OFBF
OFBF Board of Trustees
Ohio Congressional Delegation

The following comments have been submitted by Ohio Farm Bureau members from across the state expressing their concern about this new Department of Labor rule.

Our family farm is very important to us. Our kids are the 5th generation on this farm. Our children want to farm once they graduate from school. They are in 8th grade and are a great asset to our family farm. They have learned a lot of things that you can't learn anywhere else but on the farm. They have a very high work ethic. They own their own sheep flock and are very proud of that. If it wasn't for family farms then I believe that the cost of items would be even higher. We are very proud that we help feed the world and that what we grow is safe to eat. We make a lot of hay during the summer to feed our 190 ewes and 30 does. We also sell some occasionally. If it wasn't for teenagers we wouldn't be able to make as much hay as we do and that would mean that we wouldn't be able to have as many animals to sell for food which would eventually trickle to the consumer by not having enough to eat. We have tried to hire adults to do the job of baling hay and they aren't willing to do the work. We pay very well and I think that the teenagers are more willing to listen and learn at this type of job than adults are.
David Trihaft , Trihaft Farms, 2725 Winnemac Pike LaRue , OH dktrihft@hardinnet.com Marion County

Children need to learn to work. Working on the family farm and also on a neighbor's farm helps to teach children responsibility and also they can earn money. While they are working they are off the streets or doing something else they shouldn't be doing. Working together as a family helps to strengthen the family and teaches children respect. Why are all the opportunities for young children being taken away? Farming is not only a way of life which is a very good life but it is a teaching experience also. Children working on farms goes back to early pioneer days. They have always worked. I remember as a child working in large gardens so we would have food during the winter to eat. What is wrong with a child working on a farm? I don't think it should just be the family farm but neighbors need help baling hay, caring for animals and other jobs. Give the children the opportunity to work. The farm life is no greater risk than other jobs children do to make money. LET'S KEEP THE FAMILY FARM

Rita J. Adam 9628 Owens Rd. Convoy OH 45832 rlane400@metalink.net Van Wert County

The list of benefits is unending. Youth learn responsibility, develop work ethic, develop physical strength, learn problem-solving skills, build self-esteem, and grow an appreciation of causes larger than themselves. They learn many practical skills that are no longer available in many schools and find real life applications to the academic subjects they are learning in school. They learn to operate as a team to reach goals together that directly affect their lives and the lives of the broader community and world. Working together as a family also builds strong family bonds and provides rich family communication that is so lacking in many families in our society today. Many employers see farm experience on a resume as an asset, a fact that has helped my husband work in many jobs. We have had neighbors request that their youth could work without pay on our dairy farm for sheer value of the apprenticeship and character development. The opportunity to teach the children to drive slow-moving farm equipment in a safe supervised setting on the farm gives us confidence, as parents, that our children will be responsible safe drivers when they begin to operate faster moving on-road vehicles. As an agricultural employer, I would much prefer to hire a 16 year old who has had experience on a lawn tractor than to train someone who has never been on any type of tractor. A 16 with no experience is a greater liability than a 14-15 youth who has had limited, but gradually increasing experience under the guidance of caring adult. My husband I worked in education positions at both the high school and university level for many years, but returned to operate his small family dairy farm for the primary reason that it is an ideal place for us to teach our children the kind of life skills and characteristics that we desire. The proposed limits to child labor would greatly limit the experiences and skills we have worked to provide.
Greg Steffen Steffen Farms 12892 Western Road Apple Creek OH 44606 steffenfarm@embarqmail.com Wayne County

One of the proudest moments of our family is when our daughters' purchased their first piece of farm ground in 2010. At the time, our daughters were 26 and 28 years old. They both would tell you that they wouldn't be the person they are if it had not been for the strong work ethic my husband and I showed they by example when they were growing up. My oldest daughter remembers when she was able to "drive on the road" for the first time with a tractor. She was 7 years old and was sitting on her dad's lap steering the tractor. Both of the young ladies lived off the farm while in college and their first jobs. However, it was only a few years before they moved back to the place it had all started- the family farm. While growing up they had responsibilities, as most children do. Their tasks were a bit different and didn't seem like work to them...it was spending time with the family. Whether they were raking hay after school or bottle feeding the new calves, there were always something for them to do, and they enjoyed it.

Lakalynn Arnold 951 Back Massillon RD Orrville, OH 44667 Larnold515@gmail.com Wayne County

As an agriculture teacher and FFA advisor the changing of the labor laws in this way would be devastating to my students' abilities to learn skills they need in order to be the food producing leaders of the future.

Joe Hawk Fort Recovery Schools 400 East Butler Street Box 604 Fort Recovery, OH 45846 hawk@fortrecoveryschools.org Mercer County

Family farms are important because they are the first place that my family found "teamwork" helps. They could not get the 4-H animals out of the barn by themselves, so they would discuss a schedule to work for everyone and then would work together. Doing this they learned at an early age that "teamwork" was key to success in their lives. They might not have always gotten along but they knew that they had to work together.

Sheryl Miller 6104 Homegardner Road Castalia, OH 44824 bearmom72@aol.com Erie County

1) The food supply of a nation must come from the grassroots 2) Our children learned responsibility,

cooperation, work ethic, safety, respect, resourcefulness, perseverance, faith, and a whole lot more as they worked beside Dad and Grandpa on the farm. This opportunity is without equal in our society.

Carolyn Baer Elmer Baer Farm Ltd 6669 Coal Bank Road Marshallville, OH 44645 eebaer@aol.com Wayne County

Being raised on a farm during WW11, it was necessary for me as a child of 8 to work on the farm. My uncles were in the service, and without my help my granddad would not have been able to get the needed work done. I in turn grew into a farmer. I never felt and don't to this day think it was wrong for me to "have to work" on the farm. Our whole society seems to think we shouldn't work, and that comes from government making rulings such as they are trying now. We need to make it easier for families to keep their farms, and harder for towns to encroach on farm land. What happens now won't bother me much, for my years are toward the end. On the other hand we all should be looking 50 years down the road. We will need all the farmers we can get to feed our country. Our leaders should look before they leap into these actions that will destroy the family farm. Robert R. Weidner former farmer.

Robert R. Weidner 1863 Golfview Drive Springfield, OH 45502 bobelou@woh.rr.com Clark County

My family dairy farm consists of my Parents, my brother and his family and myself. We milk approximately 50 cows and do not employ non-family labor. My brother has 5 children. Each child is assigned a chore. The youngest, a girl aged 9, fills water tanks in the main barn every night. The next, a boy aged 11, is responsible for getting hay and straw from the hay mow. The next two in line are aged 15 and 18 respectively. They clean box stalls and calf pens. The oldest is 20 now. He relief milks and pitches in when he is home on the weekends from school. Each child progresses to a more difficult task as they get older. All kids are involved in 4-H and the older boys were FFA members. These chores and fair projects allow them to build their college fund from an early age. The farm and the assignment of chores teaches the kids work ethic and responsibility. Even if they choose not to farm in the future they have learned life skills to make them responsible citizens. This is not just a business it is a

lifestyle.

*Krista Richardson 12028 Buckland Holden Rd
Wapakoneta, OH 45895 balmoralfarms@yahoo.com
Auglaize County*

My family operates a horse boarding facility under a LLC. This operation has allowed all three of my children the opportunity to work with horses on a daily basis and in addition learn valuable life skills in dealing with people and business. The proposed rules would limit their ability to work in our operation. It would also require us to terminate eight local high school boys and girls who are in our employ. These kids clean stalls every day, bale hay during season and help with general labor around the farm. I have structured the work so that each scheduled worker for that day has about an hour to an hour and a half of chores. My own children work into this schedule. By keeping the work limited to this time frame we offer a manageable job opportunity for local kids busy with school and activities. The farm benefits from low cost labor that allows us to operate. The proposed changes would prohibit us from using these children. Stud colts are regular guests at our facility. The proposed laws would not let the children handle these animals. I feel it is very unfair that studs are characterized as "more dangerous" or "dangerous" than any other activity. These studs are trained show horses who are or have the potential to be very successful. This is the purpose for the owners to keep them studs. If they were wild child killers they would not be show horses. Farms and parents of the children should be allowed to make the decision of the safety of children on a farm. Not the government who is at best a arms length of any situation. In over 10 years of operation we have never had more than a sore muscle injury from any of our workers. Can children get hurt sure. Should we put them in a box to prevent it... no. We teach them proper ways, lead by example and give them opportunities outside the class room. They learn by doing a honest days work generates a honest pay check. We need government to get back to Washington and stay out of our back yards. We know what we are doing. I wish I could say the same for them.

*Duane Powell, Scenic Hills Farm 205 Taylor Blair Rd
West Jefferson, OH 43162 tpowell4@columbus.rr.com
Madison County*

It is the best form of education a young person can get. Skills can be acquired that apply to so many other fields of endeavor. At least that's what I found when I grew up on a farm. RESPECTFULLY,
*JAMES HUDSON BROOKSIDE 7070 ST. RT. 88
RAVENNA, OH 44266 JHUDSON2@NEO.RR.COM
330 620 2002 Portage County*

Children learn through example. Families instill values in children that cannot be replaced in other venues. Children learn animal care, humane treatment as they care for a newborn calf, lamb or other species. Children appreciate the value of hard work and team work that are necessary for the farm family. Parents and grandparents serve as teachers, mentors and coaches throughout a child's life in preparing them to fulfill their role in future society. Families act to make sure that their children are in a safe environment, and instruct them about inherent risks. As members of 4-H and FFA they also learn about issues relating to Quality Assurance and safety hazards. Because of the nature of farming, youth are often more enlightened about safety issues as they become drivers and operators of equipment at a later age. A driver instructor once said, "he wished more drivers grew up on farms, they have a certain sense about them and respect for vehicles."
*Becky Cropper Harbeck Farms 8796 US 62 Georgetown,
OH 45121 cropperbecky@hotmail.com Brown County*

I think with the right supervision and how to run this equipment young adults ie Jr. High and up can be a big help on the farm. If they are not allowed to do these chores they will not be at all interested in the farming practice. With the size of tractors etc. now days there should be limitations on being on the highways unless accompanied by an adult. I have been in situations that have been scary with some of the drivers today. Government regulations are not going to help the farmers and what they are expected to produce. I have seen some hired hands that would not be up to expectations since they have no monetary involvement in the farming practice as the farmers children will have. This is a touchy situation with the hourly wages that would have to be paid for off the farm workers. Most farmers I know would not put their children in harm's way and the government does not know what needs to be done.

*Marilyn Sheets 1380 U.S. 42 North Delaware, OH 43015
msheets12@frontier.com Delaware County*

Family farms are extremely important to our families, communities and larger society. First, for families it has been a source of income, providing for families as they can preserve their land and heritage. Generations learn from one another and pass down traditions and learn skills of farming, mechanical repair, livestock care, cooking, gardening, housekeeping and preserving as well as quality values for life. This has been a great source of pride in our family to be part of a farm and farm family and know about many of these skills. Our children love their time on the farm to work with their extended family and feel a great sense of inclusion and importance in getting a job done. With farm chores on a daily basis they learn responsibility and the importance of caring for animals and the land. For communities, the family farm is a basis for the structure, providing consumers for the farm-based businesses, highly qualified workers for the work-force, community involvement in local churches, schools and organizations. Often it takes extra family and friends to help get projects done on a farm without going bankrupt and farms are set up in corporate forms to help preserve them and allow family members to co-own their land and business.

*Jane Baldrige Hybrids 877 St Rt 137 Winchester OH
45697 janehesler@hotmail.com Adams County*

Family farms have always been the backbone of agriculture. There is much to benefit from living and working close to the land. Children learn life and death lessons at an early age and develop an appreciation for the pure joy and the angst in life. Learning from your father or grandfather or uncle the lessons of life on the farm are irreplaceable.

*Theresa Miller 202 Township Road 295 Salineville, OH
43945 bmiller14@att.net Jefferson County*

Farming is a way of life, quickly diminishing in the US that teaches life lessons that cannot be learned elsewhere. Growing up on a family farm, I learned that there's nothing a farmer cannot do, learning an attitude of independence and self sufficiency. The farmer must operate and maintain complex machinery, and on a cattle farm as I was raised on, develop animal hus-

bandry skills necessary for safely herding and caring for large animals, who in their own way are complex machines.

|
*Richard Rockwell Acorn Engineering Services, LLC
13951 Township Road 108 Mount Perry OH43760 rockwellrk@gmail.com Perry County*

We don't have children working on our farm as they live elsewhere but strongly support keeping the rules as they are! I think keeping family farms is very important and having a place that young people can learn these life skills is invaluable.

*Paul & Kim Chandler 73401 Broadhead Rd. Kimbolton
OH 43749 pchandler771@msn.com Guernsey County*

Family farms are important because as children learn to do farm chores they learn to work without supervision and develop a work ethic that will help them throughout their lives. My sons learned to drive tractors independently as soon as they could reach the clutch this was very useful in helping them acquire their drivers licenses. One daughter developed a love of animals that led her to go to college in the Vet Tech program. My other daughter loves caring for flowers and maintaining the garden.

*Rick Carlson 15878 Cowley Rd. Grafton, OH 44044
plumbbobkid@aol.com Lorain County*

Our farm is a 300 acre farm that has been passed down from generation to generation. We now have our own children and grandchildren that have in the past, currently and in the future want to continue this family farm. The family has learned how to work together in the good, bad and ugly times of farming. We've been asked if we go to the 'gambling boats' and our response is 'no-farming is gambling enough'. Everyday the family has learned how to get through the dry-spells and the soggy spells but know that in the end everything evens out. We have learned to be frugal, shop wisely for seed and the needed supplies, how to repair equipment. The 4th generation now (13 yrs. old) now owns his own tractors and can hardly wait to get home from school to go to the barn. He's very anxious to take FFA in high school just like his aunt and his grandfather did. We need to keep family farming for the next generations in order to keep people working and living on the farm. There is NO where else we'd rather be, work-

ing beside and with each other!!

Nancy Batdorf 965 S. Childrens Home Rd Troy, OH 45373-9602 batmenj_52frontier.com Miami County

The Department of labor is intervening with my beliefs in how to raise children. No one has intentions of placing a child in jeopardy, however, it is important preparation for decisions to be made by the individual child learning the functional operation of heavy equipment. Denying this takes away parental bonding and presumes sinister intent. Cultivation of the child's mind to engage in the farming experience with animals, crop production, and operation of equipment is reality. It cannot be learned through a Kindle. Students attending higher education without a farming experience do not grasp the same appreciation for life.

Ralph Stonerock Lapama LLC 19221 State Rte. 245 Marysville, OH 43040 ralph@flyinaballoon.com Union County

The life lessons learned on a family farm are invaluable, hard work, persistence, and problems solving just to mention a few. Hands on training in safety, public health, as well as taught on the farm. Very few institutions can match the learning environment of a farm, *Alfred DiVencenzo DiVencenzo Family Tree Farm 16101 Island Rd Grafton, OH 44044 aldivi@ncwcom.com Lorain County*

It is hard enough to get the youth involved and by setting these regulations will force a higher cost for everyone. It stops families from passing on the skills and knowledge that can not be learned in a book or a classroom. A small veggie grower like myself will either be forced to quit or figure out how I can make more money only to feed the government. Many of us learn what we know from our parents and grandparents, this would stop that or turn very hard working people to lie and distrust any official's. Is there any of the people making these rules ever been on a working family farm, or are they just listening to the ones who offer the most cash to their bank accounts. What happens if the farmers got together and said, if you want to play by these rules then don't come to us for your food. I read somewhere and can't remember who said this, so please don't sue me. But the dumber and higher the poverty levels in a nation, the easier it is to control

them: Are we heading there?"

Lonny LeFever self employed 6290 Kiser Lake Rd. Conover, OH 45317-9649 mlefever@woh.rr.com Champaign County

Family farms are very important because of the knowledge that is passed down for generations. There would be NO farms left if the generations had not worked together to learn all the tasks that are involved. The number one thing we have taught our four children is SAFETY with equipment, livestock, etc. We feel that they are learning other core values that most people will never experience.

Anonymous

Just another invasion of the government. Next the government will want to own the farms. Farmers don't want to put their family in jeopardy and what better way to form family bonds than working together. Physical, mental and spiritual health should be instilled at an early age, what better way than working side by side in a family.

Judy Kilbury Jjh farm llc 2150 Marion Bucyrus Rd Marion, OH 43301 Judy@stonehedgefarm.com Marion County

It is important to instill in a person while they are YOUNG the importance of working for what a person needs or wants. To learn how to work, that they are hardships and there are rewards. To learn you can do something even if it is hard at first. That you can succeed. To learn to take care of animals, the land and help another person.

Anonymous

We moved to a 100 acre sheep farm from a large metropolitan area when our children were in grade school. I watched our children grow and learn a sense of responsibility and commitment from helping run a sheep farm. Our youngest developed a life long interest in farm life and work. She was an active FFA member who received State and National Degrees as well as State proficiency award and served as a State Officer (secretary). She was a 4H member, Jr Fair Board member, as well as a delegate for 4H at multiple functions, both at state and national level. Today she

is a professor of Agricultural Communications at a large midwest university and an active Farm Bureau board member for her county. I do not believe that her successes in life would have been as great if it had not been for the work that she did on our and her friends farms growing up. She learned what it means to be accountable for your actions and those of those working around you. Valuable lessons were learned operating equipment, caring for livestock and managing farm resources. Her siblings are as successful in their adult endeavors; which I, again, feel a result of growing up on a working farm. A major part of that experience is operating the equipment needed to successfully complete the tasks a farm requires on a daily basis.

*Gordon Bisdorf 19823 Nunda Rd Howard, OH 43028
ggordonmb@hotmail.com Knox County*

Hard work on the farm builds character and makes for better children.

*Roger Otermat Self Employed farmer 1416 C.R. 116
Fremont, OH 43420 rogerote@msn.com Sandusky
County*

I learned a great deal from working on my uncle's farm, from driving a hay truck at the age of 13 to the importance of self motivation in getting a task done to the satisfaction of seeing the results of your efforts. My kids did not have this opportunity, but I hope my grandkids will, from our current Christmas tree and wine grape operation. I believe some of the proposed rules are over protective to the point where they deny our younger generation to benefit from hands on knowledge and experience.

*Dick McGuinness McGuinness Farms 5371 Ashford Rd
Dublin, OH 43017 McGuinnessFarms@aol.com
Franklin County*

ARE THEY KIDDING????!!! Remind our elected officials how the term "Americana" originated. We have raised 4 children on our family horse farm. Every one of our kids' friends even revel in their cherished opportunities to participate on the farm. A family business or lifestyle is an American right! We choose to educate our family members as participating members of real life chores. There should never be generic rules by the government stating what can and cannot be allowed. How is that even possible anyway, with the vast array of individual situations? Educators globally

condone hands-on learning. So what's this all about? From my first hand experience I can honestly defend including children in daily chores on a farm. I have witnessed character development, increased respect of responsibility, self pride, terrific exercise, and what might be called "liberal arts" learning. Environmentalists try to teach these same lessons in which I have brought my family up. We all have learned to respect the good earth and have a close awareness of how our actions have a chain of reactions. The family farm is purely and simply the closest humankind can get to Mother Nature. Love and respect is the foundation of the family farm. Don't mess with it.

*Heidi Voss vosrun farm 717 Arborrun Cincinnati, OH
45233 vosrunfarm@fuse.net
Hamilton County*

ALL IS SAID - FAMILY FARM !! WHY WOULD THEY EVER WANT TO CAUSE PROBLEMS IN SUCH A TRADITION????

*BILL PASTOR 7510 KNAUF RD Canfield, OH 44406
FORD53BP@GMAIL.COM Mahoning County*

Family farms are important in teaching our youth responsibility! The problem today is that kids are not responsible or held accountable. Living and working on a farm you must provide feed and water for your animals, be responsible for driving equipment in upwards of \$100,000 worth and hard work! Nothing easy comes without hardwork and unfortunately today's kids don't know a thing about that!

*Erin Elliott 19527 Elliott Lane Mt. Victory, OH 43340
quadelliott@wcoil.com Hardin County*

Family farms are the back bone of America. Family farms help keep families together by working with each other in a healthy and safe work place. Only by working together can we provide a safe and affordable a product to the consumer. Our children and now grandchildren have and will benefit from our farm by learning the skills needed to keep the farm working. Farms all across America are stopping operations because of unskilled labor. Everyone is not cut out to be a farmer, and to those of us who are, need to continue farming and learning new skills. If you think farmers are not necessary then try living in a country where are none.

*Paul Wilde Wilde Horses Feed & Supply 4002 Gardner
Barclay Rd. Farmdale, OH 44417
pwilde71@peoplepc.com Trumbull County*

Farm families are the back bone of the USA . As a child I learned the responsibility of hard work and of caring for animals. My grand father , my father , talked and showed me how things work and how to care for the LAND that we are care takers of , and I passed this on to my children.

*Gerald Whipple 124N. Lickert Harder Rd.
Oak Harbor, OH 43449 Jerry@whipplefarming.com
Ottawa County*

Keeps family members together and instills love and awe of God's nature and creatures. Family farming creates very strong work ethic within family. With the societal breakdown of families, I would applaud all families who choose to farm, thus creating strong family values.
*Terry White 6011 Waterloo Rd Atwater, OH 44201
jackhanna@aol.com Portage County*

I was born and raised on a farm and we own 417 acres in Darke County, OH which is in a Family Trust and cannot be sold until our grandchildren reach 65 years old. My Father came to America from Sweden when he was 19 years old. He and my Mother worked very, very hard and owned a farm near Bloomington, Illinois. State Farm Insurance was started in Bloomington by George Meherle who wanted cheaper insurance for farmers because they drove less than their counterparts in the city who drove everyday. George Meherle went through the country during the Great Depression selling shares of State Farm for \$25 a share. When my parents died, since our farm was about 1/2 mile from State Farm's Data Processing Office, they bought our farm for mega bucks and my share bought the 417 acres of farmland in Ohio. From the time my Father bought this farm until our grandchildren will be 65 years old will be 114 years. We don't need any Government Department telling us what we can do on our land. I was driving a Massey Harris tractor when I was 7 years old. Children on the farm learn responsibility and will listen to their parents about the safety precautions. Stop this invasion of America's Farming Business!!!

*Louis and Carolyn Woehl 6887 Sweet Potato Ridge Road
Englewood, OH 45322 calega@earthlink.net
Montgomery County*

My children grew up knowing how to work and take responsibility. Their self-confidence came from knowing they were important to the farm's success.

*Susan Moody 970 E. Goshen Run Rd. Chesterhill, OH
43728 treefarmsusan@gmail.com Morgan County*

Family farms are important for they teach where food comes from and a respect for life. The preservation of the farm animals and care for them is income. Work habits are taught and learned.

*Richard Ross 1800 Pleasant Valley Road Malta, OH
43758 richross@embarqmail.com Morgan County*

I was the only son in a family with five children, and worked on the family dairy farm since I can remember. I learned the reward from working hard and gained a lot of pride in my family's farming tradition. My work ethic helped me succeed in school and as a professional engineer. I learned many valuable hands-on lessons that I would not trade for anything. Farming may not be the most glamorous career, but the family tradition and pride in my work shows through even today. I hope that I may have the opportunity to teach my children how to work for a living and not expect everything to be given to them. I hope children today have the opportunity to work in their families business, whether it be a family farm, restaurant, retail store, or other business. Working together as a family brings everyone closer and also keeps young kids out of trouble. These types of skills cannot be taught in the classroom.

*Doug Steinberger 3615 C.R. 168 Fremont, OH 43420
DougSteinberger@gmail.com Sandusky County*

Family farms are important because working together as a tight knit family is unique in today's culture of fast paced, video gaming and tv watching family . For many farms it takes a lifetime to learn the management of finances, care of animals and be a steward of the land. My children , learn that everthing we do affects the farm, everything from daily chores that the whole family takes part in, to solving problems that come up from day to day. As our children grow they learn to respect the equipment that we use and how to safely use it. We will never put our children in on or near any equipment that would pose a danger to them

*Quillin Dairy Farm 5455 Angelvalley Rd Stonecreek,
OH 43840 siensven@localnet.com Tuscarawas County*

I taught youth and adult farmers for 57 years - 31 1/2 at Crestview High School and then 25 1/2 at Vantage Career Center. I know the great educational value of youth projects with animals and crops on farms. During the Career Center years I taught the Child Labor Laws in my classes. I consider the previous laws very adequate. The new ones are ridiculous and will do great harm to our very best youth educational programs.

*Warren L. Reed Retired Ag Teacher/Farmer 3176 Wolf-
cale Road Convoy, OH 45832
wreed@WCOIL.com Van Wert County*

Family farming is very important to America. Rural America is the back bone of our great country. Rural America is families living most of their lives together, working together, learning together, growing together, learning and teaching each other how to improve the out come. Family farming succeeds when you mix the knowledge of Grandpaw's experience with the new knowledge of Junior fresh out of school. There are families of 3 and 4 generation working and living together. Some have a 5th generation ready to begin learning the process. Much of the department of Labor could learn how to operate much better, leaner, much more efficient, by following the lead and understanding the business of successful Family Farmers. Family Farms create proud Americans who will never surrender, never bow their heads in shame never turn away a person who needs a helping hand to get back on their feet. Family Farms create much more than food. They teach humanity, right from wrong, good from bad. Many lessons of life have been learned while working a 4H project, attending an FFA banquet, fixing the chain drive on a grain elevator... Why on earth would anyone even consider taking any of that away? Whom even promotes even such a discussion should seek a different line of work and perhaps move to a different country. God forbid these are elected officials. Gimme names and they will hear from the folks who likely voted them in office in the first place.

Anonymous

When I was growing up on a farm, and an only child (girl), my father's help quit and I helped my father put crops in at our farm as well as two rented farms. The experiences learned at an early age on the farm, and various 4-H projects, have been most valuable throughout my life. I still own the family farm on which I was raised and also own the small farm on which my Mother was raised, both in Clark County.
*Norma Carol Mercer 1256 Ryan Ct. Springfield, OH
45503 NCarol2@aol.com Clark County*

The family farm is an excellent place to grow up. It teaches good work ethics that many children do not have any more. Most children are playing on computers or other such games. When they grow up they still think they should not have to work. Some of the most polite people and hard workers have grown up on farms. You learn to work together as a team rather and against each other. You also learn how to manage your time to accomplish all necessary work. A farm is no more dangerous than kids playing sports, riding bikes, etc. or even being in a car or flying on a plane. There should be information put out about following safety rules. My dad was always careful about what he allowed us to do. However, I think that regulating this is not the best way to handle it. I loved being on the tractor. It gave me a sense of accomplishment when I was able to cultivate the tobacco. We never had a farm accident with the children in my family. All the accidents were when we were playing. Because I learned the good work ethics, I have been picked for jobs over top of others. I have always been known to be a hard worker. This all started with the work I did growing up on the farm.

*Janice Williams 1805 Raccoon Road Gallipolis, OH
45631 equ2applab@cloh.net Gallia County*

Working together on our farm promotes highly educated individuals who eventually become leaders in our church, community and country. You rarely ever see a youth grown up working on the farm ever in trouble with the law. Working on the family farm teaches responsibility, teamwork and leadership.
*JERRY PAYNE 8098 TOWNSHIP RD 19 MCCOMB,
OH 45858 jlpohio56@live.com Hancock County*
I am a positive product from the farm. I have had the privilege to grow up in a farm family in Ohio. My

brothers and sister grew up doing chores and working on our family farm every day. We learned responsibilities of taking care of livestock and growing crops. We all have had the benefit of participating in the 4-H Club and all the experiences that go along with that outstanding program. We have all grown and have become productive citizens in society, owning our own farms and homes and keeping the farm family alive, in this new era of government handouts. It's too bad that the Dept of Labor has implemented the idea of this rule. I believe that this is another idea that has come from generations that are removed from the farm. Those people don't have a clue where their food and clothing come from. And now unfortunately those folks are 'In Charge of the Country'! I happen to be the fortunate individual that gets the HONOR to work for several thousand boys and girls that participate in the 4-H clubs in Ohio. I am the auctioneer that sells their livestock projects at the end of their year of long, hard work. I also have had the pleasure of selling the Ohio State Fair Champion animals for over 20 years. I have heard every Governor of the State make the statement, 'If more youth participated in the 4-H clubs when they were eligible, our prisons would not be over crowded'! How much more of a positive influence on society is there than that!

*Johnny Regula 8140 Slocum Rd Ostrander, OH
43061 jleereg@aol.com Delaware County*

Both my husband & I were raised on small family farms and we have raised our 2 children on our farm also. We were taught the responsibility of taking care of livestock, how to drive a tractor, how to respect others the way we want to be treated. We learned these things and may more by working on our farm and we gained the knowledge of a job well done is job well rewarded. We learned valuable work ethics and to care and love our animals which in turn taught us to care for and love people. We had to care for them, because they could not care for themselves.

*Debbie & Michael Robbins 9145 N Casstown Sidney Rd.
Piqua, OH 45356 debbiebelgian@aol.com
Miami County*

Too many of our young Americans are resorting to guns, knives, and drugs because they are not able to find useful activities to spend their energies on. The family farm, mine and my son's, allows my three

grandsons to learn responsibility, many skills, care for a living thing, and earns some money for college as they tend 4-H projects. The experiences gained in the projects equip them to cope with life and assist in the farming operation during peak seasonal demands. I have not been able to hire "city" kids that know how to "work". Knowing how to work means arrive on time, show up on days scheduled, be industrious in the use of time, care for tools and equipment, and understand the importance of asking enough questions to completely be equipped to safely do a task. Without my farm kid, grandsons, completing seasonal work in a timely manner would not be possible.

*Jerry Hannewald Self Employed 209 N River Rd
Waterville, OH 43566 jrhannewald@embarqmail.com
Lucas County*

A family farm is more than a business. It is a way of life. For my size operation, the government calls my farm a "lifestyle". I am the third generation on the present farm. One day, I hope that my 3 sons will participate as the fourth generation. Our oldest is in his last year of vet school with a strong interest in cattle. All three have helped on the farm in raising grain and livestock (beef cattle). Hunting, fishing, camping, hiking, cutting wood, walking fences, riding 4 wheelers--any outdoor activity--satisfies their fancy. They have been through (or are still in) the 4-H program. One completed the FFA program while in high school. They have been vigorously involved in school, church and civic programs. They may not be the "average" kid (2 are Eagle Scouts, one had a full ride academic scholarship). I'm glad. They have learned and developed responsible attitudes. I would like to claim that growing up on the farm has played a large role in that development. We have stressed safety and proper care of livestock and equipment. We don't shy away from work but also exercise caution. When I was growing up and likewise with my sons, parental limits have been in place. It was not always perfect. I have yet to see a license or certification for parenting (I am also a school teacher--enough said). I would hate to see the proposed limits in place. There is too much to lose compared to the benefits.

*Michael M. Anderson 770 Morton Road South Salem,
OH 45681 mmanderson2@hotmail.com Ross County*

Family farming is one of the few remaining American traditions. We choose to live and work on the family farm, and raise our children on the family ground to teach them the basics of living in a sensible society. In a reasonable society everyone contributes to the betterment of the community, in this case the family. There is nothing wrong in teaching the age old truth that he who wishes to eat must work. I agree that tasks must be age appropriate, but there is no reason an 8 or 10 year old can't gather eggs or feed chickens. And if their friends from town want to come and help with chores, all the better. That child will learn the benefit and pride of working, and if I slip him a few bucks on the side...that's my business. I certainly can't be paying my kids minimum wage with benefits for helping out on the farm! It is part of their growing up to learn how to help, why to help, and the feeling of a job well done or the feeling of failure when the job doesn't get done well.

*Kevin Laing 10588 Van Wert-Decatur Road
Van Wert, OH 45891 klaing7240@aol.com
Van Wert County*

Family farms are family owned business.
Anonymous

You said the magic word its done by families and with family LOVE !!!! our goverment has NO clue about the word family and thats really said.

*Robert Lee Phillips Jr 284 Hash Lane Bidwell, OH 45614
rlp@jbnets.net Gallia County*

We have learned the value of hard work. We also have learned how to care for animals, My grandsons have learned so much about mechanical repairs that they both have good jobs.

*Carol A Serrine Weaver Farms 6225 N Ridge Rd West
Ashtabula, OH 44004 sir765@roadrunner.com
Ashtabula County*

Hands on learning is the best way to involve youth in farm activities. children not only want to be a part of the family farm, but they are excited to be a part of it. learning is not just text books..... it is being a part of what is around you. learning, morals, and life styles

can not and should not be decided by legislation.
*Robert Parr 432 Oldfield Rd. Crestline, OH 44827
rparr432@gmail.com Crawford County*

Family Farming is as American as The Red, White and Blue of our flag. I lived and worked on the farm with my father since I was old enough to help. And I was in FFA and 4-H. It tought me alot and I believe it teaches kids things like value and love for the land. And to respect alot that alot of people take for granted. Alot of things that kids in cities don't know or ever see. And it teachas them that a good days work means something. My Grandmother use to tell me: Work hard all day, eat a good supper, go to bed tired, and then you will sleep good knowing you did good for God. In plain words, To make it so there is no FFA or 4-H would be the worst thing that could happen to the American Family Farm!! Because with out our kids, Grandkids learning at a early age, What would happen to our country? Why can't pepole who don't live on farms have to stick their noses in where they don't know anything about it? FFA and 4-H are the back bone to this country!! LEAVE IT ALONE!!!!

*Mark A. Harlan 4303 Rush Creek Rd NW Somerset, OH
43783 mark.harlan@att.net Perry County*

Everyone is concerned about the loss of the family farm in today's agriculture and this enactment will cripple the very heart of the family farm. I had the pleasure of working side by side with my farther and my grandfather, worked along side my farther for over 50 years and observed him with my two sons from the time they could walk. Now I watch with the same joy as my grandchildren can not wait till they can help me do chores in the nursery of our hog farm. Peyton (grand daughter) and Casen (grandson) are 5 and 3 respectively and are so disappointed if they are not able to help. Now the advancement of todays machinery is so much safer than my time in the fifties and my kids time growing up in the early eighty's that this is ridiculous. We now have cabs with engineered instruction seats equipped with seatbelts and climate control. Even with today automation of our swine barns there is still the taking care of young livestock and the responsibility of livestock welfare to teach to our children. The benifits are to endless to even begin to list and I am not even sure the people writing these laws could even understand or even willing to try to.

*Duane Stateler Stateler Family Farms 4291 Township
Road 117 McComb, OH 45858
duane@statelerfamilyfarms.com Hancock County*

Family farms provide hands-on opportunity to learn to work under the supervision of a caring adult. This is a learning experience that is unique to any other vocation. It not only teaches a skill, it teaches a work ethic that can be applied in life. A college professor once told me that he was happy when he learned that he had "farm kids" in his class because he knew, "They knew how to work."
*Tom Schumacher TNT Farms, LLC 5914 Rpad R
Pandora, OH 45877 schumacherjt@hotmail.com
Putman County*

I grew up on our family farm and have since purchased a farm on which my children grew up on. Learning how to work has benefitted me and my children and we are a positive to society. Many children who have not grown up on the farm are a detriment to society. Might I also add, I would hazard to guess that the ones who are looking to make the change know nothing about farm life and wouldn't be able to understand what it is like.
*Glenn Smith 794 Township Road 782 Ashland, OH
44805 hcsvts@gmail.com Ashland County*

If our kids can't work with us until they are 18, then they are ready to leave for college and they really have no practical experience. As much as we would like to put our kids in a box to keep them safe sooner or later they have to step out in the real world. It is a proven fact that we learn more the younger we start. Are we going to deprive all because a few may get hurt, when probably more will get hurt later because they have not learned the basics. My kids were cleaning stalls, riding horses, driving tractors and pickups on our acreage by the time they were in 6th- 7th grade. They worked with me in whatever I did, cutting grass, putting up fence, building our barn, cutting firewood whatever. Watch any of them as they work now and you will notice they can handle about any tool you give them. Get real, you can't keep them in a box and expect them to jump out when their 18 and be capable young workers and citizens.
*Dave & Jane Frey 8865 Nabida Dr Colerain Twp, OH
45247 shop5700@zoomtown.com Hamilton County*

Growing up on a farm and learning the work and more importantly the work ethic that is involved is an invaluable experience. Taking away the opportunity for families to raise their children in this environment would be a tragedy. I learned many valuable skills working with Dad and uncles that are rarely taught in today's all about me society. I learned how to work hard, manage time and people, and pass a quality product on to the consumer. I plan to raise my children with these same values. In our operation currently we have a young man that works for us not from a farm family. He wants to work and learn which is rare for today's youth. Kids like this will find things to do most of which are not productive and can allow them to start down wrong paths in their lives. Not allowing youth in general to work on farms would be a terrible decision and would in my opinion add to the problems we see in society.
*Steve Isler A. Isler Farms 1313 Bethlehem Rd Prospect,
OH 43342 islersk@aol.com Marion County*

Having worked on a family farm I've learned many things which would have cost thousands of dollars to hire out. Working with my family I've learned from a relative (who's a certified electrician) the skills needed to wire my own home, install my own plumbing, and perform my own carpentry work. I've gained a good work ethic and am one of the youngest professionals in my field in a management position. Personally I feel that this is another attack on our individual rights and freedoms as Americans and will only lead to hardship and many family farmers producing less food at a time when food shortages are predicted in the next few years this is NOT something that is prudent. America has an obese problem, especially among the youth and instructing our youth that they cannot go perform routine activities and gain physical skills, and a good understanding of work and how to perform work well, this is NOT going to reduce our current obese problems, but only exacerbate them, leading to more obese children and a poorer overall health of the Rural American youth. Having grown up on a farm, and worked on a farm, I've benefitted from the exceptionally healthy food grown on a home farm which wins hands down against ANY store-bought product. The Family Farm is the backbone of America, attacking it, is the same as Attacking America itself.
*Stephen Sowards 313 Flat Road Bainbridge, OH 45612
stephen.sowards@yahoo.com Ross County*

By being raised on a farm I learned the value of good work habits and the responsibility of doing things right . We were taught from a early age the dangers of working around farm equipment and the responsibility of using them in a responsible way . If they want to do something for youths in agriculture it would be better to educate not regulate. It seems our government wants to enact a plan to make businesses fail instead of prosper. This seems to be in all businesses not just agriculture.

Terry Bloom Bloom Farms 1410 Parker Rd Jamestown, OH 45335 postalblues2@hotmail.com Greene County

Family farms aren't just important, they are our life! My husband is a full time grain farmer but he and I were both raised on what are now called "hobby farms". We had responsibilities of animal husbandry and other farm duties at an early age. Had I not had bottle lambs to care for, before and after school, I probably wouldn't have joined FFA in high school, met my future husband through that same great organization (FFA), or raised Dorset sheep. My husband started helping a neighboring farmer when he was just 13. He operated the large equipment, helped care for the cattle, learned about finances etc all the while growing a deeper love for agriculture. Our children were born into the life of caring for animals and taking care of the land. They helped In the hay fields driving small tractors while raking hay, would help move equipment, and of course, served as our assistants while sorting, docking, castrating the sheep and hogs. Every day was a learning experience. They cared for many lambs and hogs in preparation for their county fair, shearing their own lambs(yes, with sharp clippers and hand shears!) working daily with their hogs and cleaning their pens. They chose not to sit on their rears all day playing video games. Instead, they helped out when they could or when were needed and never once got seriously harmed! More importantly, they have grown into self-reliant, hard working, responsible, smart, free-thinking, problem-solving adults who have made their self-reliant, hard working, responsible, smart, free-thinking problem-solving parents proud! Family farms have survived and thrived ONLY because families have worked together since the concept of family farms (basically forever!). There are fewer family farms every year so we don't need the government telling us that we arent allowed to let our own children/family participate in the daily working of the farm. This

country NEEDS the young to LEARN and DO and WORK before there are no people with good common sense anymore. Family farms teach so much...but only if the children can participate fully. Parents know best. Let us choose.

Kim Hoops, Hoops Family Farm 13696 Lonesome Rd. Thornville, OH 43076 dakimhoops@att.net Perry County

I have two boys who are adults now. They still help with the farm and have learned how to work, be safe at there jobs, and work and trust others. We have hired other kids also, put where 16 years and older who learned important skills working with use. These new child labor laws are a direct assault on childrens freedom. The parents or guardian should decide where the child should work not the federal government or the Department of Labor. We should not be amending these laws, we should be trying to get rid of them. Freedom is the best gift you can give anyone, but there is also a price for freedom. You have to learn how to use it, when to use it, and how to respect freedom. If we never let children have freedom how are they going to learn what to do with freedom.

Russell Breyley, BEDEBE Farms Inc. 18819 Hawley Rd. Wellington, OH 44090-9837 russbreyley@gmail.com Lorain County

Look around this great nation of ours. Now where would you look to find the most honest, hard working & well rounded people? Exactly, in the rural country areas. Growing up on a Family Farm gives children more life lessons & a greater foundation to succeed without the mandates that our government continually wants to distribute. I grew up on a family farm & now have raised my four children to become self sufficient, responsible adults contributing to society. Yes, we had chores 7 days a week which we knew were our responsibility & the animals well being was our responsibility, too. This taught us soooo much at a young age. What we seen, what we smelled, how to work, the time management. This shaped us. Yes, we operated power equipment from lawn mowers to tractors & balers, etc. We worked hard & we played hard. We grew up with this way of life which was supervised until we mastered the skills needed to operate the various equipment. Not a sibling of mine nor a child of mine has been hurt by operating farm equipment, but my next door neigh-

bor's child has his leg all screwed up from football, and this will be his for the rest of his life. A Family Farm is a bonding like no other. It takes all ages to work together, which builds family values & a strong future. Sure there are farming accidents & that is what they are.....accidents. Same as every driver that wrecks a vehicle. These are not intentional acts & we mourn our losses. Our country has become so policy & regulation driven, that one day we, as well as our children, will wear uniforms and be told what we can do & when to do it. Wake up Washington! Live & learn the agriculture life before screwing up America's Heartland.

*Lisa Dues 354 Pine Road Fort Recovery, OH 45846
dues-pine@bright.net Mercer County*

A family farm is an important way to teach responsibility, finances, skills, work ethic, & team work. We have moved back to the farm I grew up on and purchased it from my parents in order to raise our children on the farm. Our children have raised numerous 4-H & FFA projects here, helping them to earn money for vehicles, and college educations. Today the family farm is in peril because most people are 3 generations removed from the family farm, and are clueless about where milk, corn, beef, pork, and other products are grown.

*Ellen Heiby 2188 Twp Rd 757 Perrysville, OH 44864
elheiby@gmail.com Ashland County*

First, we have no children; However, we have many nephews and nieces as well as grand nephews who want to work on the farm to learn more about the chemistry of fertilizers, pesticides, operations of farm equipment, and hundreds of other jobs which will benefit them tremendously whether they go directly to the farm as a livelihood or continue their education through several years of college to obtain one or more degrees. This time spent on the farm as youngsters is much more valuable to them than loafing around a street corner or any other leisure activity they will need to pursue. Looking at it from a different perspective, a question would arise from any farm organization that would be seeking help. That question would be, "What kind of farm experience have you had?" Without a positive list of tasks performed on a farm, no farmer is even going to consider anyone as a full time employee. That would apply to farm youths who might want to get part time work for their neighbors. Yes, there have been accidents on farms and certain tasks on

the farm are dangerous, but farm youths have already been exposed to the potential problems in performing these tasks, thereby making them more aware of those dangers. Such experience inspires the farm youth to make better decisions, such as driving vehicles, and hundreds of other tasks. To prove how valuable such training is to our farm youth, ask any farmer looking for a farm hand if he would rather have a farm trained employee over a non-farm trained employee. Preventing our youth from doing those jobs which require making important and sometimes difficult decisions would be a restriction on their most important educational achievement.

*David L Howard, Howard Laboratories, Inc.
3715 Liberty Ellerton Rd Dayton, OH 45417
dhtraveler@yahoo.com Montgomery County*

Family farms are essential to the future of this country and are ability to feed the world. My brother and I are the fifth generation on are family farm and we both would spend any minute we could on the farm since we could walk, and then worked on the farm ever since and wouldn't have it and other way. Getting kids out of the house and working can teach them a lot of life's lessons.

*Jason Breyley, Bedebe farms 18819 Hawley road
Wellington, OH 44090 buckscocoscarlet@yahoo.com
Lorain County*

Many of our ancestors farmed for a living. Some of our farms have been in the family since the 1850's. Without farms and farmers, there wouldn't be food and the many things we enjoy today. In reality, while we still farm some of the same farms, agriculture has changed a lot in the last 100 years, With less actual farm ground due to urban development, farmers have stepped up to the plate to produce more bushels per acre to feed our blooming population here and abroad. In order to do this and stay in business, we as a farm family, have hired reasonably priced labor (often times teen agers) who wish to learn the business of farming and actually experience the work and farm life, something you can't learn from a text book. We also have family members and grand children help for some of the same reasons and because they want to help. It's also important because we all need to save money and cut costs. I think family farms are important because we really care and take pride in what we do. Farming is too expensive to just go

out and start. It takes the past and present generations to pass on what we have. If not in farming, you have no clue how much everything cost and you can't go to Wal-Mart and buy more land. We want to succede and pass the farming operation down to the next generation, just like our ancestors did. It's something we love and the life style. Our children have benefited by learning to work hard, discipline, sacrifice, seeing things grow, working together, and seeing food actually start on the farm to end up on the table and grocery shelves. I think living in the country helped protect our children from some of the city crimes and poor influences which might have caused them to go down the wrong track. At least they weren't bored and lazy! We have a teen ager help us with planting, side dressing, and harvest. He wants to farm some day and this is giving him valuable experience and a good paying job. Plus, it really helps us during the busy times. Most people would not want to do seasonal work and it's hard to train someone who has never lived or worked on a farm. Most simply do not want to work hard, learn new skills, or even care about working. It's hard for people to realize what we are talking about unless you experience or have experienced this yourself. Please don't sit at a desk and write a bunch of laws and ideas when you haven't "practically" tried them out. Thank you.

*Annette Stewart Stewart Farms 1897 Karr Road
Arcanum, OH 45304 ajstew@embarqmail.com
Darke County*

Keep large tracts of open space which act as buffers, help protect against overdevelopment, improve quality of life for neighbors, act as wildlife corridors and sanctuaries as well as protecting watersheds. We have significantly increased the time spent outdoors since we moved to our farm. Our overall quality of life has improved substantially. Our nine year old daughter is able to share farming with her friends at a school in the city, including bringing lambs to school and educating her fellow students about the proven health benefits of naturally raised meats and the environmental benefits of rotational grazing. She also raises and sells her own laying hens which has provided her the opportunity to learn about the value of disciplined record keeping, how to analyze information and make decisions, and how to incorporate customer feedback to improve her business model. She regularly helps with the movement and treatment of our sheep and horses, including the rams. She also works safely with electric fencing

and around the farm pond. She regularly instructs visitors to the farm on our safety practices. She shows a maturity and awareness of her surroundings that her same-age school friends simply don't have. The workload on the farm would not be possible to maintain without her assistance as we both have full time jobs and 1 and 1/2 hours of commuting time each. We would likely sell the farm to a developer and move closer to town if she were unable to participate in daily chores and activities. This would be a loss for our community and ourselves.

Anonymous

Farm reared children learn responsibility by watching first as animals are cared for and tools and equipment are maintained. As they grow older parents and other family can give them tasks and responsibilities with animals and equipment. It is up to the adults to assess their children's readiness to do tractor tasks, care for calves or other tasks with animals. I learned about drills, saws etc in my uncles farm shop. I began tractor driving with an adult on the tractor as I towed empty wagons back to the fields, operated a disc harrow and other simple tasks. When they judged me ready I operated the tractor alone and moved on to more complex (yes more dangerous too) jobs. Family leaders know each child and can best gage when and what they are ready to do. This is not just a matter of years of age. Looking back I thank God for the opportunities I had and wish that I could have given it to my children.

*David Munn 2686 McCoy Rd Wooster, OH 44691
munn1@ssnet.com Wayne County*

The family farm, no matter how small or large, is still how a large percentage of production agriculture is passed on to the next generation. The lessons that I learned as I was growing up helped shape me as a person. These were anything and everything from feeding and caring for livestock to cleaning out fence rows and cutting wood to heat our home, as well as helping to improve a field for cropping. Today there is nothing more that I hold dear than when my kids help out around the farm. They drive the tractor on the grain cart to helping clean up after harvest and mowing waterways in the summertime. They all enjoy doing these things and are beginning to understand the value of keeping things maintained and what all of this does for our operation. All of these things are a priceless experi-

ence for anyone that has the opportunity and it would be ridiculous for these things to be taken away.

*Jason Davis 7971 New Vienna Rd Hillsboro, OH 45133
jpdavis@wildblue.net Highland County*

Our family farm means the world to our family. It has been in our family since 1856. We have 4 generations living on the farm right now starting with my father. My grandson, his great grandson is EXTRMELY interested in the farm continuing to be productive. He truly has a vision and passion for the farm and he is just 13 years old. The farm life is slowly fading from our culture. It is what started our nation. The hard work, long hours and dedication brought our country together. Our nation is becoming a "What can you do for me" nation. People want handouts, welfare, SSI, food stamps. They find every excuse for not being able to work and not supporting their families. They want everyone else to do that. Trust me, I see that everyday at the job I do. Farm families are not that way. They strive to work, turn the soil, grow crops and raise animals. It is not an easy job. It is long hours of work everyday. Everyone in the family has to help to make ends meet....and they want to help. The government should not be putting regulations on our farms that will impact the heart of our nations farms. Are you trying to make farms fail? Before putting regulations on the farms maybe all of Congress should go work and live on a farm for a few weeks and see what truly makes farms work. It takes everyones help to keep things going. Please, take some time and experience farm life. Don't make a decision before you know the true meaning of family farm. Sincerely, Pam Hills *Davison Family Farm 6414 Davison Lane Rd Alexandria, OH 43001 pshills@embarqmail.com Licking County*

Family farms build COMMUNITIES. With farm families owning the land for their business - they own their communities. The children of the family farm have very unique opportunities to learn the responsibilities of the operation at early ages. The youth learn the value of responsibility, and also learn the work ethic since they work beside their parents on the operation. If all business ventures mentored youth in this way, the work ethic in our country would be MUCH better. *Louis Damschroder Oak Harbor FFA 12801 W. Portage River S. Rd. Oak Harbor, OH 43449
ldamschroder@roadrunner.com Ottawa County*

First of all my children have learned to have good work ethics. They work hard to get the jobs done so their 4-H animals are healthy and well taken care. The many hours of time feeding, watering, cleaning out stalls, and walking their animals has taught them that a good job well done pays off in the end. They sell their animals at the fair. Many of my older children's previous employers have hired their younger siblings because they know they are hard workers who do the job right the first time. These employers have told me this personally! My children know that at times you have to do things now, because of time constraints, and weather issues. The hay must be bailed and put away now before the rain comes, or their animals feed will be lost. They wanted to go have fun with their friends, but the job needed to be finished now. My children learn to operate machinery safely under our supervision, so that they can do this type of work by themselves when they are older. My oldest son was hired over many applicants for two landscaping jobs because he knew how to operate and care for a zero turn mower, drive a stick shift truck with a trailer behind,(and back it up without hitting anything) and operate a backhoe/ frontend loader safely and efficiently. My children have learned that life has its ups and downs, and that disappointments happen. They have lost fair animals right before the fair because of an illness that could not be treated. Their garden projects did not grow well because of weather issues, or disease, or they just did not do their job and the plants died. My children learn life issues, like managing their money, taking care of their animals, putting tools away, keeping things in order, learning from their mistakes, and having to make decisions on what they can and can't afford. If you take this away from them, you can't expect them to be hard working well educated adults. These qualities are not hereditary, they are learned. Teachers can't teach kids all of these traits! It takes family and time spent together learning these traits.

James Kreglow, J.C. Homestead Farm 841 C.R. 308 Bellevue, OH 44811 migfarmer308@yahoo.com Sandusky County

My children are young, but they have already learned about calving and watching calves being born. My daughter knows what the names of breeding equipment are and she loves being able to help hand us appropriate items. She has shown hogs since she was 3 and knows the ways to handle moving livestock My 2 year old son loves nothing more than to ride in the tractor while working ground, drilling or ride in the combine at harvest. He too knows the names and uses for equipment. My children love the time spent with us doing chores on the farm (especially if it involves a four wheeler ride!) It is the love of what we do that tell us as parents that our children will want to continue thier "farm life" and teach thier children the same.
Shannon Yochum, Yochum Farms 2880 Fender Road Hillsboro, OH 45133 prospecthorses@hotmail.com Highland County

Family farms care. They care about stewardship of the land, livestock and the environment. Family farms raise most of the food consumed in this country, the work that is done here is important to every person in this country. Family farmers also care about raising quality citizens with the skills to not only farm into the next generation but the skills to become the employees, business builders and professionals of our future. Children raised on the farm have early experiences with real world events that matter. Children learn quickly that if they are irresponsible something, someone or a favored pet will suffer. When they commit to feeding livestock, providing care for any of a host of dependent animals or crops or tending to the family vegetable garden these children have an authentic learning experience that their work matters. Education research shows that "authentic" lessons are the easiest to learn, have more lasting education value and work better for learning, family farms teach core values in an authentic situation like no other experience. Police officers, teachers or truck drivers might take their children to work for the day but farm raised children live the work everyday and because of this they value the experience more highly.

Anonymous

Family farms are the most important 'cooperative' in managing a farm operation. As a child, I enjoyed working on the farm with my parents, brothers &

sisters. I learned at early age the responsibilities that go along with farming. More importantly, I became aware of the gifts God has given all of us--rain, sun, heat, cold, snow--they are important part of the cycle of life. My husband & I were dairy farmers and raised 7 well-rounded children on the farm. It was a vocation that taught our children the joys, sorrows, worries and responsibility of a job. I am no longer farming but live on our farm (my husband is deceased) and it is leased to another farmer. I have contact on a daily basis with other individuals who really have no concept of farming. I am able to share with them 'where their food comes from'. We must realize farmers are the most vital link in the food chain after God. Food doesn't come from the store/grocery, it comes from the farm! Children of farm families learn valuable work ethics, the power of God, sharing responsibilities and more importantly working together for the well-being of all. It is a concern today that children are growing up without leadership values or a work ethic that is beneficial to all. This proposed restraint on farm families is dangerous and destructive.

Barbara Mickley 15548 Chapel Rd Danville, OH 43014 bmickley@ecr.net Knox County

I grew up on a farm learning responsibilities and good work ethics, and I hope my children will have the same oppertunities. Hard work never hurt anyone and you cannot stop all accidents because that is what they are, accidents.

Bruce Walker 5830 Stoker RD Houston, OH 45333 4walkers@centurylink.net Shelby County

Every day I use something I learned as a youth worker on my Dad's small farm in WV. The education I obtained on the farm is just as important as the B.S. & M.A. that I completed in college.

William M Baker 5312 Ford Rd Madison, OH 4057 mwcb@windstream.net Lake County

I believe the family farm is essential thread in the fabric of our country. Our country was founded on hard work and families working together to achieve success. Family farms keep america strong by having the family and children being envolved in the working mechanics of the farm allowing for the strong work ethics and partnerships to build from early on in their lives. There

are many things that need to be taught and learned but without the early hands on working experiences this can't happen, our children don't then have the opportunity to excel and learn the importance and work ethics necessary to survive financially in these economic hard times.

*Barbara Borris, Borris Farm 1220 Stumpville Road
Jefferson, OH 44047-8610 blborris@gmail.com
Ashtabula County*

While we don't have a family farm, I do believe they are important to the welfare of my kids generatin. Kids these days do not fully realize where their food comes from, or the hard work and dedication it takes to raise food- whether it is animal or fruits/vegetables. To be able to know that the food you are enjoying was grown by a local farmer, and not a factory is a feeling that our grandchildren will be missing.

*Holly Everhart 79 Harnagy St Berea, OH 44017
tazrus23@hotmail.com Cuyahoga County*

To develop strong family values while learning how to run a small family business and secure the livelihood of farming in the next generations.

*Steve Powell 2457 Twp Rd 56 Bellefontaine, OH
43311 sp7br3@yahoo.com Logan County*

Had I not grown up on a farm, I would not be the successful individual I am today. Growing up in a family of three girls, our father expected us to do about as much as a boy could. We could outwork almost any boy dad brought to the farm to help. Working this hard helped me develop the work ethic, responsibility and discipline I needed to be who I am. The more our children stay on the farm, the less likely that are to have time to get into things no one would consider good for our kids. I know that rings true for me. It even stopped me from wasting time dating at a young age. I also had the privilege of being involved in 4-H and FFA. The leadership, speaking and organization skills learned through these two organizations is what got me through college. What we learned in high school did not prepare me for college or how difficult college was going to be. Growing up on the farm and in 4-H and FFA is what prepared me to take responsibility for my own education. I worked my way through college, sometimes having 2-3 jobs at one given time.

I also managed to graduate with a bachelors degree in three years. Had I not had the support of the College of Food, Agriculture and Environmental Sciences, my past contacts through agriculture and the opportunities offered to me by both, I wouldn't have been able to #1 pay for school or #2 land an amazing job just a few months after graduating. Agriculture is the number one industry in our state and in the country. Agriculture is the foundation of our country, it is the foundation of our world. One thing that was instilled in me at a very young age is that agriculture is the strength of everything we do. Without the backbone and strength of our country where do we expect to be in 5 years, 10 years, 50 years down the road. By allowing these proposed rules to become law will only defer more children off the farm. This in the end will produce less American's with the passion for farming, which will provide a problem in producing the food we need to survive. Currently 1 farmer is already feeding more than 100 people on average. If these proposed rules go through and we lose our children from the farm, it will become impossible for our country to feed ourselves, let alone the world.

*Anna Hall 200 Miller Ave Apt 39 Ashville, OH
43103 annakateosu89@gmail.com Pickaway County*

I think the government should clean up their own back yards and leave farmers alone. They have made a mess in Congress with the :”lobbyists” in call them treacherous thieves and if Congress is being paid off by lobbyists then we have a right to do what we want on our farms. I think this started because Amish people use their children for labor and some dogooder decided that this was a worthy of legislation. In my opinion they should leave the EPA alone, create jobs and stop all these wars that are reducing the budget of the US. LEAVE THE FARMERS ALONE UNLESS YOU ARE GOING TO HELP THEM!!!!!!! I have an organic farm that I provide vegetables for the food bags in the ministry in this town. Nobody comes to help me pull weeds, plant the crops, or buy the vegetables.....they should mind their own business.

*Rose, Meadow Beauty Organic Farm 27800 Friendly
Ridge Road Tippecanoe, OH 44699 preservewater@
yahoo.com
Harrison County*

This is a fourth generation managing our farm. Being able to pass the land to future generations is very important to our family. Belonging to 4-H and showing cattle and sheep at the fair was my beginning in raising livestock, and also our children's partnership and our daughter's goal of becoming a veterinarian.

Anonymous

I want my children to learn valuable life lessons and skills from caring for farm animals, as I did as a child.

Anonymous, Montgomery County

Farm children learn by example by working side by side with their parents, grandparents, siblings and extended family. They learn not only hard work and dedication but also the one thing that has been lost the most in America...FAMILY VALUES and SUPPORT!!!! They are spending quality time with the people that matter! Time has proven that the more the family deteriorates the more the community suffers! If children are not allowed to work in a family business we will lose the American small business as we will not be capable of hiring the needed labor at today's prices to keep our dreams alive. The government is taking away our options and in doing so forcing American people to seek their needs from other countries. Just go to any place of business and try to purchase something made in America.....it's almost impossible. Now you will be taking away our food and outsourcing it!!!! Statistics show that crime rates among farm families are minute, marriages are higher, military enlistment from this sector are higher compared to other children!! We need to save the way of life that made this country what it is/was.....

*Virgil Buckingham 995 Twp Rd 150 Nova, OH 44859
buckinghambulls@aol.com Ashland County*

It helped them to grow into better and mentally strong people.

Anonymous

What is the point of this children won't be able to buy a car or pay for any of their college their parents will have to pay for everything. And the FFA will never be able to give out degrees or scholarship because kids

have to show that they have worked for that. I hope that you consider and change these rules.

*Brandon Turner, Turn-er Green 28680 State Route 67
Waynesfield, OH 45896 15.600201@wgschools.org
Auglaize County*

There are few jobs that strengthen a family the way a farm can. When the whole family can work together and see the end results of a product grown or produced on that family farm. There are fewer farm children in trouble with the law. Divorce rates have to also be lower for farm families. I would contribute these values the children learn to growing up on a farm and being able to work directly with their family members.

*Doug Hafer, Hafer Farms 10,000 Wildcat Pike Larue,
OH 43332 dohafer@cs.com Marion County*

I had five children that all had chores on the farm including driving tractors, one daughter that had to stand up to push in the clutch at 8 years of age. She was a manager for a department store and opened three new stores for them. Without her farm background and work ethic I'm sure this would not have happened. All the children raised Geese, rabbits, etc for spending money. They fed the animals, hogs, sows, pigs cattle etc. All are successful, the four youngest are in agriculture including one son that farms. The most important benefit of working on the farm is the work ethic then the experience the variety of things you can learn that is missing from city life.

*Richard Slonkosky 4010 St RT 29 E Sidney, OH 45365
lonkosky@bright.net Shelby County*

My husband and I are 3rd generation dairy producers. We both grew up on family farms. We have two sons who we're raising on our farm. I value my upbringing because farm life provides many important lessons. Some of these lessons include building a strong work ethic, valuing animals, taking pride in producing food, being responsible for accomplishing a task, being held accountable, and the satisfaction of doing a job well. Some of the jobs I was responsible for as a child included picking weeds around our farm, "pushing up feed" to the cows using a pitchfork and weighing feed trucks. My job taught me to be responsible, value hard work and that I could generate income from working. My husband and I are always near our children when

we're on our farm. We understand there are risks associated with some farm work and share that message with our boys. We take safety on our farm very seriously. Not only for our children, but for our staff.

*Brenda Hastings, Hastings Dairy LLC 13181 Claridon Troy Road P.O. Box 1003 Burton, OH 44021
hastings97@gmail.com Geauga County*

The family farm instills work ethic and responsibility. The benefits for not only the childrens education but the whole family growing together as a unit is priceless!

*Cindy Petitti, Anthony Petitti Garden Center
5828 Columbus Rd Louisville, OH 44641
cindypetitti@gmail.com Stark County*

I grew up on a dairy farm in the 50's and 60's. I worked on the farm to pay for my college education at OSU. My children also got to grow up on the family farm. They also worked on the farm for college money. 4-H was our biggest summer activity. Working and showing animals, gardening, etc. was how our children learn responsibility and caring for animals and completing projects. 4-H is the back bone of our rural area youth.

Michele Antonini 11105 Laurel Hill Road SE Thornville, OH 43076 antonini@wildblue.net Licking County

Family farms are a huge part of America's history and future. Children that grow up on family farms learn from an early age what the meaning of hard work really is. There is a reason why employers always like to hear that you grew up on a farm. Besides hard work, farm chores teach the children responsibility at and early age along with being accountable! It is not the governments role to change the strong and proven tradition of family farms. Why doesn't the government worry about cutting their spending. Why doesn't the government cut their wages and pensions as they are doing this to the rest of the American citizens while they still enjoy the hefty pay checks and well filled pensions. There have already been numerous legislation passed to help improve workers safety in the workplace around the country. Let the family farms operate themselves.

Anonymous

I grew up on the family farm and my children grew up on the same farm that my great grandfather farmed- although now it's a Family Limited Partnership where I and my children actually own shares of the farm. I've also worked "in town" and so have my children. These are some of the comments I've heard over the years. "How did your children learn to be such hard workers?" (Various teachers) "How can they work like a team, they're only (8, 10, 11)?" (Various soccer moms) "Maybe there really is something to being raised on a farm." (My boss) "You're always calm and cheerful even in an emergency, we need someone unflappable to take over this project" (His boss) "Can my child work on the farm with you? I want him to learn where his food comes from." (neighbors and relatives) Our forebears believed that faith and competence and pulling together and hard work were values that made a good life. They can't be learned in a cocoon. Do we want our children to be as fragile as butterflies? Or fully developed adults? Don't prevent us from giving our next generation the same advantages we had of testing our limits, discovering the bone-deep pride of a hard job well done, and growing up strong.

*Loretta Pierfelice, Watson II FLP 8489 Wesleyan Church Rd Pataskala, OH 43062 pierfelice.1@osu.edu
Licking County*

My grandparents stopped milking full time and planting row crops in the late 50's; however they maintained some of the original property and ran some grade Angus cattle and kept around 100 laying hens; and produced some haylage, ryelage, and hay to feed the cattle. My grandfather took a full time job operating a dozer for a surface coal mining company that tested his mettle keeping the farm going. As a pre-teen and teenager I spent most of my summers in eastern Ohio helping spread manure, making hay, and canning fruits and vegetables. He told me once, later in his life, how appreciative he was that I gave up most of my summers a couple of counties away from home and friends, and how invaluable my efforts had been. My grandparents passed in the mid-90's and I miss them more each day. I have come to realize their character and Christian influences shaped my own, and the time I spent with them have become cherished memories.

*Randall Hutchison, Coshocton Grain Co. PO Box 606
Coshocton, OH 43812 hutch@coshoctongrain.com
Coshocton County*

Family farms are important to my husband and I because we live on a farm. We have raised our two children on our farm, they have been an active part of our farm all though their lives. Our daughter Heather and son Nick, were helping me plant my garden and planing trees as soon as they could walk. They also helped with feeding lambs and calves. This sparked their intest in joining 4-H, and FFA that expanded there learning jobs on the farm. They worked beside us in job task that were age appropriate and I was safety coordinator and helped organize farm safety workshops for the county that many farm children attended. Our children learned to be responsible adults, our daughter graduated from OSU with a Ag Degree in Communications, and is educating people about agriculture our son will be graduating next year with a degree in Agribusiness from OSU. Our son Nick would like to be able to return to our farm and help us build our farm business. The only way for children to learn how to take over the farm is to work beside their parents or another adult that will take the time to show them how it is done. We need to spark an interest in young people at an early age or else we will lose them to all the other opportunities out in this world. With the World population continuing to grow we need to make sure we give our children the best opportunity to carry on the Family Farm so that they can help in making sure our planet can feed our people. We need to make sure that young people can continue to work on the farm to learn what it takes to be in agriculture. Thank you.

*Brenda Kocher, MKB Farms LTD. 9972 Hurr Rd.
Galion, OH 44833 brendasue@ngamail.net
Marion County*

I married into a farm family. This gave me an opportunity to grow in areas I never knew before. It also allowed me to start several programs for our communities' youth and have had nothing but gratitude from the families. Leadership, self reliance, dedication, pride in a job well done, the list goes on and on in regards to the experiences and life lessons provided. With a young son and nieces and nephews who want to be part of this tradition, these proposed changes would bring nothing but stress and disruption to families and small agri-businesses.

*Jon Hart, Jake's Produce 4396 CR 53 Mccomb, OH 45858
justoffc@yahoo.com Hancock County*

I started "working" on the farm when I was six years old. I pushed hay into the manger and helped feed the baby calves. I also mowed hay with a tractor mower. It taught me responsibility at an early age. I learned that chores come first regardless of anything else. I learned how to prioritize and manage my time to be able to do the other things I desired to do. Later on as a teenager I learned about selecting the right seeds and fertilizer combinations to optimize crop yields. Today I look back and am grateful I had the opportunity to learn chemistry, physics, mathematics, welding (gas & arc), carpentry skills building pole barns, erecting silos, and many more skills that are essential in life. I never need remedial training to move to a different occupation because I was exposed to many different skill sets as I was working on the farm. Most importantly I learned that nothing is impossible to do if you put your mind in it. As my youngest son always says, "A mind is a terrible thing to waste".

*Robert Risdon 435 Thomas Alva Drive Vermilion, OH
44089 rrcowdriver@yahoo.com Lorain County*

I grew up on a farm, still farm. I worked hard on that farm, that just the way it was, you didn't ask questions, you just worked. Today, besides farming I teach at a local community college. The college draws students from both urban/suburban areas and rural areas. I teach photography - but without looking at their photos, I can tell you who comes from a farm and who doesn't. The farm kids just work harder and aren't afraid to try new things, or I should say, walk into the darkroom and puzzle a few things out before they ask me for help. It's a confidence builder - working on a farm - and that shows in a classroom. They tend to be more independent and can work that way, helping when appropriate. I see the benefits in my own life and people who know me, know that I work hard and can do lots of things because I learned these skills on a farm. I can build basic, simple furniture using saws (band and table included), drills, drill press, you name it, I'm not afraid to use it. Basic car maintenance, oil, windshield washer fluid, and air in tires. I can grow my own food. Tend to basic livestock needs (chicken, cattle, horse, rabbit) beyond water and feed. I'm not afraid around large animals, my truck or power tools. These were skills that were developed ON A FARM! Little by little adding new challenges each time my parents

saw fit or that I was ready. I look at the urban/suburban students and see lack of confidence, fear, laziness and sometimes basic contempt. They have little structure in their lives and have an entitled attitude. I have recently returned to college to get my Masters degree. This past semester I totally (at 42) blew the minds of my professors. I totally switched my thesis project to something I have NEVER done before and did it fairly well. The comments on my grade or made to me in person - wow you worked so hard, not many people do that. That's just what farm people do, that's what their children learn, you just work hard - that's just the way it is. We need hard working people in this country. People willing to do the really hard work. Agriculture and the people involved - over the decades have become some kind of second hand, back water, red neck persona to the greater American society. They forget that the Founding Father and Mothers were Farmers in many respects. Farmers have quietly kept doing what needed to be done in this country without making too much of a ruckus over it. NOW everyone looks at agriculture in two ways. 1) far too utopian and dreamy or 2) ugly and brutal and only industrial. Farm kids need to keep working and farming, that's how we'll pass on the family farm and build a strong country. This isn't a Republican/Democrate issue, this is and American Farm Family issue and the issue of a strong FAMILY operated farm.

Becky Dickerson, Fine Grain Productions 4810 Huff Rd Berlin Hts, OH 44814 rcdickerson40@gmail.com Erie County

Family farms are the backbone of this great country of ours. My parents operated a farm and I worked on the farm growing up. We were able to hold on to the family farm until both my parents passed away and my husband and I were able to purchase the farm after their death. Now we have the pleasure and the honor to continue farming this same piece of land along with my siblings, grandchildren and nieces and nephews. Why our legislators would want to interfere with this practice is beyond my understanding. The government needs to concentrate on unemployment, our economy, education, and homeland security, NOT interfering with family farm practices.

Mary Wells 13330 Sara Avenue NW Hartville, OH 44632 mlwells@neo.rr.com Stark County

I believe it,s good for family to farm toghter . The kids all learn on the job and also learn the saftey working with their father and family . I was raise up on a farm and i knew how to run all the farm equment by the time i was 12 . It a good thing to have hand on and know what all it,s takes to farm.

John H Kennedy 3475 S Canal St Newton Falls, OH 44444 rebootbase@yahoo.com Trumbull County

Part of growing up was being able to work on our farm as a child. Not only did it help sustain our farm and allow us to keep our land and our livestock, it also was important in helping me to develop into the person I am now. I developed a sense of responsibility, a strong work ethic, and the understanding that I was responsible for my outcomes. Although farm work can be hard, I never felt that it was something I was unable to handle or that I was not responsible for those jobs around the farm. I would be devastated to find that my children would be restricted from the same work and lessons that I experianced.

Karen Jackson 3640 Utica Road Lebanon, OH 45036 kjackson@cciohio.com Warren County

We live on a small farm in which our children helped with chores and on the farm operations of working ground etc. I myself grew up on a livestock and grain farm, we were out there just as our parents helping with what needed to be done. Our parents were not going to put us in harms way. Farming is a hard life for some. But it is worth it in the end. The work ethic that is learned on the farm you can not get living in town. I also was in the 4-H program. Taking projects through this organization was great. I learned may life skills, how to take responsibility, and to be a leader. Each county does make a difference with the youth that are involved in the 4-H program.

Ann Foxworthy 3926 Haley Rd Sabina, OH 45169 afoxworthy@in-touch.net Clinton County

We moved to the country to give our young men an opportunity to grow up learning the work ethic and responsibility necessary to farm life. It teaches them that they are a necessary part of family and farm and gives them confidence in themselves and respect for the land. It also teaches them diligence and perseverance. Horse stalls aren't fun or easy to clean out, but must

be done for the health of the animal. These lessons are invaluable.

*Todd Cumberledge 538 Wildlife Rd Seaman, OH 45679
tcumberledge1@gmail.com Adams County*

First because it is someone's livelihood. Second, there is a rich tradition in America of the family farm's role in agriculture. Third, to quote Mr. O'Hara from *Gone With the Wind*, "Land is the only thing that matters. The only thing worth fighting for, dying for." My life and my husband's life has been enriched in ways to numerous to count by being involved with life on family farms and in continuing this tradition on our own small farm.

Susan L. Walker, TRSW Morgans 3881 Mogadore Road Kent, OH 44240 swalker@trswmorgans.com Portage County

I have seen first hand the benefits of raising a family on a farm. Our family has been farming in our township since 1854. We now have the 4th, 5th and 6th generations working everyday to provide abundant quality food for all. It is a way of life for us, each generation has learned the rewards of hard work on the heels of the generations before them. Sure there are dangers, it is the responsibility of the parents and grandparents and employers to teach children to be safe in every way of life including farming. I look at the many young people both family and others who have worked on our farm and it is amazing to see that the work ethic learned on the farm has carried through to school, sports, raising their own families and to non farm careers to. In our society it now seems we discourage being responsible and encourage people to think they will be rewarded or taken care of no matter what. We need a common sense approach to being safe that will allow the family farm industry to thrive for generations to come. More emphasis on education and safety training is better than just making it impossible for youth to have a chance to live and learn on a farm.

Linda Rufener Congress Lake Farms LLC 372 Congress Lake Road Suffield, OH 44260 linkenruf@msn.com Portage County

I am a fourth generation vegetable farmer. My sons, who work with me, are co-owners of the farm along with 2 of my brothers and 7 of my cousins. We are

incorporated as we have so many family members as owners. The farm was started in 1896 and every child of every owner has always worked at the farm. We allow our children to start working at age 12. They are able to buy their own cars, pay for a lot of their college costs, and develop a sense of responsibility by working and paying for things they want. We now will have 6th generation family members ready this year to continue the tradition of working at the farm. The legislation being proposed will prevent this from happening. Instead of instilling in them a great work ethic they will be forced to stay at home and watch TV while their parents work all day. If they were at work they would be learning from their parents, grandparents, uncles, and cousins, what it is like to work for what you want instead of sitting at home and relying on someone else.

Bruce Buurma, Buurma Farms Inc 3909 Kok Road Willard, OH 44890 bruce@buurmafarms.com Huron County

Family farms are the backbone of American agriculture. I grew up on a dairy farm, and am the person I am today because of it. As a child/teenager/young adult, I helped with the day to day tasks on our farm, from taking care of animals to assisting with field work. I am now married to a farmer with children of our own, and I want my children to learn from the farm as I did. Agriculture is becoming more and more commercialized, but the small family farms are still an integral piece, and consumers now are choosing locally grown farm produce/meats/cheeses, which is exactly what the small family farm produces. These laws would destroy our opportunity to farm in this manner, and be a major blow to agriculture. This is our way of life, it is good for our family, and good for the consumers who want to purchase the products we produce.

*Lori Houck 6830 Tucker Road Centerburg, OH 43011
houck1998@centurylink.net Knox County*

Family farms are a way of life for many Americans (although a smaller and smaller number over time). I grew up on a family farm, owned by my parents and my aunt and uncle. My cousins and I all worked on the farm at one point or another, and learned a lot about the value of hard work and felt a deeper connection to past generations who also worked as farmers. Many of the stories I remember from my grandparents were about their experiences as children on the farm.

We often laughed about the similarities and differences between their experiences and ours. I learned that the work is over when it's done, not when the clock strikes 5pm. I learned that when you take on responsibilities such as livestock, or field crops you had to follow through because they (and your parents) were counting on you. My parents, aunt, uncles, and grandparents were also sticklers for safety. We were given age appropriate jobs and we were taught about the possible dangers which surrounded our home year-round in the farm equipment. I spent precious time with my father in a combine or a grain truck, talking about things as simple as the weather or what I was doing in school, or as important as my hopes and dreams for the future. Most of the important conversation I've had with my dad were in a livestock barn or a grain field. My parents still farm full-time, and shortly after marrying my husband and I bought a farm business of our own. My ten year old daughter works approximately 4 hours per week in our commercial greenhouse operation. She may fill pots, plant seeds, or transplant growing plants. She earns money which she uses to buy supplies for her 4-H horse project, books, or small toys. She learns not only about the value of working for a dollar, but also how to budget that money, and the fact that you can only spend it once. Could she learn those same things sweeping the floor or doing dishes at home? Yes. But she wouldn't learn about seeds and how they grow, why water is important, what fertilizer does for a plant, pollination and propagation. She loves the time spent doing her "job." How do I know? Because she begs to go out and "work" in the greenhouse even when her assigned chores are done. She and her cousin have set up experiments (on their own) to test how using fertilizer affects the growth of their flowers or if the type of soil their in affects how many flowers they get. They are learning about sciences, experimental design, and botany all in the most exciting and imaginative way possible. When my daughter had to write an essay earlier this year about what she's like to do when she grew up, she drew a picture of herself next to a corn plant and a horse and wrote, "When I grow up I want to do something with farming..."

Gwen Soule, Sandusky County

Family farms are so important for children. I grew up on a dairy farm and I work full time there now and raise my young daughter on the farm. I learned how to work hard, how to care for animals, and I hope my

daughter will learn these things too. The farm is a dangerous place and we recognize that by using many safety precautions especially now that our daughter is outside a lot with us. If I wasn't able to grow up working on the farm it could be even more dangerous now. I learned early many of the dangers and continued to learn them as I grew up. We hope and pray our state legislature will see the benefits of allowing our children to grow and work on our farm which is also a LLC.

Christy Hulse Lahmers Farm 971 C R 1600

Ashland, OH 44805 christylahm83@hotmail.com

Ashland County

Family farms are a way of life for many! Our family farm was a second income and we considered the land as an investment in the future as farm land usually appreciates. On the family farm our children learned a strong work ethic. They learned to operate many vehicles, equipment, etc. They could "try things", like using a chain saw to cut down brush, mowing fields, making hay, etc.

Betty Penner 19260 Buckskin Rd Defiance, OH 43512

tbpenner@bright.net Defiance County

The lifestyle breeds strong work ethic and moral values. Life on a farm can be integral in the development of the future generations of agricultural leaders. I grew up helping my grand father on his dairy operation and learned about how it is to get up at 4 am to milk, bragged to my friends about how I (middle school kid) was allowed to get up at 4 am to help milk 200 head of cows and then go eat breakfast after the cows were milked and fed, nothing cooler than that, those were the good ol days for me. Now I have a cow calf operation hay and straw business, snow removal business, and chemical and auto product sales business, im 23 years old happily married own my own house and ground and have no intention of slowing down for years to come. Id like to think im a product of my grandfathers work ethic and morals, and I hope my children when they come can follow in my footsteps as I followed in my grandfathers.

Dustin Converse 27900 Kinney Pike Richwood, OH

43344 ddconverse88@gmail.com Union County

Family farms are strongly focused on the lifestyle of family-based teamwork, working for your food, hands-on learning and high activity level which are all benefi-

cial for America's children. Personally, I benefited from growing up on a farm around livestock by learning to care for the animals and be responsible for task accomplishment and planning. I also helped bring up my younger siblings in this environment and pass on my knowledge to them through out-of-classroom learning. I am closer to my family through the cooperation which was critical on the farm and am a better communicator and problem solver. This also helped me be a better animal caretaker in adulthood and a better leader in my community by being able to take responsibility for decisions and planning and to help teach those who are less experienced than me.

Benjamin Wenner 8831 Olencrest Dr. Lewis Center, OH 43035 benjamin.wenner@gmail.com Delaware County

Family farms are important because they are more than a way to make a living - they are a lifestyle. Through farming our children have learned how to drive a car, truck, and tractor; how to bale hay and pull a calf or lamb. They've learned to work hard, to work as part of a team (as well as independently), compassion for all living things, where our food comes from, and the satisfaction of a job well done.

Jody Forman, Granny Creek Farms 11500 Campbell Road Mt. Vernon, 43050 jodyforman@gmail.com Knox County

Farming is not a job. Farming is a way of life. The need to nurture an appreciation of the whole scope of task and how all are a critical part of the end goal is best taught over many stages of growth. The desire to farm needs to be appreciated at a young age to best suite the changing environment of agriculture today. My family has benefitted from life on the farm by learning to love all things around us has allowed us to learn we need to be good Stewarts of all things to work with nature to give us the opportunity to prosper.

Dan Corcoran 6929 US 23 Piketon, OH 45661 osurules@frontier.com Pike County

Farming has allowed our family to live close to the land and provide for our community. It has taught my children the following skills: The ability to works as a team-family A sense of community Involvement in local government planning budgeting time management humane animal care safe driving safe equipment

operation construction skills growing and raising our own food land stewardship.

Steve Dillon 1853 US WHY 50 HILLSBORO, OH 45133 sdillon1532@gmail.com Highland County

We have a small family farm, however in todays world you have to make money from the farm and work jobs just to make ends meet. Children of farm families do not get to play the video games for hours like their friends, they get to go outside and do good hard work that teaches them responsibilities and respect as well as makes them stronger and better at sports, unlike a large majority of the youth. Passing this type of legislation no matter how you paint it, is taking away our freedoms. The government is coming up with these laws that they think will make things better, most of them have probably never worked a farm, and cannot appreciate the value of farm life. Please do not vote our rights away.

Linda Medley, Medley Meadows Farm 3423 Sherr Avenue SE Canton, OH 44707 medleyli@yahoo.com Stark County

I grew up on a farm in which I was an active participant. I believe it was the best place for me to grow up. I learned about hard work and reaping the end result of that labor. I spent time with my dad being constructive that I would not have had in a different environment. Though I am not living on a farm today, I desire for my children, when they are old enough, to be able to "work on the farm" with their grandpa and uncle with the possibility of one of them continuing on the family farm.

Melissa Gregory 1804 Marion-Melmore Rd. Nevada, OH 44849 jgreg1044@gmail.com Crawford County

They learn the value of working for things that you want. Also how to nurture and care for animals. They enjoy 4-H and FFA. They are taught life skills. The American Farmer feeds the world.

Teresa Kimball 199 Antioch Road Eaton, OH 45320 kimbaltr@muohio.edu Preble County

There isn't much better than working together as a family. Everyone has importance and contributes to the family. My children learned to work all throughout

childhood, and it has served them well as adults.

Anonymous

The family farm is the backbone of American agriculture and the children growing up learning as they grow is fundamental to the culture.

Rich Tennison Tennison Farm 3114 Gordon-Landis Rd Arcanum, OH 45304 richtennison@yahoo.com

Darke County

Although I do not have children yet, I grew up working on a family farm. The skills that I learned at a young age helped me to be successful academically, athletically, and in life in general. I learned a great work ethic and the value of money. Now, as a teacher, I see major differences in students that have grown up working on farms versus those that have not. Students that work on farms typically have a better work ethic and fewer discipline problems. I believe this is because of their on-farm experiences.

Sarah Heilers 11405 State Route 119 W Anna, OH 45302 luthman.10@osu.edu Shelby County

Farm raised children learn many valuable life lessons. How else are they going to learn farming unless they participate in the actual work? You can't learn to be a good farmer from a book. It takes hands-on experience.

Shirley Boyd 3581 Tillbury Avenue Columbus, OH 43220 hirboy@aol.com Franklin County

Family farms are important to me because it is our way of living for one and and it is a good way of living. There may be alot of struggles in farming but I feel good at the end of the day knowing that I fed a hungry person or saved an animals' life like helping with a cow having trouble bithing. The benefits of farming and having kids helping on the farm are that farming teaches responsibilty and the facts of life. it also keeps kids out of trouble. I feel kids get in trouble when they have nothing to do. Kids need to have responsibilities and learn work ethics. It also teaches dicipline. We have to dicipline ourselves to go out and do those chores. Of course the you have to know what your kid could handle as to chores. There are alot of things a small child can handle with supervision like helping

feed a calf and as the child gets older and more responsible they could do more responsible jobs. My son has learned alot from working on the farm. He is married now and some day when he has kids he would like to teach his kids the same ethics.

MaryAnn Mihaly, Mihaly Dairy

4400 Cooper Rd Lowellville, OH 44436

mare41m@aol.com Mahoning County

We have raised three children on our family farm. My husband and I each also grew up on farms. Each of our children had much hands-on experience with raising animals including their own for the county fair. They each helped with hay baling and learned to run tractors and equipment from early ages. We are so proud that each of our now grown children (their late 20s) have exceptional work ethics and great respect for the farm and a healthy respect for all types of machinery. It created much pride in my husband and I to hear from early employers of all three of our kids, how great of workers they were compared to other late teen workers. I FIRMLY BELIEVE this is 99% due to the fact that our children grew up knowing how to help out and work on the farm. They did not grow up lazy and expecting everything handed to them as the majority of young people are today who do not grow up on a farm. Take this away and you take away what few respectful youths we have today. Farming is a hard way of life, but I would want no other way for my children or grandchildren to grow up. Just like my husband and I, all three of our children are very glad they grew up on a farm and had responsibilities that come with it. By the way, both sets of my husband and I parents also grew up on a farm and worked on it. Of all the family members are both sides of our family, not a one of them had any serious injury from the farm and all were well respected, hardworking people. Everyone of our family members are good, hard-working citizens who have never had to turn to drugs or alcohol due to boredom as many youths do who have nothing productive to do with their time. DO NOT TAKE AWAY THIS PRIVILEGE THAT just a few of our youth today still have.
Kathy Hiller, Hiller's Country Market 1280 Township Road 1656 Ashland, OH 44805 dkhiller@msn.com Ashland County

I grew up on a farm that has been passed down through several generations. I hope to be able to continue to keep the farm in the family, but taxes and other government regulations continue to make the process of farming and passing down the family farm more difficult all the time. Growing up on a farm teaches young people so many lessons that seem to be lacking in many of today's kids: respect for people, animals, and the earth; it takes hard work to make things happen; recycling (you can't always afford to just throw things out ... you learn how to repair them and keep using them); and so many more lessons.

*Rita Boyd 5371 Twp Rd 360 Millersburg, OH 44654
hisboyd@embarqmail.com Holmes County*

Family life on the farm provides for a close knit family where children have optimal time with the parents not only working together but having fun together also. We are able to be more involved with our children's lives. Our boys have been given the responsibility of caring for livestock, Cattle and Lambs not only for 4-H but we have also given them the opportunity to make money through our feeder to finish cattle operation. The boys are also expected to help during harvest and planting. This has taught our boys to not only be responsible but self-reliant. Our boys can just about fix anything mechanical, and have thrived in school also. Funny enough our oldest son has never had an interest in video games or TV. He loves to work on his truck, tractors or just building things with his hands. Now at the age of 19 he attends college, feeds bottle calves to sell as feeders, he averages 35 per group, and is farming 400 acres on his own and then helps his Dad with his 1500 acre farming operation. Since he was a small child all he wanted to do is farm and we are so blessed that his dreams are coming true. I feel as parents we will never worry that he will not be able to care for himself or someday a family of his own. Our 15 year old son also helps on the farm and with the cattle, but has a huge interest in football, basketball and does well in school. There is a noticeable difference in the determination, hard work and grit he puts in to interests than a lot of kids his age.

Candice Eiler, Eiler Farms LLC 4724 Monroe Central Rd Eaton, OH 45320 Ceiler174@gmail.com Preble County

I grew up on a dairy farm of nearly 300 acres. Being one of five children, each of us were taught responsibilities, skills, love of nature, hard work but never beyond reason, and the rewards of life were tremendous. Dad and Mom were a great influence on my life, and they helped me continue my education by assisting me to go to college. I felt I contributed to the farm work in many ways, baling hay, doing milking chores, mowing grass, etc., and am proud of it. I was in 4-H for 8 years for both animals and cooking and sewing which again taught responsibilities, skills, leadership, and was good socially as well. None of the five of us were ever seriously injured, mainly because each of us were taught safety rules and were closely supervised until our parents had confidence we could do the task competently and responsibly. All five of us have led very productive lives. Only one brother chose to continue farming, and he does it more as a hobby, since he has a postal career, but we all have fond memories of life growing up on the farm.

Diana E. Ross 1800 Pleasant Valley Rd. Malta, OH 43758 deross71@embarqmail.com Morgan County

We raised 3 sons on our family farm. All of them had responsibilities-CHORES-which enabled them to learn to work as a team, respect each other, and to develop a work ethic. I worked a full time job off the farm, so it required their help year round. I am now retired and two of our sons continue to live on the farm. Furthermore, our grandchildren are learning those same life skills -on the family farm! 4H was an important part of life on the farm. The experience of raising and showing beef cattle taught discipline, budgeting, time management, and friendly competition. All 3 sons have college degrees and are in productive careers. I firmly believe that the responsibilities learned on the farm have contributed to the success of our children. Responsible parents teach safety. We do not need any more government regulations! We urge the Ohio Farm Bureau to strongly oppose this unnecessary intrusion into the lives of farm families. We need less Government -Not More.

*ARNOLD V. MCCOY, MCCOY FARMS
11627 MAIN STREET SOUTH WEBSTER, OH 45682
arnoldmccoy@frontier.com Scioto County*

I was raised on a farm. I don't have a farm any more but still help on farm next door. Farm work gives children self esteem and to be able to think for themselves. They learn to do many different jobs and encounter many situations so they learn how to do a job safely. They learn to operate equipment and care for it.
John Roseburg 32947 McKaig Rd. Hanoverton, OH 44423 anna.roseburg0@gmail.com Columbiana County

My Children and I have been working on my Dad's farm for years. If it was not for the help of my Dad would not have been able to survive. My children's friends have also taken an interest in farming and they also like to come out to help. With them helping they have now applied for programs at OSU. What are all these rules going to do to 4-H programs and FFA. I am getting really tired of government butting into everything from what I eat to what I can do on my own property.
Melissa Rettger, Rettger Dairy Farm 115 Lee Rd. Painesville, OH 44077 rettger@sbcglobal.net Lake County

Family farms have been the backbone of farming since this country was founded. Children doing "chores" on the farm is an excellent way to teach skills, responsibility, and how things work. That is if these children are your own kin. Parents and relatives will be sure to teach the children the proper way to do the work as they would themselves. Some small farm operations would not survive without the help of the entire family. Everyone that I ever knew that worked on a farm as a child, grew to be adults with a sense of responsibility, and knew how to get things done.
James Olsavsky 5555 McCann Rd. Salem, OH 44460 olsavsky@tusco.net Columbiana County

I believe family farms are important because without them the future of this country's growth & self-sustainability will end. This country was founded by families working together to plant, grow and build better lives for themselves & their neighbors. Our own children have learned that the effort they put into taking care of animals and working around the farm has not only instilled a sense of pride and accomplishment but they have gained knowledge that they've been able to pass

on to other kids; including those "city" kids who have never seen the birth of a calf or goat, or who have never brushed a horse. We are not full-time farmers, our livelihood does not depend on how merciful the seasons are to us, how full our crops are, the market value of those crops or of our livestock... but both of our children have grown up working a hay field, mucking stalls, building fences, cleaning out barns, cutting grass, helping weed a garden, learning to can/freeze foods. They have learned the importance of good animal management and have excelled in both 4-H and FFA. As a junior in high school, our daughter has earned the 2nd highest degree available in FFA, her State Degree. Both of them have been leaders in their 4-H club & camp counselors. They have taken ownership in their livestock, and enjoy the process of learning about and raising an animal whose sole purpose is to become food! In no way are our children "forced" to do this. This is their life, this is our lives! They have learned responsibility, the benefits that come with hard work, sacrifices that are sometimes necessary to have what they want or need, respect for themselves and for others, and the pride in being "country"!
Tina Compton 2592 Arthur Rd Springfield, OH 45502 tmc1440@yahoo.com Clark County

Family farms are the backbone of our country. We are able to share our knowledge and crops with others in our areas, to give them the healthiest products available. It has taught me how to be self-sufficient when I grew up on our family farm, and I passed that tradition down to our children as well. We all eat right off of our own land each year.
Nancy Roesner, Copley Feed & Supply Co., Inc 1468 S Cleve Mass Road Copley, OH 44321 farmergirl4262@aol.com Summit County

It is more important today to teach our children the value of hard work and responsibility. Most children raised on a farm have become responsible young adults, a far cry from their "gimmie" peers, who want everything handed to them on a silver platter. Farm youth seem to respect adults far more than the rest of the "gimmie" generation. They work hard and accept responsibility and know what it means to earn what they have, and don't have the attitude so many young adults have. Many young people put conditions on their "employment", saying I want to work only where

I want to work, and when I want to work. They are spoiled and do not respect authority or older adults. Family farms develop strong family ties and values passed down through generations of hard work and respect of the land and older adults. A willingness to work for what you have and to respect what you have. It is pleasant to know that the American dream and values still exist somewhere in America, in the rural family farms. Now days it is far too easy for parents to give their kids everything, and teach them nothing, but disrespect and “gimmie” because I am your child, not because I earned it. It has become far too easy in American society to give our youth everything they want and to “do it for them”, rather than teaching them how to respect and work hard pays off. Today's youth want everything now, and do not even think about their futures or their children's futures. I do not feel it is the attitude of today's farm youth, who seem to know how to work for what they have and above all know how to respect family values, authority and have managed to retain the American Dream attitude, that has been lost in most of the “gimmie” generation.

*Katharine Wheeler 4573 State Route 29
Mechanicsburg, OH 43044 MysticTex@aol.com
Madison County*

My two children have been in 4-H and FFA, they both received the American Degree, One was a State Vice President, and a OSU Grad and is teaching Ag. My other child has a Two Year Degree, and is helping with the Farm and started his own. My wife and I are both Honorary State FFA Degree, and past 4-H advisors with 26+ years experience also we are all Life members of the FFA My kids have worked hard in our farming operation, It is time you people in Washington do the same and get off your BUTTS and step outside the belt way and clear minds or we the people will Vote you out!

*Michael K Miller T-021 Rd. 21 Napoleon, OH 43545
buy pork@bright.net Henry County*

It teaches everyone responsibility and how to work for what we have.

Anonymous

If our kids can't learn to work, with their hands and hearts and heads on our family farm...where will they

learn!! schools fail miserably government??? sure if we want yet another path to entitlement attitudes STAY OUT OF OUR BUSINESS ENOUGH IS ENOUGH EAT OUR PRODUCE CONSUME OUR GOODS LEAVE OUR KIDS ALONE

*Jeff Martin, Geis 10020 Aurora Hudson Road
Streetsboro, OH 44241 Jeff@geisco.net Portage County*

I grew up on a family farm. I am so thankful for the lessons and self discipline that I learned from working on the farm. Through my participation in 4-H and FFA I learned skills that I still use today. The very best place to raise a family is on the farm in my opinion. Dwight Brill

Anonymous

Family farms help keep families together. It also keeps kids out of trouble and instills in them habits of having a job that will benefit them throughout their lives. I started working on our family farm as soon as I was big enough to go out and care for my pony (around age 4). Then when I got big enough to help start baling hay (about age 6 or 7) I was part of the hay crew. It taught me lots of responsibility and gave me some extra spending money. There were many summers that my brother, neighbors and I were the hay crew for many local farmers. My own children (ages 5-16) now help out with chores. My oldest daughter has helped out my parents on their farm and also with baling. This has helped both parties. My parents get the extra help they need, my daughter has a job and its only a mile and a half away. Not only is she getting to spend quality time with her grandparents, she is learning life long lessons. *Ginger Williams-Carr 12365 Appleton Rd. Croton, OH 43013 g.williamscarr@yahoo.com Licking County*

There is no closer bonding established in a modern family than that formed in a farm family. The parents teach and the children learn responsibility and the enjoyment of a job well done. No other way of life lets a child see the beginning and the end of a project well done. All through life 4-H, FFA, show young men and women the good that comes from planting, reaping and seeing the products of their labor being enjoyed by the public. They also learn the heartbreak when an animal they have cared for dies or a crop fails. They respect others efforts and do not destroy the projects

others have undertaken. The destruction and killings in the inner cities are the result of those individuals who have never known the satisfaction of having something they really cared for or being cared for by someone who really cared for them. I am proud of my grown family and know that being in a farm community has made them the good productive adults they have become. The grandchildren have stayed close to the earth as farmers, health caregivers, and farm wives. The oldest great-grandchild (3 yrs) has a complete set of all the JD toys available and loves to dig in the ground. He is looking forward to helping grandpa as soon as he can. Seventy five years ago I was just like him.

*Liz Milbrodt 3966 S. SR 19 Oak Harbor, OH 43449
lizzym6203@aol.com Ottawa County*

Growing up on a farm taught me two things at a very young age; responsibility and passion for agriculture. Every morning and night, rain or shine I had to get up and do chores and check cows before I got to eat. My passion for agriculture has grown to be a way of live. It's my passion to help feed the world but to also educate everyone I can about agriculture and how together, we can make a difference.

Lauren Fehlan 20270 State Route 511 Wellington, OH 44090 fehlan.2@osu.edu Lorain County

Both of my girls have learned how to operate and respect machinery. They have learned to plant and grow our food supply. The children and their parents have benefited by us working together as a family, teaching, learning and living. This in depth hands on education could not be obtained by them in any other environment.

*Jerry Chabrian 3647 State Route 503 South West Alexandria, OH 45381 chabrian@verizon.net
Preble County*

I was raise on a farm leave on a farm i learn about life as well what things that GODS wonders are if new life begining when seeing a new born calf or pig ,or filley,colt etc.i think that teaches kids more than they are going to leran about life ,good work ethics and honset,than they are going to learn in any school..i work on the farm wasnot hurt or anything this from somebody that has to much time on there hands for

years kids learn on the farm.

Faron Thompson 11796 Pool Kuntz Rd. Sardina, OH 45171 faronthompson63@yahoo.com Brown County

I think it is absurd that we have reached a point in our history that children of a reasonable age cannot work on a family farm or do odd jobs to ensure that they learn some value of their own keep. What,s more,the tasks they get involved with each require some thought and ultimately there is a learning process which they can build upon as they complete those tasks one by one. And,as they progress through life each of the tasks achieved gives them the common knowledge and inspiration that they need to tackle even larger problems with more difficult solutions. I can tell you from my own experience that when I,ve needed help or work to complete that it is my choice to call upon an Amish teen first, and a farm teen second, and an inner town English teen last. Why?...because of two basic life principles 1)the level of common knowledge and good sense from past experience and 2)the work ethic which that individual pocessed (which they didn,t get from sitting on the couch). It,s very clear in our society, in all phases of occupations, that there is a lack of common sense and the work ethic is not what it should be. All you have to do is just have some discussions with the employers and they,ll tell the story. In regards to this same subject,I have much experience and relative background to the issue of young adults and their capabilities. I will share what I,ve experienced. I am a 35 year retired teacher from a vocational school. I started teaching in the mid 70,s at which time the students I had were able to use power tools and hand tools with pretty much ease. The challenge was to teach them new techniques and refine the skills and to develop speed with their work. In the 80,s it seemed as thow the same entry level student was a bit slower to learn perfection. I n the 90,s , I found myself in a situation where the first 4-6wks. of instruction had to include tool theory and demonstrations as well as constsant supervision to be sure those same entry level students would not cause damage to the tasks they were performing. Then by the 2000,s, it became incredible that I even had to initiate vocabulary and classroom theory with the shop performance on BASIC hand tools and power tools. In addition,I noticed a great deal of difference in attitude,work ability,and discipline with the students from the 1970,s and up through the 2000,s. It became ovious to me that over the years there was a significant

decline in starting potential. Why?.....I blame it on our social downswing over the years of NOT allowing our children to have meaningful jobs or creating the proper work environment at the home, even for the odd jobs. In short we have taught them to be lazy and they have not learned the basic skills to even include the knowledge or use of tools. If we allow this trend to continue we will soon see the day when our adults will not have the proper life skills and won't even be able to start a lawn mower, change a flat tire, or certainly won't have the common sense to raise their children with creative minds. Of course, there is always the risk of injury and the immediate response is to put a stop to the activity. Stop the activity.....stop the risk. That becomes debateable! You may stop the risk now, but my belief is that you are actually increasing the risk of a far greater volume of our population at a later point by non education, lack of experience, and no common work sense. It's time we re-think this philosophy. Allow our young adults to be responsible in the home and the farm and with real life odd jobs. Allow them to learn skills and nurture all the common sense they can muster up. Some day in the near future our Country will be calling upon the farmer to feed this great nation of ours and we better hope that the farms are alive and well. My experience has proven to me that we have already allowed the inner town English teens to be non complacent to the general labor work force. The whole idea of our youth not being allowed to work or even perform life learning skills on the family farm is just an outcry. We need to build and prepare our families, farms, and businesses for the future and that can't be done without first developing and instilling values in our youth!

Lynn Anderson 212 Ascot Rd. S.E. Carrollton, OH 44615 robinslanding@frontier.com Carroll County

Family farms are important because they keep the integrity, heritage and spirit of the American agriculture industry alive. Being involved in my family's fourth generation farm gave me a sense of responsibility, an excellent work ethic and a true appreciation for family. Not only did our farm provide our income but it bound our family and community with tight bonds that are still working today.

Anonymous

Agriculture is one of the last opportunities for labor, at any age, to truly have an impact on the beginning of our economic supply chain.

Anonymous

I grew up on a family farm. I milked cows, baled hay and straw, mowed grass, picked up rocks, cleaned out the stalls, feed and watered and bedded both calves and grown cows. I was a member of a dairy 4-H club from the age of 9 through 17, where we would be responsible to feed, bath and show a cow or cows. It is hard work but, I would not trade the lessons learned or the work ethic instilled for anything. My children visited their grandparents on that farm and helped bale straw one summer during a week visit. My children look back on this week with fond memories. This I can't believe how our government is trying to take this away. Growing up on a farm is and was the most wholesome childhood experience. Not allowing a child the opportunity to work along side their parents on the family farm is unconscionable.

Cheryl Scholes 604 E. Lexington Rd. Eaton, OH 45320 cscholes@centurylink.net Preble County

Family farms provide very important goods and services to the local economy. Many people have complimented our children's wonderful dedicated and responsible work ethic that they learned on the farm. They are grown adults now, but their upbringing has served them very well as they have become good tax-paying working citizens. The farm now has more non-family employees, but now that it isn't a start up business, it is much easier for that to be the case than before.

Cheryl A Dye, Stoney Meadow Farm 3 Longue Vue Wooster, OH 44691 caddye@aol.com

I do not think 'family farms' are necessarily important. I am not even sure what the term 'family farm' actually refers to as the term has become so much of a 'buzz word' in agricultural politics. The traditional 'family farm' of bygone days, in my judgement, barely exists in our current cultural milieu. Even when (so called) 'family farms' did exist, the notion that it was a 'family farm' very often was used as an excuse for improper and unsafe use of minors as slave labor.

Anonymous

Family farms are important because they are efficient businesses in many cases. Let us not call them children, but to be adults. What better a situation to learn work ethic, the reasons for hard work, etc. by working with the parents on the family farm business.

Anonymous

It teaches self reliance. And skills nobody learns in a class room!

Anonymous

Family farming is the only decent thing left in this "sick" socialistic society. It teaches children love of animals and the land. It teaches them responsibility and sharing. Learning how to plant gardens, raising crops and animals to provide for themselves could "save" their life someday. In some cases, it keeps families together. If government would back out of our lives, they would see we are "smart" enough to take care of ourselves and our families and the world would be a "much better" place to live in.

Thelma Farmer 14659 Old McArthur Rd Logan, OH 43138 tfarmer47@roadrunner.com Hocking County

Our family farm is now in its 6th generation. We're located in Delaware, Ohio, one of the fastest growing counties in the nation, and blessed with a diversity of available jobs. My nephew, Austin Bright, will soon be graduating from Bellarmine University in Louisville, Kentucky, with a business degree and is returning to Delaware County to work full time at our farm and compost facility. I can't imagine this would be the case without his having had the opportunity to work on the farm during his youth. Restricting this experience for our young adults would most certainly deal a heavy blow to family farms across the nation. Please help us keep our farms in the family and pass our businesses on to future generations by preserving our right to have our children work alongside us on the farm! Thank you, *Tricia Kalmar, Price Farms Organics 4838 Warrensburg Rd. Delaware, OH 43015 pfo@pricefarms.org Delaware County*

Hello, My name is Susan Arters. My husband Steve and our sons Tyler age 21 and Tate age 16, farm ap-

proximately 1,200 acres in Chatham Township, Medina County Ohio. We primarily raise corn, soybeans, hay and a small herd of feeder cattle. Our family farm has been passed down and our sons are the fifth generation to maintain and operate this acclaimed Century Farm. We have had many discussions, as to keeping this land in the family and maintaining it as a "working farm". Tyler has received his Associates Degree from Ohio State University in Crop Science and looks to a brighter future in the farming industry! In the day and age we are living in, it is almost unheard of to see a young individual set foot out into the farming occupation without the farm being an "inherited" occupation. Our sons have both been active in 4-H over the years and have taken livestock projects which have taught them responsibility, appreciation and how to accomplish their goals. Farming is a very "dedicated" way of life. We do not take a family vacation, get very little sleep during planting and harvest, push to get the hay baled on the hottest day of the year and have Mother Nature as our "boss"! You have to love the farm to keep the farm! Steve and I love our farm! It is in our blood! Our sons have learned to love the farm life! It's a good way of life! In closing, PLEASE do not allow the Department of Labor to regulate our family farms! The auction ads are abundant, in the farming newspapers these days. There will be more, if the DOL sets more stringent regulations on the farms! FAMILY VALUES, APPRECIATION AND DEDICATION are instilled in our lifestyle, FARMING! KEEP OUR FAMILY ON THE FARM! THE HEART AND SOLE FOR GENERATIONS TO COME! Sincerely, Susan Arters
*8990 Spencer Lake Rd. Spencer, OH 44275
Chatham Township, theartersfarms4@aol.com
330-635-5969 Medina County*

I grew up on a fairly large general purpose farm. I did and had to learn how to do many of the things that is now being proposed as illegal. I have made it to 83 years old, partly because of the many things and approaches I learned. I since earned a MS degree in Mechanical Engineering, so I really do understand the issues. I had parents who cared and showed me as well as trained me how to do things safely. I also learned you can't be 100% safe in every action and still succeed in life. To do otherwise is not Living. Please stick to education, not over restrictive regulations.
Andrew G. Detrick 3895 Midshore Drive Naples, FL 34109 adetrack@comcast.net

We are a family farm that grows sweet corn. We have been growing 100 to 120 acres for over 30 years. Our 4 children grew up helping from little kids. At 12 years they wanted to work and so did their friends. We feel like we have raised many young kids in the area. They still come back and say it was the best job and learning experience they ever had. We still believe local kids are willing to work hard and earn their own money and learn responsibly.

*Kathy Burwinkel, Burwinkel Farms LLC
5915 Dry Ridge Rd Cincinnati, OH 45252
kathyburwinkel@hotmail.com Hamilton County*

Having worked on my grandfathers farm and neighbors farms as well I learned the need to be responsible for things that depended on me, the animals and that other people also depended on me. That has carried on today in the job at which I am now employeed, AT&T. The problem that we have is that many or most who are trying to impose their will have never had the joy or responsibility of working on a farm. What a shame!!! That's like me a telephone repairman telling an artist the colors in his painting aren't what they should be. How do I know unless I have either been a artist or am learning the trade. Those folks just don't know.

*Daryl E Hurst 7125 Sealover Hollow Rd Philo, OH
43771 dehurst@sbcglobal.net Muskingum County*

Learning to care for animals no matter what the weather, making sure animals have enough water in the hot summertime, dealing with frozen waterers so your animals can have what they need, these are some of the hard lessons our boys have learned and persevered through. With just the four of us, we needed our family team to meet each other's needs to accomplish the harvest to get all our acres done. It is definitely a family operation. Teaching farm safety has always been of the utmost importance. Accidents can happen easily if one doesn't have forethought and consider the possibilities. Our farming lifestyle has greatly influenced our boys development for the better. It has been a character- building process and still is. Our youngest is now 12 years old and I wouldn't want to deprive him of his chance to make a difference in our farming operation. He's looking forward to learning more about hydraulics and machinery and how to combine.

Farming keeps him grounded and teaches him skills and pride in his work. Farming is part of who we are and our future.

*Ellen Frey 12987 SR 65 Wapakoneta, OH 45895
jetafarm@aol.com Auglaize County*

Having grown up on a family farm, I know first hand how beneficial the family farm is to the young people of our country. Our children learned at a young age the importance of responsibility for taking care of nature. From protecting the land to treating animals with care and compassion have given them a better understanding of the world around them. The work they provide on the farm is geared to their abilities and allows them to learn trades not possible in school. Family farmers today stress safety and health better than ever before because of programs like 4H and Future Farmers of America. The next generation of farmers need this education and the connection to the family farm now more than ever to allow our nation to continue to be the most productive in the world. Please consider this when making decisions that affect the family farm. Thank you.

*Roy Barth 7649 Brooks Road Harrison, OH 45030
trckdrvr@zoomtown.com Hamilton County*

Farms not only are the source for food and clothing, but they are places where children grow up learning the value of a strong work ethic. Growing up on a farm, my children have space to play, opportunities to engage with animals, and a neighborhood where no one is afraid to sit outside at night and count the stars.

*Karen Smith 3627 Folk Ream Road Springfield, OH
45402 poplarflatsfarm@yahoo.com Clark County*

I have grown up om a small farm and i benifit that to my strong work ethic and great atititude towards life and all of its challenges. it would be hard to keep the next generations in the loop and gain teh training needed to run a farm! we are in the process of growing our small farm and entering into a small trucking business. I could not imagine having a farm and not letting any of my young family as they grow up around the farm.

*Nathan Schroeder, FNK Farms 3916 Road D Laipsic,
OH 45856 fnkfarms@hotmail.com Putnam County*

Children learn valuable lessons: responsibility, decision making, and crisis management. As a teacher I am constantly admonished to teach my students these things that my children learned in a real life setting. My students have difficulty applying what I teach because they have no where to apply these lessons.

*Janet Christenson, Christenson Farms 15371 County Road 21 Fayette, OH 43521 rjbuckeyes70@gmail.com
Fulton County*

I think family farms are important because our country was founded by our ancestors who plowed the fields for the first time ever and established the very first family farms. Family farms create a sense of love for your own land and a way to become self sufficient and also provide a way of living for your family. The work ethic learned by children of farmers is something that is irreplaceable in this day and age. It teaches a child to appreciate that he/she is able to make a living if they are willing to work hard at it. I may not have any children who have helped us on our farm, but we have neighbors whose young teenage boys have benefited from the work ethic they learned from helping us on our farm.

Anonymous

Family farms are the backbone of American agriculture. We have lived on one for 40 years raising 8 children. All of them worked on the farm and all of them have gone on to be good workers today. They learned to work when they were young and still work today.

*Nancy Mcguire Nic-Nan Farm 4149 SR 287
West Liberty, OH 43357 aredg6@yahoo.com
Logan County*

I was raised on our family farm. We worked around cattle, hogs, horses, chickens and sheep, We ran tractors and other farm equipment. We learned the importance of taking care of livestock as they depend on us for their feed and water. We never were injured doing these chores. I think I learned to be a responsible hard working adult, because farming is not an easy job. We also raised our children on the farm. They had all kinds of livestock in 4-H. They ran all the machinery. They were never injured. They both live on farms now and they too have become hard working and respon-

sible adults. I think farmers are more connected to the real world and so are their children. Just go to the county fair and see the next generation of farmers, or want to be farmers,

*Judy Ratzel 2911 W Smithville Western Wooster, OH
44691 ratzel1@sssnet.com*

I think family farms are important because there are not many people who want to or can afford to start from scratch to farm. People don't want to work that hard anymore nor do they have the work ethic it takes to be a farmer. People just want to sit at a desk in front of a computer. A farm needs everyone in the family to work together to be successful. High costs in all areas prohibit farmers from hiring farmhands. Why should we be forced to hire help and added to our costs when there are family members that are willing and able to do the work? Our own farm was purchased and started in 1974 with just 22 acres. We both worked fulltime jobs off the farm while getting the farm off the ground each year adding something more. When the kids were old enough to help at age 9 or 10, it became a family affair. Living on a farm is the best way to raise a family. The kids learned how to work as a team player. They all have very strong work ethics. We have been complemented time after time on what hard workers they are. Because we all worked together, it kept the family together and taught them what a family is. Now a days there is no such thing other than on farms. Today, they are all grown with families of their own. The boys have expanded the farm to 200 plus acres and are still trying to make a go of it although rising costs are always a problem. They are teaching our grandchildren everything they learned and more. And so farmland goes on.

*Patricia Bradek, Crooked Fence Farms 1382 Dorset Rd.
Jefferson, OH 44047 Ashtabula County*

As a young teen child I grew up helping my parents operate our very small farm that struggled from year to year, but we survived, then I left for the Marine Corps which forced my family to hire one farmhand and that was all it took to put them out of business. My parents had to sell off their land in parcels to pay off their debt and they are now surrounded by "cookie cutter" housing tracts that have replaced their beautiful country views. The loss of the use of a family member that has grown up knowing the needs of their family farm is invaluable and the cost of hiring farm hands to

replace them will be devastating, not only increasing the cost of operation but it will increase the cost to the consumer and if the commodities market doesn't allow for the increase in value the farmer will be forced to absorb the cost. This will destroy the small farm community.

*Mark Ramirez, ONE R FARM 6155 US HWY 62
HILLSBORO, OH 45133 ONERRAM@AOL.COM
Highland County*

My personal experience working on our family farm was more valuable than any other education that I received. To have our government continue to encroach on our lives..... and now in our sacred family business is one more example of government power run amuck. stay out of MY FAMILY DECISIONS!

*Mark Garver, Garver Family Farm 6716 State Route 63
Middletown, OH 45044 Mark@abacustaxservice.net
Butler County*

It teaches the value of hard work. It also makes the bond between the multigenerational family tighter. The grandparents can help the youth learn skills and work ethic of a bygone era. It also makes the youth more physically fit. With more and more of our youth sitting in front of computers and gaming systems this allows the youth to work off excessive calories and keeps them physically fit. They are also better drivers because they have more opportunity to drive for a longer period of time before they get behind the wheel of a car that goes a lot faster than a tractor. It also allows the children to learn how to be good stewards of the land by learning from a very young age how to take care of the land. Our children have daily chores and as they got older they were given more appropriate chores. Our philosophy is that school comes first, activities then farm work. We all pitch in and get each others chore done. As our children become old enough to get a job off the farm we encourage them to see what the real world is like. They tend to come back to the farm.

*Patty Richardson, Balmoral Farm 13259 Buckland-
Holden Rd Wapakoneta, OH 45895
kpcows@ohiolink.net Auglaize County*

Family farms are a great place for children to learn responsibility by caring for animals, helping with chores and being in a learning environment. My children all

helped with the farm work with safety cautions and supervision during the learning process.. It is a shame that the government would want to take away the freedom to train our children for the next generation of farmers. Something that government would do a poor job and cost us taxpayers millions of dollars The 4-H and FFA Clubs are great to teach these many children about value of working together for the good of all people. The fact that my college educated grandsons got jobs because they learned how to work and their activity in FFA. The employers noticed the fact that they were farm raised and knew the value of earning their salary.

*Donna Wolf 1715 Twp. Rd. 1335 Ashland, OH 44805
bdwolf2@hotmail.com Ashland County*

My children of 4 have all been in 4-H and FFA and were taught responsibility and the value of work ethic from the age of 9. Farm children have always worked in family settings for life as we know it. We don't need the labor dept watching over us in agriculture, we can take care of ourselves. Are farm families have enough regulations to deal with already. GOVERNMENT GET OFF OUR BACK.

*Robert Campbell, Campbell Farms 12867 St. Rt. 118
Rossburg, OH 45362 rjcampbellfarms@aol.com
Darke County*

Family farms are the backbone of the country and the lessons that a child learns from living and/or working on a farm are invaluable. All 4 of our children worked on our farm as they were growing up and now they are very responsible/ working adults. Our oldest son is farming fulltime. He graduated from OSU/ATI at Wooster where he went to further his knowledge of agriculture. He owns his own farm, but works with his dad and younger brother to get all the work done on his farm, our farm, brother's farm and our rental ground. Our second son is a chemical engineer and his work ethic came from having jobs to do both here and at a local grocery store while in school. He was an outstanding student at OSU and when DuPont hired him, one of the reasons, he was told, was because he had a farm background and it showed in his work and study ethic. He was hired almost immediately and has continued to climb the success ladder at this company. He loves to come home every chance he gets to help with the work and would be here more often if

he could possibly do it. Our daughter received an Ag Business Degree from OSU, was a National Champion on the OSU Equestrian Team, is married to a farmer, a Crop Insurance Adjuster, and raises/breeds Simmental Cattle. She is also a Women's Representative on the State Farm Bureau Board of Trustees in Ohio. Our youngest son also owns his own farm, graduated from OSU/ATI, is employed by the local Bobcat Dealer, and farms parttime. He would like to farm fulltime, but we don't have enough available ground to rent for him to do that at this time. He also is working his way into the farm by purchasing and maintaining new/used equipment on his own. His knowledge as a mechanic is invaluable to our family farm. All of our children were in 4-H and raised fat Steers to sell. The money they made paid for part of their college because mom and dad paid minimal for their educations. They worked very hard to get their degrees and 4-H was a huge teaching tool giving them that added responsibility for finishing what you start and not quitting halfway through a project. They learned early if they were going to gain anything in life, one can't quit when the going gets tough. None of our children were ever hurt on any equipment and the animals was just minimal. They learned from little up that they must be very careful when around any of the above. Something one doesn't learn sitting in front of a TV or an electronic game. They drove tractors at a young age, but never, at any time, did they drive when it was a risky situation. Responsibility is key, could be why none of them got mixed up in drugs, drinking, vandalism, etc. We taught them to THINK before you do something. If it doesn't sound good, then it probably isn't. Please DO NOT pass a bill that would hinder children from doing work on the family farm, whether it is their own or someone else's farm. Why should the government come in and tell us what is good for our families. Stay out of our lives. We have done this for years. These children are ours and we should be allowed to make our own decision as to what they are allowed or not allowed to do.

Gloria Wentling, Wentling Farms 7030 Pigeon Run Ave., SW Navarre, OH 44662 robwent@frontier.com Stark County

Farming is a way of life. My husband grew up on his family farm and now my sons are playing an active role in our farm. The children feel their value and learn responsibility while working side by side with us. No class room can teach the value, importance, and safety

of farm related duties as good as a child's parents.

Anonymous

My grandparents and parents had farms, so I have been farming the family farms since a young boy. I am 81 years old and still work on these farms daily, managing a large herd of cattle and sheep on a farm that had been purchased by my parents. I also help my son with hay and grain crops on other farms that have been in my family since the 1800's. I have five children. They were involved in our farming since they were young. They had the opportunity to excel in 4-H and FFA with the skills that they learned working on the farm. Three sons and two daughters graduated from The Ohio State University. The three sons got degrees in the College of Agriculture and used this knowledge to pursue occupations in Agriculture related careers, such as Agriculture Education teacher, USDA, and farming. So, having worked on the farm as a family did not cause them to never work on a farm. In fact, my wife and I had insisted that each had to attend college and obtain a degree, so that they did not have to farm for their income. The girls also liked attending to sheep, cattle and driving tractors. I want to continue to be involved in farming activities, however this is only possible because the family continues to help me now. Also, we have helped many 4-H and FFA members that do not live on farms to obtain the requirements needed for their projects at our farm. Last year we accepted a FFA member who needed to meet some goals. She is ready to do more again. She worked with two of our grandchildren that have their 4-H sheep, steer, and heifers at our farm. This was the first time that the FFA member had ever had the opportunity to learn the feeding, health and training skills that are necessary to raise lambs.. I have been a 4-H advisor for 44 years and my wife has been an advisor for 41 years. So, we are still giving farm-related activities to the youth in our area. +65.

James Skinner 17555 State Route 328 Logan, OH 43138 575farm328@hughes.net Hocking County

Last year I found an orphaned calf in one of our fields. I took it in and nursed it until it was in good enough health to give it to a friend to raise. My son, who was in kindergarten at the time, found out that I was going to get rid of the calf and voiced his opposition. So I made a deal with him, we would keep the calf only if

my son went out, with me, to the barn every morning before school to bottle feed the calf. For 3 months, we went to the barn, and he would do his best to hold the bottle to feed the calf. We even took the calf to his school for show and tell, where 2 kindergarten and one special needs class asked my son questions about the calf. This was not only a great father/son activity, but it also taught my son about responsibility, work ethic and how to care for farm animals. Our family farm has recently converted to and LLC, with my father-in-law and I being the owners. This change in entity structure was done for a variety of business and personal reasons. It is my understanding that because our family farm is a LLC, the proposed labor rules would make this activity illegal and I could be fined or even charged with a crime. Really? Please change these rules to that my children have an opportunity to be a part of our family operation.

Michael Videkovich, Noecker Farms LLC 564 Princeton St Ashville, OH 43103 michaelvidekovich@hotmail.com Pickaway County

It teaches them how to work without getting paid for every little thing they do. My son came home one day and asked how come all the other boys had no chores to do at home. I told him that they only had a home and no other chores to do. Most of the other fathers even mowed their grass because they didn't want to teach their children how to mow the grass. Our family had a push until the children were in H.S. They even knew how to take turns pushing by age 12. My daughter now has a yard mowing service in which her oldest daughter helped with by the age of 14. (Riding mower) She could even mow straighter than her mother. Trying hiring H.S. kids now to do chores. Save your breath !!! My children were all 4-h members. They showed livestock from New York to Denver, Colorado. It wasn't they showing that helped in later life but the friendships and contacts they made in life.

Larry Shroyer 12168 Rd. 59 Degraff, OH 43318 ump1@watchtv.net Logan County

The family farms are very vital to many of the farms being able to exist. By working together as a family many are able to have members of the family understand what it takes to work on a job. I agree with many of the statements from other Family Farms that our government officials don't understand Family Farms.

All of our children are gone from our farm but all have told us how important it was that they learned how to work on our farm.

Gene Schrolucke, Lucke Acres Farm 11860 ST. Rt. 29 New Knoxville, OH 45871 lucke@nktelco.net Auglaize County

There is no other way to keep children interested in farming than to have them involved at a young age. How many people go to college, graduate and become food producers without coming from a farm family? The LLC is a way to organize the succession of the farm business by keeping family members vested.

Anonymous

Farm kids don't need help with their self esteem. Animals live or die due to their care or lack thereof. There is food on the table because they helped plant the garden, pick the the vegetable, collected the eggs or fed the cows. When they help dad fix a fence it's because dad really needed their help. They understand where their food comes from and that if you work you eat. They will not end up in a government line to receive a handout. They develop real skills and avoid the "fear" of hard work that many in our society develop.

Jennifer Miller 2067 Championship Cir SE Massillon, OH 44646 millerhome@ssnet.com Stark County

No farmer deliberately puts their family at a safety risk with the everyday chores around the farm. We all know the positives of having a family working together -- it is just the policy makers, regulators who think they need to "save" everybody from what statistics say need attention and then they make regulations/laws accordingly. Continuing education and awareness of the need to use common sense with delegating work is the key to labor issues in any business.

Pearle Burlingame, Burlingame Farm 13172 South Avenue North Lima, OH 44452 pb@mahoningfarmbureau.com Mahoning County

Family farms are important for many reasons; they bring families together, part of American culture, and it allows children to learn the values of hardwork, responsibility and seeing their hardwork pay off.

*Andy and Lindsey Caldwell, Caldwell Farms
10458 Centerfield Rd Leesburg, OH 45135
caldwellfamilyfarm@yahoo.com Highland County*

Family farms are preparing the next generation of agricultural leaders and food, fuel and fiber producers. A lot of farming is a way of life, it's not a job that someone does for eight hours then departs. It is ingrained into every aspect of home life. Even though I don't farm directly now, I have benefited from growing up on the farm. A timely work ethic and responsibility were instilled in me from childhood and that has counted for my education and success as an adult as much as any formal academic pursuits.

*Jenny Camper, Lesic & Camper Communications
172 E. State St. Columbus, OH 43215
jcamper@lesiccamper.com Franklin County*

The best way to have responsible children grow into responsible adults is to have them involved in what is happening and have a stake in the action. I grew up having chores and after a little while a cut of the milk check and some cattle or lambs as my own property that I could learn how to care for and make some profit. That is how kids learn this way to running a business. To have the government (of all entities) try and tell parents how to raise children on a farm is ridiculous. The ones that know best are the ones nearest to the action. Not some bureuacrat in Columbus, Ohio or in Washington D.C.

*Robert E Little, Little Family Farms 21584
State Route 67 Wapakoneta, OH 45895
rlittle19@woh.rr.com Auglaize County*

Family farms are the glue that holds the agrarian society together. There is a special bond that occurs between a farm family and the land. No one who has ever lived on a farm can deny this phenomena . The rules of nature and the rules of the family exist side by side. It is a harmonious and productive element. For the government to step in and disturb this element is akin to a patient giving a doctor a set of rules before

he can perform the operation on the patient. Aside from the parents, the children are the most important element in the success of a generational farm family. It is they who will learn from their parents the proper tools of safety for not only themselves but also others. After generations of passing skills, information, safety formulas, and animal care giving along with a wealth of other farm related information, what right has the government to interfere with this process. It is an insult to the farmer to view him as a person who lacks knowledge on the complexities of child safety and farm management. If I may ask, who are the people that wrote this bill? How close are they to farm life and farm management? Did they ever live on a farm? In our case, although we did not live on the family horse farm, our children and especially our son spent summers at the family farm with his grandparents and uncle. He would never have been able to do the things he did if this bill were in effect. And, he learned and quite proficiently, how to operate on the farm in a safe and responsible way not by being prevented from doing tasks that may have injured him but by performing the tasks under supervision and how to avoid possible injury to himself or others. If this present bill had been in effect he would not have had the opportunity to learn the many valuable lessons that made him the responsible human being he is today. In truth, it is because of his work on the farm that he became the successful Veterinarian he is today. He perfected his instinct, awareness, perception, knowledge and ability to work in a farm environment safely only because he was taught how at an early age by loving grandparents and an Uncle. The government should not interfere with the farm family's parental teachings in regard to their children. They (the parents), of all, have the utmost concern for their children. They, not the government, know best how to teach their children safety standards. They, not the government, are the best teachers of responsibility, caring, safety, right and wrong. Too much governmental interference in to a citizen's life with rules and regulations erodes his personal freedom. And Freedom is what this country was built on.

Mitzie Hennessey 288 Beach Dr. N.E. #9B Saint Petersburg, FL 33701 mitzieh24@gmail.com Jefferson County

Family farms are a huge part of this country. There are so many useful tools that are taken from a family farm. Children acquire many life skills that will help them throughout life. I grew up on a beef cattle farm and wouldn't change it for nothing. I was able to exhibit animals through 4-H and FFA and learned so much from those projects. Kids today expect everything to be given to them and not have to work for it. Yes I had to work on a farm and yes I learned a lot and yes I feel that through all the responsibilities I was given on our farm it helped shape the person that I am today. Having a family farm and responsibility on that farm kept me out of trouble. You gain so much knowledge from growing up on a farm that will help you throughout life. There is nothing wrong with hard work. We have become so lazy in our society that we forget what hard work means and earning an honest living. There is nothing better than growing up on a farm and unless you experience it you will never have that sense of pride. Now my husband and I have a grain farm and love our life. There is nothing like living on a farm. We pray that one day our children will be able to experience the things we did while we were growing up. A child wants nothing more than to do what their father, grandfather, great-grandfather did or does. A child is by their side as soon as they can ride in a tractor or whatever it may be and if they can't be they are upset. Right now I am involved with the Junior Fair in our county and I know what it means to our youth to have the 4-H and FFA program. Our county has seen drastic budget cuts and the possibility of not having a 4-H program and our youth were upset about the possibility of no program. Can you imagine what would happen if our child was told that they are not allowed to have a 4-H program let alone not being able to help on a farm because of laws given. What if someone said that you weren't allowed to let your child play sports or something that meant the world to your family how would you react? Sports involve strenuous acts such as running, weight lifting etc. Youth get hurt playing sports and could have long-term damage to their bodies but I don't see the possibilities of sports being taken out of youth activities. Or who is to say that a 16 year old is ready to drive a car or even when they turn 18 they are ready. I'm sure if you polled driver's education instructors they would say that the average farm kid is more ready to drive than any other kid. Parents on a farm know when their child is ready to drive a tractor, combine, atv, etc. That child has watched their parent

repeatedly drive a tractor, combine, atv and its called experiential learning. Parents on a farm are smart and know what a child is capable of doing and knowing if they are ready for a task on the farm. When it comes to working on a farm and the work a child does they aren't abused. They are given a sense of pride and love what they are doing. By passing this law you are taking away a right that means more to families than you will ever know! Personally I feel there are a lot bigger things in this country that need addressed than picking on the family farm which is a backbone to this country and without it you wouldn't be able to EAT!!

*Jana Holbrook, Holbrook Farms 4320 St. Rt. 138
Lynchburg, OH 45142 jlhess2003@yahoo.com
Highland County*

FARM CHILDREN WORK HARDER AND ARE MORE RESPONSIBLE THAN ANY CITY OR TOWN KIDS. MOST COMPANIES WILL HIRE FARM PEOPLE OVER CITY OR TOWN PEOPLE BECAUSE OF THEIR WORK ETHICS AND MATURITY. FARMING WITH YOUR CHILDREN ALSO IS A WAY TO SPEND TIME TOGETHER AS A FAMILY. IF CHILDREN ARE NOT ALLOWED TO SPEND TIME HELPING ON THE FAMILY FARM IT WILL START TO EFFECT GENERATIONS OF FAMILY FARMS.
*TERESA LEVERING, LEVERING FARMS
8319 MT. GILEAD RD. FREDERICKTOWN, OH
43019 teresalevering@embarqmail.com Knox County*

Family farms are incredibly important for a wide variety of reasons. One of the reasons is the understanding that there is life and death, and that each of those events leads to the other and then repeats. The second reason is that growing up on a family farm allows the members of that family to earn what they have, thus creating a value of respect for the items they do have. One must till, plant, weed and water the garden before it can be harvest, or water, feed and work with the animals before they are sold and taken to slaughter. The other reason is that living on a farm has taught me a level of responsibility and work ethic - nothing in this world is free or without strings attached, nor is life fair. One must work diligently, frugally and hard to obtain what one has. However, sometimes we can do all of the above, and it doesn't matter because the rain saturated the crops, or the animal being birth had an umbilical chord caught around its neck. The last reason

of importance that living on a farm provides excellent hands-on work opportunities - to work on vehicles and tractors, wagons, spreaders and mowers, building barns, sheds and stalls, caring for and nursing animals, tree, fruits, vegetables and plant identification. Living on a farm provides ample opportunity to be physically fit, during a time when child obesity is a huge concern. *Timothy Kellogg 12211 Clark Road Chardon, OH 44024 tkellogg@ofbf.org Geauga County*

I was raised on a 1500 acre farm and if was not for the hard work on the farm I would not have the work ethic that I have. The government should not be telling the families they can not work hard. What on earth are they thinking. If we allow this to happen what will these kids be able to do..... oh wait they will sit on the couch and get fat. they won't be allowed to do anything but play video games. think of the depression these children will have. When do these people in government think these kids learn how to farm and continue to feed our country. I will tell you when it is during their entire life! They work side by side with their family and learn and grow. I am blessed that my daughter was able to help on her grandparents dairy farm. This allowed her to know what hard work was and that life did not come easy. It would be wonderful to know where this silly idea came from and who on earth is backing it. where do these ideas come up from. *Patty Luscheck 5836 State Route 134 Lynchburg, OH 45142 3510pat@msn.com Highland County*

Without family farms, eventually younger generations would not learn to appreciate farming as a way of life and the skill of farming would become obsolete. My husband and I were raised on farms and it taught us the value of hard work and provided us with a zest for life. Without assisting with work on the farm as a child, I really doubt that I would have become the person I am today. I have no fear of hard work, getting my hands dirty, or trying new things. Our children are grown and gone now. We routinely have neighborhood children help out on the farm. They enjoy learning how to build and fix things. My husband and I both enjoy working with them. We believe we are passing on our work ethic to kids who would otherwise be without focus. Rather than working, they would be joy riding, smashing mailboxes, trashing yards, drinking/doing drugs, or finding other ways to earn some

pocket money (like robbing homes). Although we are not related to these children genetically...we have become a part of their extended family. They often call my husband for advice, or go fishing with him. Please do not pass this law! What's next? Going after babysitting, newspaper delivery, and lawnmowing jobs? Those jobs can be hazardous too.

Robin Stankoff 8467A Pleasant Valley Rd Camden, OH 45311 rstankoff@woh.rr.com Preble County

Family farms have been in the past and still are today an important segment of the back bone of this country. For generations family farms provided food for themselves, the communities as well as grain for the animals. They are still doing that today, oftentimes on a much larger scale. Children growing up on these farms go on to be hard working, community oriented members of society. Too many of today's youth do not have the necessary skills to make it in the "real world" they need assistance. Children raised on a farm are familiar with all that it takes to make the farm function properly, they are able to manage their finances and think independently. I was raised on 3 acres in Clermont county, we had a large garden to take care of and a few animals too tend to, that would go to slaughter in the fall. We learned at a young age to respect the equipment when it was in use and also what a hard days work was. I also lived less than a mile from a very large dairy farm. Every one of the children in that family have gone on to be successful, some owning their own businesses and still farming on the side.

Marla Catron Home Instead Senior Care

201 W. Main St. Mt. Orab, OH 45154

insearchofsanity27@yahoo.com Brown County

It is no longer a "family" farm if generations living in the house are not participating together to "farm". My brother and I were driving the older tractors at age 12 and driving loaded grain wagons to the local grain elevator a couple farm road miles away, while our father was harvesting in the field. My grandfather was at the elevator with another tractor waiting in line to "dump" and we would switch out for his empty wagon to take back to the fields. It was a generational team effort. Yes, things have changed, although in many ways the bigger tractors and the equipment behind them now are much safer than the ones we were driving 40-50 years ago. The proposed Fed rules that I have seen would prevent a 14 year old from even cutting our five acres

of lawn (using the same tractor I drove to the elevator when I was 12)!

*Bill Wiley, Francis-Wiley Farm 13990 Fulton Road
Sidney, OH 45365-8962 Francis.Wiley.Farm@gmail.com
Shelby County*

My family can not imagine living anywhere but on the farm. The farm is a place where we have learned so much in a practical manner as well as spiritual. We have worked together for decades and find we are close and dependant on one another and at the same time we are able to be independent with confidence.

*Lisa Wilt, Wilt farms, 925 Arbuckle Rd London, OH
43140 Wiltfarms@juno.com Madison County*

Family farms help feed America! We've helped to feed our families, neighbors, and communities. Where most large farming co. may provide food in bulk, family farms have always been the heartbeat of America by producing fresh, delicious and wholesome foods locally. Our children learn, work and even earn right along with us. They learn the value of an honest hard days work with many benefits and rewards in leadership, stewardship, caring, sharing, thinking of others rather themselves, the discipline of daily life and chores on the farm, Our family works together and plays together well! Our children are more physically fit, mentally strong and have a deep appreciation for food, animals and life in general since being on the farm. The benefits are endless.

*Mrs Cynthia DiGiorno 6309 SR 18 E New London, OH
44851 cindyloubuttercup@att.net Huron County*

Family farm bring family members closer together. When you learn to communicate your opinion and listen to others opinion, this is a skill that is not taught now days. Every one is so busy trying to be the boss that the art of communication is lost. I was born on a dairy farm and I learned from an early age a good work ethic and never quit til the job is done. Our boys now help us raise our starter steers and they have jobs to do every night. They are learning how to work together and communicate well with each other. This takes work and practice.

*Amy Dirksen, Meier Dirksen, Inc 9026 Pitsenbarger Rd
Versailles, OH 45380 jadirksen@yahoo.com
Darke County*

I grew up working on the family farm, I raised and showed cattle, rabbits, and horses in 4-H. I feel live-stock 4-H and FFA projects offer a tremendous learning experience, and they helped shape the person I am today. I am now a youth volunteer for 4-H and continue to now manage the family farm. I grew up on lawn mowers and farm tractors, I didn't have any free time to get into trouble because there was always farm work to be done. When I was 16 I started working for my neighbor feeding his calves as well, and all of my personal farm income put me through college.

*Tracie Greer PO Box 275 Pioneer, OH 43554
rabbitry@hotmail.com Williams County*

Our farm has been in our family 3 generations and we have all benefited from living there and being able to come home to a place we can truly call" home."

*Nancy Bolton-Berry 11340 Duff Washa Rd
Oak Harbor, OH 43449 Nancybberry@gmail.com
Ottawa County*

Children who work on the farm grow up learning responsibility...They learn a good work ethic. Outside labor is very good for everyone....

*Robert Hawk, HawkFarms 16041 T.H, 135 Nevada, OH
44849 hawk@udata.com Wyandot County*

Family farms teach children responsibility. They learn to take care of animals. I believe when you teach a child to care for an animal properly they become caring passionate human beings. I think it's important for children to learn where their food source comes from and to appreciate the hard work that goes into it. It is proven that children who are exposed to farm life will become more responsible hard working individuals in their future. Values on the farm that are learned cannot be taught anywhere else. To take this valuable tool away from our youth would be a tradgety.

Anonymous

From being able to work on a farm at an early age my children and myself have learned what it takes to make a sucess farming operation. My son's have learned val-ueable work ethic and what hard work is they are not afraid to try something new from the things that they have learned from there grandfather and uncle and cousins.

Anonymous

Working on a farm is character building likeno other experience. We don't need Government protection. A parent's judgment supercedes. This is an assault on the developepment of individual responsibilty, work ethic, and the American spirit.

*James Oberschlake Brown County Shotokan Karate Club
11151 Colthar Road Hamersville, OH 45130
joberschlake@hotmail.com Brown County*

As the next generation steps forward, we have to take a look back at how we got here. My parents worked hard, through the tough times and we, as a family, sacrificed a great deal in doing so. We were able to help run tractor, clean pens, feed livestock and just handing the tools to Dad meant keeping labor costs down. While growing up, we became more responsible and better disciplined helping us become better students. I would like to use farming/agriculture to help my 2 boys become better as a person. Whether that means they would become the next generation of farmers or nurses, agriculture teaches values of being a good person. A sense of responsibility is important for all people and all generations. Thank you for your time,
*Michael Scherger, Scherger Farms Inc. 6254 W. Twp. Rd.
154 Kansas, OH 44841 schergerfarms@thewavz.com
Seneca County*

Family farms are needed to keep local mills and dairies running. I have benefited from farming because raising our food grow our crops supporting the community. I learned how to work hard and have good work ethics which are missing out of kids, today. I dont expected things, i earned them. My skills on the farm helped me with all my jobs. I never give up unlike kids or students today.

*Harold Yoder 8619 Alabama Ave. Navarre, OH 44662
hyoder@drage.stark.k12.oh.us Stark County*

The work ethic that a child learns on the family farm is secon dto none, especiallty in this day and age. Hard work ethic and responsiblility learned on the family farm are critic skills that will carry through the rest of life. With kids growing up in the days of more advanced video games and online communications, they are going into the workforce not knowing how to work. Families are also not spending enough time

as a family. Everyone seems to just coexist in the same house, doing their own seperate things. Farm families live together, work together, share dreams together and work towards the same goals together. My three young girls, along with my wife and I enjoy working with cattle together. My seven year old and two three year olds have all experienced calving, cleaning pens, loading hay and showing feeder calves. It is an experience that we share as a family and they are learning responsibility that a pet or sports will never teach them. As a father, I would never put my children into harms way. As they get older they are given more repsonsibility and provided with more experiences. I strive to make the experience fun and enjoyable. I would never put them in a situation that I would consider to be dangerous. I do not feel that someone in the government can deem what is or is not a dnagerous situation. Especially when dealing with something that they have no experience with. At what point are we in in this world where a parent does not know what is best for their child. I fully understand that some parents need guidance and many have made poor choices, I am the father of an adopted child. But at what point does everyone in this society have to suffer from the poor choices and actions of a few. As an Agriculture Education teacher and FFA Advisor, students gain valuable experience and knowledge from their SUpervised Agricultural Experience programs. Many students do not grow up on a farm, this is obvious by the fact that less than 2% of our population is involved in production agriculture. When non-farm kids have the opportunity to gain work experience on someone elses farm I say bravo. Bravo for the student having enough sense to gain valuable work experience and bravo to the farmer for allwoing them to gain this experience. In the words of E.M. Tiffany, written in the FFA Creed, "I believe that live and work on a good farm is pleasant as well as challenging, for I know the joys and discomforts of agricultural life and hold an inborn fondness for those associations which, even in the hours of discouragement, I cannot deny". Let us not deprive future generations of agriculturists the priviledge of knowing this "inborn fondness" that was written about in 1928, adopted in 1930 by the FFA and has rung true for many generations.

Anonymous

We are in the process of restoring our family farm. My parents and grandfather stopped farming but many of our cousins continued. I am now in the process of re-starting the family farm. We are teaching our children responsibility and a good work ethic by having them help as they are able. We also share any profits with our children so they learn if they work hard they receive compensation.

James Brossenne 15540 Holman Rd Williamsburg, OH 45176 james.brossenne@jenzabar.net Brown County

What about the amish? Why is the gov trying to take work ethic and family tradition out of the family farm. It seems like we have to buy gym memberships and and take gov handouts instead of earning a good wage and living a healthy lifestyle on the family farm. Lets not put everyone under the problemed umbrella and fix the core of the problem.

Morrow County

I would not be involved in agriculture today if I had not grown up on a family farm doing the small tasks that help learn life lessons. If I was not involved as a child in agriculture I would have never truly understand the work that goes into running a farm, the essentials required to run a business, or understood the body language of an animal when it was sick. These are things that are learned in steps from a your age. Running an agriculture business is not something that can only be taught at the university level it is a tradition that must be passed down from generation to generation. Taking away yet another freedom limits the way of life and the national traditions of agriculture. Very few new farms make it in today's society, by taking the next generation out of the picture fewer farms will survive the hardships that go along with living in a struggling economy.

Danielle Hulit Clear Fork High School 2056 Beal Rd Mansfield, OH 44903 hulit.3@gmail.com Richland County

Family farms are the backbone of our country by providing quality food products to our citizens. There's a reason why "family" is included in the name - the entire family is involved - moms, dads, kids, cousins, and grandparents. Families are able to create traditions and their work develops pride in the family. My children

know where their food comes from. They are actively involved in problem solving when it comes to areas of our farm that we try to improve. We are able to help them make some money by raising their own livestock. We can help teach them financial responsibility along with the basic hard work ethic that they develop in doing basic chores. My best memories with my dad are times when I was little and went to the barn with him. He taught me how to milk cows, deliver calves, observe animals for health care, and ride horses. How many kids today would benefit from spending quality time with their parents while learning life long skills at the same time? The barn was our "after school" program. I hope that everything that I gained from farm life are things that I can pass on to my children....and that they are able to pass on to their children. If my kids don't learn how to do some of these things at an early age, or don't develop a passion for farm life because they are not able to be exposed to it, I don't think there will be family farms in the future.

JoAnn Pfeiffer 4315 Marion Johnson Road Albany, OH 45710 joannpf@frontier.com Athens County

Farms are important for the community as an economic engine, contributing to the local economy in many different ways. As a young man I spent many hours operating equipment for neighbors and learning to both operate equipment safely and to respect a work ethic that I may have otherwise not understood. Farms offer these opportunities to a segment of rural youth that helps them grow, mature and become independent. To take that away from a generation of youth is Un-American.

Bill Hershberger 2365 Gearhart Rd. Troy, OH 45373 bershberger1@goinx.com Miami County

It comes down to respect; people, work, living things, on and on. We have kept this country productive and "clean" by family run farms. Clean meaning good food, good people, good lives. When farms become so large that we have no family "touch" to them, this country will be sure to fail. When corporate people take over a majority of food production they will be able to dictate your life. If you think gas is a problem, wait until your meals are being monopolized by corporate (probably foreign) people. God help us if our country ever loses the family farm.

Dan Fulk 1788 CRd 555 Jeromesville, OH 44840 Nrws_Fulk@tccsa.net Ashland County

Family farms are important for children to learn family values, hard work, self satisfaction, pride in jobs well done and providing for other people. Farming helps children and all family members how to make quick decisions and also how to think things through to be able to accomplish things on the farm and how to talk and compare thoughts and ways of doing things and compromising to get projects and the work done as needed on the farm. Living on a farm teaches responsibility and how to handle finances.

*ELLEN JONES 2688 WASHINGTON JACKSON ROAD
EATON, OH 45320 ELLEN@PREBENG.ORG*

Preble County

I am currently a junior at Duke University and was raised on a 160 acre farm in southern Ohio where we raise corn, soybeans, hay, wheat, tobacco and cattle. The following is an excerpt from a piece I wrote for a scholarship that details the importance of farm life in my experience. As I left for my first semester of college, I knew my small, rural hometown to be one that held the values of family, community, and hard work close to its heart. However, my journey of 500 miles to a gothic wonderland known the world around for an attitude of superiority, brought me to a deep understanding of the place I left behind. I quickly realized the differences in the attitudes of myself and my new peers. I was now living with people who had never thrown a bale of hay, ridden or driven a tractor, seen a cow in person, hoed a row of anything, and had met their cousins perhaps once or twice in their lifetime. The fact that my new friends had never done any of this did not necessarily surprise me, what surprised me was the difference in our actions and demeanor, differences I quickly traced to my upbringing. From throwing countless bales of hay, driving many tractors, working closely with cattle, hoeing rows of corn, green beans and tobacco and living a short walk from my cousins who are my best friends, I have become the person I am today. I have learned to respect a hard day of work, to learn from the traditions of my ancestors, to help and care for my community, and to cherish my family and friends and treat all those I come across with dignity and respect. I noticed these fundamental differences, while my friends found my accent and life at home a cute novelty. They are amused by the fact that my family owns and operates a farm and that I come from a tiny community where it is an impossibility to

remain anonymous. It is from this somewhat abrupt entrance into a world completely opposite of mine that I have come to love my hometown more than I ever thought possible and to appreciate and many times marvel at those who are not from a background similar to mine. Growing up in rural southern Ohio has taught me to appreciate the most important things in life, things that are not things, but the relationships I form with those around me. My family and friends are my number one priority; they are my support system, my relief, my inspiration. I have come to the realization that a tight-knit family is not the norm, but the exception. My mother, father, brother and I are more than the typical family unit in their traditional societal roles, we are friends. We genuinely enjoy spending time with one another and have come to appreciate the strengths and idiosyncrasies that each of us brings to the table, a relationship that has been attained through days of work at each other's side. A relationship fostered in a tobacco barn, around a livestock trailer, in the cab of a tractor, and on the bed of a truck. I love my family more than words can express and am truly thankful that I have come to know and appreciate them as people. As a young woman, I pride myself on my sense of independence. I know I am not reliant on another person, a fact that brings me great freedom. I have learned to accept help from others when necessary, but first and foremost to rely on myself. This trait was developed on the farm through the teaching and trust of my parents. They taught me necessary skills and then encouraged me to use those skills on my own; they praised me in my successes and encouraged me after my failures. Because of this, I trust myself to succeed with any task, but am not afraid of and am able to learn through my failures. Learning and growing on a farm in southern Ohio has allowed me to develop a sense of pride in myself and my background. My father always told me that whatever I was doing was worth doing right. At the time those words came from his mouth, it seemed as though he was merely speaking of the wood I was stacking or the garden I was weeding, but his words ring true for every aspect of life. He has shown me that I should be proud of everything I do. I admire this fact that my father shared with me, a fact that his father undoubtedly shared with him, a fact that has shown me that I should be proud not only of what I do, but of who I am.

*Hannah Scott 8568 Henize Rd Georgetown, OH
45121 scott.hannah13@gmail.com Brown County*

It is the stories and the history of each family farm that is passed on from generation to generation. I, personally, left the family farm and worked in Higher Education, BUT, I now understand that I spent my entire “professional” life trying to get back to the family farm and save it. I accomplished that task and now live on the land I grew up on, raised sheep, cattle and horses on, helped bush-hog and mend fencing. The life experiences of growing up on this beloved farm, far surpass the shallowness of the white collar world. A farm is sacred ground to me, it spiritually speaks to me, it resonates in my soul. I learned resilience, perseverance (sp?), respect, humility, teamwork, appreciation of the stages of life, just to name a few. I also learned that a farmer could move a mountain. And if by chance that one farmer was not enough, then there would always be another farmer helping to shoulder the load.

Janis Taylor, Retired Ph.D. 5504 Brown Rd. Oxford, OH 45056 jetaylor01@gmail.com Butler County

Some of my fondest memories growing up involved various activities on the family farm. I did not consider these activities “work”, but part of my way of life. I frequently worked in the garden, cared for animals, and occasionally was able operate various equipment. These years of my life greatly impacted my work ethic and outlook on life. I was able to raise enough money through sale of animals to buy my first car and help with future college expenses. I decided to pursue agriculture business in college and then found a job in ag lending. I hope to raise my children as I was raised and would be heartbroken in my children would be restricted from participating in these same activities. I learned respect, the value of hardwork, and how to be accountable. I am certain without these skills I would not be where I am today.

Anonymous

Family farms teach students responsibility and work ethic. If children are not allowed to work on the family farm, then the future work ethic of America will diminish. Also children will not be able to participate in such programs as 4-H and FFA is many of these new regulations are established. Additionally this will effect the economy. Youth contribute to the economy through the exhibit of junior fair livestock projects and Supervised Agricultural Experiences in the Agricul-

tural Education Programs in our high schools.

Dana Snyder London High School 336 Elm Street London, OH 43140 dana.snyder@london.k12.oh.us Clark County

Family farms are vital to our nations work ethic and food supply. The children on the family farm learn to pitch in and help out on the farm at an early age and we all learn that if we don't feed the animals, they don't get fed. It teaches responsibility and accountability to all the family members.

Penny Augustus 3013 Woosley Rd. South Charleston, OH 45368 penster1968@juno.com Clark County

FIRST OF ALL I AM 53 YEARS OLD, MY DAD AND UNCLE BOTH LIVED TO BE 90 YRS OLD, THEY AND I WORKED TWO JOBS AND ARE/ WAS FARMING AT THE SAME TIME. WE RAISED LIVESTOCK AND GRAIN, MADE HAY, CUT FIRE WOOD, ETC AROUND OUR FARM. I AT A VERY YOUNG AGE OF 5 WAS ALLOWED TO RUN A TRACTOR WITH SUPERVISION UNTIL AROUND 7 YRS OF AGE I STARTED DRIVING BY MYSELF DOING DIFFERENT JOBS-BAILING, WORKING GROUND, TO NAME A FEW. A FEW YEARS LATER I WAS HOOKING UP THE EQUIPMENT AND DOING MOST EVERYTHING BY MYSELF. WE RAISED HOGS, SHEEP, HAD A SMALL DAIRY,BEEF COW/ CALF HERD, LAYING HENS(GATHERED EGGS AND CLEANED THEM) AND WE BUTCHERED MOST OF THESE ANIMALS OURSELVES FOR FOOD AND TO SELL. I BELONGED TO 4-H AND FFA AND HAD NUMEROUS STEER, AND SWINE PROJECTS THAT I TOOK TO OUR COUNTY FAIR. SO I BELIEVE THAT WORKING AROUND THE FARM GAVE ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN MANY LIFE SKILLS SUCH AS RECORD KEEPING, FINANCE, MAINTENANCE OF EQUIPMENT, PLUMBING AND ELECTRICAL, WOOD WORKING, FENCE BUILDING, WELDING, ETC. MY CHILDREN (3) TWO GIRLS AND ONE SON HAVE ALL DONE THE 4-H THING WITH DIFFERENT LIVESTOCK PROJECTS AND HAD DRIVEN TRUCKS AND TRACTORS ON OUR FARM. MY SON WAS ABOUT SEVEN WHEN I FIRST PUT HIM ON A TRACTOR DRIVING THE BALER FOR ME SO WE COULD BALE STRAW. HE DID JUST FIND WITH THE AMOUNT OF INSTRUCTION

THAT I GAVE HIM AND TO THIS DAY CAN HOP ON ABOUT ANYTHING AND DRIVE IT. MY GIRLS HAVE ATTRIBUTED THEIR GOOD WORK ETHIC FROM GROWING UP ON THE FARM. WE HAVE ALWAYS PREACHED SAFETY AROUND EQUIPMENT AND LIVESTOCK AND HAVE BEEN VERY FORTUNATE NOT TO HAVE ANY MAJOR ACCIDENTS. SO IN SUMMARY, I THINK WE ARE DOING OUR YOUNG AN INJUSTICE NOT ALLOWING THEM THE SAME OPPORTUNITIES WE'VE HAD TO LEARN DIFFERENT SKILLS AND A STRONG WORK ETHIC. YES, IT WAS HARD WORK BUT AS WE WERE ALL TOLD "HARD WORK NEVER KILLED NO ONE"

DALE GRIEST 4901 RAMSEY LANE SPRINGFIELD, OH 45502-9002 GRIEFAMFARM@MSN.COM
Clark County

Everyone writing these new rules should spend a week working on a farm before proclaiming they know more than this grandfather with sixty years working on our farm.

Dennis Weilmann 2619 Strecker Rd W Milan, OH 44846 dennyw48@gmail.com Erie County

Our family farm is a way we have of providing a quality product to feed our family. Our children are learning valuable lessons of responsibility, hard work, earning money for work provided. Our boys know how to work on farm equipment and are learning basic mechanical skills. They are learning how to manage animals safely. We also are able to raise some extra animals to provide food for our extended family and friends. We are trying to operate a sustainable farm to provide local food for local people. One of my sons wants to be a large animal vet. He can deliver lambs and make sure they are nursing correctly, he can give shots to the animals, he can provide basic health care and first aid to the animals. He has a huge advantage over other prevet students when it comes to filling out the application for vet school. Aside from all of the benefits my children are gaining by living and working on a family farm, there is another major issue being overlooked. The government has no justification to try to tell my family how to raise our children and how to run our family farm. The last time I checked, my address was the USA. We have basic freedoms that will remain. The privacy of raising our family and operating our farm the way we feel is in agreement with our

family values and beliefs is not something we will give up freely.

Debbie Roell 2251 Krucker Rd Hamilton, OH 45013
dkroell@fuse.net Butler County

Family farms allow people to grow their own food in a natural way. This is a way for our children to understand how to grow food and where their food "starts". When children grow up in this environment, they grow up loving this way of life in a way that often cannot be passed on once they are grown. If children and prevented from working on family farms, it is possible that this knowledge and experience will be lost on the next generation. Imagine if we didn't teach our children to write or read? How successful would it be to teach them these things once they are grown? The same kind of disaster could happen if we are not letting them learn to farm. There will be a knowledge gap! Where would the world be without farmers in general? Local farms keep the food close to the members of society. In times of crisis, this is the best way to prevent starvation and ensure that those around the farm are also provided for.

Natalee Ziebro 1886 Devils Backbone Rd. Cincinnati, OH 45233 nziebro@gmail.com Hamilton County

When my family lived on a small farm it taught my children and I responsibility. We were very close as a family we worshipped God, worked hard and helped our neighbors both the ones who lived the country and the one who lived in the city. The proposed legislation is an infringement on the rights of Ohio citizens to make these decisions for themselves and for their own children. Let farming families make these decisions for themselves and stop eroding away our rights!
Lynn Strasser 2973 Wardall Ave. Cincinnati, OH 45211
lstrasser@fuse.net Hamilton County

In our area employers are looking for farm kids to work because they are the only ones with a work ethic.. the town kids are a bunch of overweight couch potatoes who have never been taught anything. The Federal government needs to start getting a life and do something constructive, like securing our borders and getting people off the public dole.

John Greiwe, Mill Valley Farms 5965 State Route 29 E Sidney, OH 45365 millvalleyfarms@woh.rr.com

As a father of three farm children, a past Agriculture instructor, a current administrator of a career tech center and the son of a farmer, I find this new legislation to be limiting to the largest industry in the United States, Agriculture. I personally grew up with the ability to go outside and work with my family on the farm. We ran tractors and other equipment and raised cattle. I will agree that there are dangers found in this occupation, however they are no more so than the any other occupation. I am a firm believer that persons that have grown up on the farm with training and afforded experiences are some of the most detailed and hardest working men and women. Work ethic is inbedded in their everyday life. The benefits to these experiences are priceless, not to mention the connection between parents and children that form and maintain a life long bond of trust and respect.

Anonymous

Family farms are very important in that they provide us with sustainable food. We have real threats to our safety in this country and when the main stream commercial food market is closed down due to an emergency of some sort then we have access to local food. With gas prices high and projected to go up even higher we need local family farms that are handed down generations to keep those lands producing. Farmland is being lost “ Between 2002 and 2007, 7,491,300 acres of rural land were converted to developed uses—an area nearly the size of Maryland. This amounts to an average annual conversion rate of 1,498,200 acres. “ “Ohio lost 796,000 acres of prime farmland in a 25 years.” (Farmland.org) Family farms offer a life style of helping children to be responsible for their own needs and the needs of others. Many children who have grown up on farms appreciate the valuable lessons they have learned. It would be a terrible injustice to our culture to pass such rules. 4-H programs are top notch opportunities for children to learn essential skills. We should not rob them of wonderful opportunities. Please reconsider such rules. Mrs Nerswick
Loretta Nerswick 3070 Layhigh Road Hamilton, OH 45013 lorettanerswick@yahoo.com Butler County

Farm life is the backbone of America and represents solid work ethic values and builds character. It provides a real in-touch awareness of the environment and

not just talking about it in a classroom. Why should this rich tradition of families working on their farms and helping each other out be prevented without serious damage to America in the short and long haul.
Joe Lippian 1112 Beechview Dr South Worthington, OH 43085 lippianfam10@aol.com Franklin County

I was born and raised on a family Jersey farm in Clinton County, Ohio. I was in 4-H through out all of my youth along with my two sisters. We, along with our father, exhibited Jersey cattle at county fairs, state fairs, and national shows. We attended 4-H camp every summer and went on to become Jr. leaders and camp counselors. The valuable life lessons and strong work ethic learned from growing up on our farm with my father would be too numerous to count. It made us the successful people that we are today. I went on to become a large animal veterinarian. I have been a 4-H advisor, on the Ohio Veterinary Licensing Board, and president of the Ohio Jersey Breeders. I now have my family Jersey farm. My niece and nephew have been in 4-H showing my Jersey cattle for all of their youth, also. They have won showmanship classes, attended 4-H camp, and are on dairy judging teams. Hannah was president of her FFA chapter and went on to receive a state degree. She now is an honor student at The Ohio State University. My nephew is now president of his 4-H club and very active in his high school FFA chapter as well as getting admitted to the National Honor Society. He plans to go to The Ohio State University and study veterinary medicine as I did. Each summer I allow any other kids in my county who want a Jersey heifer for a 4-H project to use one of my animals. Last year at our county fair, there were 7 kids that I was helping and they were showing my animals. At present, my family farm is an LLC, for liability and insurance reasons. My nephew, along with my partner's two children help us. The 4-H cycle continues as now I help my partner's son with his projects. My partner's little daughter even shows her calf in the kiddie show at the county fair. I can name 10 kids in my county alone that have grown up with a connection to my small farm alone. Ten kids that I hope I have helped to become more prepared for success in their lives just from the benefits of being able to help on a dairy farm. Laws such as these proposed are nothing more than all part of Obama's plan to remove family farmers from their land. He has it all spelled out as to how he will accomplish this. I have looked it up and studied his plan.

Basically, he plans to regulate family farms out of business. The whole idea is beyond words to me. I cannot even begin to tell you how badly this law would affect our youth. I guess he would rather have them grow up to be in the hood on welfare. *Deborah A. Stanfield, DVM 2991 Kaiser Rd. Fort Loramie, OH 45845 jersey-doc@roadrunner.com Shelby County*

I grew up on a dairy farm where hard work was the normal. We learned responsibility and dedication to working that farm was not only a farm trait but a way of life that would suit any occupation. As children, we never had a problem with getting into trouble because we weren't around where trouble was. And when we grew older, the responsibilities we learned early in life kept us from getting into trouble. We currently are raising two of our grandchildren and decided to move back to a farm where we could give those children the benefit of what I had growing up. The best chance of them growing up with values that are important for them. The life lessons they will learn working with animals and having things to do that are creative not destructive gives them their best chance in life. The changes proposed will be so widely damaging to this way of life. It will completely destroy a way of life that is good and hole some and replace it with what?

Jon R. Butts 5859 Bean Rd. Sardinia, OH 45171 Mando37@yahoo.com Brown County

Our children are OUR future, so we will do everything we can to be certain they are safe on the farm; learning each new job as they mature. We would not put them in a harmful situation; for as I said before, THEY, our children, are OUR future and the future of feeding YOUR families!!!

Jody L. Stevens Hill Top Farms 6460 Kroft Rd. P.O.Box 46 Mount Perry, OH 43760 mjstevens1031@hotmail.com Perry County

My husband grew up on a dairy farm. He talks about how he & his siblings learned and grew from helping on the farm. How he learned responsibility, the importance of 'others first', how he would get up in the morning & do his chores before breakfast putting the welfare of the animals first. My husband & I have custody of 2 of our grandchildren, 7 & 9 years old. We were full time musicians but decided to stop performing, move

to a 137 acre farm & let our grandchildren benefit from living on a farm. We have a 11 year old grand daughter that is in 4 H & lives 10 minutes away. I told her that we would get a horse but she would be responsible for the upkeep. Now your trying to pass a law that would make it impossible for that to happen! How is that helping?! Children now are less social than ever because of hand held games, tv & the Internet. You are wanting to take away a life learning experience that would teach them responsibility & that there is more to life than a digital world?! I'm a 'city girl'; I grew up in Cincinnati, Ohio. 30 years ago when I met my husband & experienced the closeness of farming families I was very impressed. Families grow together, not apart. This will not help but will hinder. NO, do not pass it!
Lisa Dapper Butts 5859 Bean Rd Sardinia, OH 45171 hammeredulcimer@gmail.com 937-716-3288 Brown County

Today it is very difficult to give children opportunities to learn the value of work because of all the devices, styles of living and multiple activities available. The privilege of working close to the land and nature gives a view of the world like no other and affords a plethora of educational experiences. Participating in family owned businesses, projects and responsibilities is key to a bonded and cohesive family. Family is the basis of a successful society. Although I do not live on a "farm" in the common thought, our acreage is enough to support a small pick your own apple business with vegetables, sweet corn and pumpkins as well. My grandchildren are learning to prune trees, pick apples, and see benefits of their working contribution. I also depend on them for this help and love the time we spend together in the orchard. Among other benefits for them, they eat well while working!! It would be such a loss for all concerned to regulate out these experiences and opportunities.

Bonnie Goodson, Goodson Gardens and Orchard 7956 Steitz Rd. Powell, OH 43065 goodsonsupick@frontier.com Delaware County

The thought of this topic makes me very emotional. I have lived and worked on our 112-year-old family farm my entire 32 years of life. Our operation consists of fourth and fifth generation farmers and it is hard to believe that we would have made it this far as a working family farm had the proposed restrictions been

in place. When I was very young, probably 8 or 9, my first "job" was collecting eggs from our 15,000 chicken operation. It was hard work for a scrawny eight year old girl. BUT, I had a responsibility to my father and to my family that to keep our farm going, work had to be done- by ALL of us, and I understood that and did my part. My grandparents had 7 children and 19 grandchildren- all of whom either were raised or in one way or another grew up on our farm. I have four older brothers, who helped my father and uncle bale hay, collect eggs, drive tractors, take care of cattle, work the fields, and more. We had several cousins that helped collect eggs and also neighbors and friends that pitched in during the summer bale hay. Having young people that are willing and excited to work on a farm is essential to keep a that farm in production. ESPECIALLY in this day and age where children have become lazy and complacent, video games and clothing brands are what is important to them- not family values and hard work. I am now 32 and have a 4 year old daughter of my own. I am a hard working single mother and I know that without the core values that I was taught as a child, to have persistence, know the value of hard work and what goes into growing food for our community, how to love and care for animals, to have responsibility and morals and that family and land is important- I would have never been the woman that I am today. I have 2 jobs- one that is a traditional career as a graphic designer that I need to support myself and my daughter- and one that I LOVE, running and managing our farm market during the summer and fall months. My daughter helps in our gardens picking vegetables and weeding and also at the market sorting thru produce and stocking shelves. She enjoys riding in the tractor and helping to feed our livestock. I would never allow her to do anything that would put her in harms way. But I do encourage her to be a part of our family tradition so that she grows to be a well rounded, hard working individual. I do not need our government to give me guidelines that will tell me what is dangerous for my child- I already know how to raise her and what would be hazardous for her to be around, I have common sense and an awareness of the dangers of farm life- I am her parent! None of us have ever been put in a situation where we have been harmed during our time on the farm. There have been five generations that have loved and nurtured our land, that have put time and effort to be where we are today. Being a part of such a wonderful life at a young age is essential- so that they learn to love the same things and can carry on the tradition- feeding the world!

*Sarah Luther 5245 Alger Road Richfield, OH 44286
sarahluther@yahoo.com Summit County*

I don't have any children but my nephew loves to help on farm . I think it's really good . Working on the farm made me stronger so if it help me so much why not let my nephew help he likes it

*Daniel Luther, Luther farms 5287 Alger Rd
Richfield, OH 44286 Dlhawkboy@gmail.com Summit
County*

Family farms not only produce fruits and veggies or livestock. They teach responsibilities along with a great respect for what the earth has to offer. Nothing is taken for granted.

*Michael Mazaros, Luther Farms 16404 Melgrave Ave
Cleveland, OH 44135 Mrbaseball_48@hotmail.com
Cuyahoga County*

I come from a small town in rural Ohio. This town was founded 203 years ago on the rich fields farmers could build a home, a barn and begin their farms, raise their families, and make a living. I am part of the local historical society and nowhere have I ever heard of a child 16 and under being hurt or even worse killed while working on their farms. Today, even with our town growing, there are still many family run farms in the area. These family farms are a huge part of our community. Whether they are fruit farms, chicken farms, or a combination of all types of farming, the families who have run them have done so for generations. They are families that are a close knit group of people. They have instilled in their children the ways of survival from the land. They have taught them the importance of business and most important what it means to be a family working together. I think what the labor department is proposing is absolutely wrong. In no way should they be allowed to say what a farming family anywhere in this United States what farmers children can and can't do. Farming has taken place for generations without interference from government and should be kept that way. Branding, castration, operating farm equipment has been done by farmers children for GENERATIONS. The government should keep their noses out of it and work where it is needed. Leave the farmers alone!

*Kelly Clark, Historical Museum of Richfield 5229 Broad-
view Road Richfield, OH 44286 kellyeclark522@live.com*

Today's youth need to have a work ethic and working on a farm whether it is immediate family or extended families is of upmost value to the youth. It is through this experience that the next generation of farmers will come. Our food is not grown in grocery stores.

Anonymous

Family farms are an extremely important part of America from the past, to now in the present, and especially to the future. I have learned so much as an individual growing up and working on a family farm. I intend to raise my family that way. We are the true Americans - we do our part to try and keep this country how it's supposed to be. This way of life has taught me responsibility. I have taken so many lessons learned on the farm to other parts of my life. There are so many people that we are supporting now thru all sorts of government programs and basically because most of them don't want to work. I know I've had the "joy" of working with some of them. It was simple for me growing up - if you wanted to eat - you worked. (Which is also biblical - that in itself is a whole another ballgame). At the rate America's going there won't be many family farms left, we'll all be eating who knows what and we all will depend on the government to take care of us. The government as a whole could learn a lot from a family farm; for example, responsibility - on all aspects, a more sound tried and true financial plan, how to work for a living, independency, loyalty, morals, keeping your word, trust, just to name a few the list could go on and on. I wouldn't change anything about how I grew up or what I plan to do with my family. We need family farms for America to survive and thrive. It's that simple.

Kellie Hatfield 4980 Weaver Fort Jefferson Rd Greenville, OH 45331 kelliejo05@yahoo.com Darke County

Family farms are mission critical to the defense infrastructure of our country, for the same reason we are the United States vs. the typical form of nation a multitude of providers and dispersion of power always proves to improve stability and prevent abuse. It is incontrovertible that greater economic stability is created in prices to consumers with more competition and smaller competitors, i.e., more family farms. Only an enemy of economic stability, property rights and national security would in their right mind object to

the legal conveniences granted family farms.

*Mark Faust, Echelon Management International
4986 Mallet Hill Suite 300 Cincinnati, OH
45244-1072 mark@em1990.com Hamilton County*

I was born and raised on a family farm. My brother still owns and operates the same farm that has been in the family since 1900. This farm has been a success because our family, together, has worked in all capacities on this farm. All of us young and old have memories of working on that farm that have made us stronger and built a work ethic that few can measure up to... I started as a child gathering eggs, grading eggs, showing cattle, picking up rocks in the field, gardening, moving chickens and many other tasks. Our family did this together and in doing so our lives have been forever enriched and strengthened. Within families we all have chores to do to make a family work. Farm families just have different chores. Instead of doing dishes or making beds, we bale hay or gather eggs. Some of my fondest memories are working side by side with my siblings to complete a task that made us proud. I still love all 6 of my siblings and we all get along great. We are all grown and still live within 10 miles of that family farm. I wonder how many families today can say the same. Working together for a common goal can only strengthen families. Do not take this away from farming America.

*Marilyn Scarbrough 3315 W. Streetsboro Rd
Richfield, OH 44286 mscarb56yahoo.com
Summit County*

the family farm is the back bone of America. No food for the world, as this is presently becoming a big problem. Gov't needs to protect the country, other than that, leave us alone.....

*Judy Hall 608 Coharie Drive Clingon, NC 28328
jusersellers.hall@gmail.com Greene County*

Family farms are the key to America's most productive, efficient, and safe food supply. The most affordable and safest in the world! The family farm provides the children an opportunity to learn the skills, the mental fortitude, and the benefits of working for yourself as a farmer. When the children learn to love it, they are willing to do what it takes so they never have to leave it. They become our future. Furthermore, it is just

plain unrealistic to think we could prevent all injuries through legislation. I think it isn't even desirable. When I fell out of a hay mow while in high school, it cemented my decision to become a nurse. That was a good outcome. There were no long term effects, except that I learned to verify and double check things that could be risky. It was much better to learn that lesson in this manner than had I wrecked a car, or worse. We see thousands of teens who die in car accidents every year, yet we do not outlaw their driving. And, if we tried to enforce the legislation against kids helping and learning on the farm, we would have a police presence on our farm and possibly in the home. There are much better ways to reduce the risk and manage the farm.

Farm kids and the young people who lease dairy calves from me as a 4-H project learn responsibility! If they do not care for the animal, it is immediately obvious as the animal becomes unhappy and moos. This is a much better way to teach responsibility because there are immediate, natural and obvious consequences, unlike if the bed isn't made. FFA is the best youth development program there is. If I could do just one thing for the disadvantaged youth of America, I would enroll them in FFA with dairy calves. They would learn animal care, a work ethic, safety, public speaking, sales promotion, responsibility, team work, parliamentary procedure, and so very much more. They would be eligible to do a science experience each year and could even serve as a national officer. With the proposed rules, this would not be possible.

Mary, Ideal Jersey 4716 N Old State Rd Delaware, OH 43015 fleming4716@msn.com Delaware County

There is no substitute for proper adult supervision of young people around power tools and equipment and their safety is of the utmost importance. But, with that said, it is unfortunate that more children, not fewer, are able to work alongside their parents or other adult family members to learn the value of work well done. There are things that rural children may miss out on when compared to their "city cousins", but the opportunity to work with and alongside family members on a family farm is an asset that is hard to find any where else. There are skills and values I use and call on every day that I learned doing work at a young age along with family.

Gerald Glenn 3549 St. Rt. 521 Delaware, OH 43015 geraldglenn@gmail.com Delaware County

our children have learned responsibility and what hard work can produce. "*****"they are now taking over the farm and the farm couldn't be in better hands. 4H and FFA gave them confidence to tackle and job and not be afraid to fail and do the job better next time, not give up. No time on their hands for trouble on a dairy farm. "We have several boys who call to bale hay each year, we only have to tell the ag. teacher.

Edgar McMahan, McMahan Farms 29245 McMahan Rd Richwood, OH 43344 mcmahandairy2@byhalia.net Union County

My children are active physically and mentally on the jobs we have at the farm. We do not force them to work, they want to take care of their animals and learn how to drive a tractor. Our children have xbox and videos, but are limited in play time for their own reasons. They are able to play outside or inside, 85% of the time they are outside hanging out on the rounds bales and watching the animals. Our children know what work ethic is and if nay of you have been out in the job market with the younger generations will see the LACK of work ethic and the " get paid for not doing any work" ear has begun.

Aimee BLumenschein 10630 state route 736 Plain City, OH 43064 blumenschein5@columbus.rr.com Union County



"Forging a Partnership between Farmers and Consumers"

280 North High Street / Floor 6
P.O. Box 182383
Columbus, Ohio 43218

Phone (614) 249-2400 / Fax (614) 249-2200

www.ofbf.org