

# Breakfast on the Farm



**First-ever  
Washtenaw  
County Breakfast  
on the Farm  
draws 2,300  
attendees from  
seven states and  
Canada**

**M**MPA members Earl and Diane Horning and their family hosted a large group of friends, neighbors and perfect strangers at their farm for breakfast recently. In fact, the Washtenaw County dairy family, named the 2010 Dairy Farmer of the Year by Michigan State University, hosted more than 2,300 people for Breakfast on the Farm June 26 on their dairy operation near Manchester. Those attending the breakfast originated from 75 towns spread across seven states and Ontario, Canada.

The event's complimentary breakfast was supplied by Domino's Pizza. The nutritious "breakfast pizza" featured eggs, pork topping and cheese on a whole-grain crust. It was accompanied by pork sausage, Michigan apples, Welch's grape juice and milk. Domino's Pizza served a total of 525 eight-slice breakfast pizzas.

In addition to breakfast, guests could take a free self-guided tour of the six-generation family dairy operation that started in 1877. Today, the family milks 360 Holstein cows, raises 410 head of young stock and farms 700 acres of cropland.

Before embarking on the tour, attendees pulled plastic booties over their footwear, a common practice implemented by farms to help keep their animals healthy. The booties were worn to minimize the chance that attendees could potentially transmit infectious diseases to the animals.

The self-guided tour allowed guests to view the dairy's state-of-the-art milking parlor and watch cows being milked; the Horning's milk their cows twice each day. Guests could also climb aboard modern-day farm equipment, visit with a veterinarian, see where cows eat and sleep, pet baby calves, take a tractor and wagon ride, and touch and smell the feeds that cows eat.

Nearly 190 volunteers were present to help the day's events and activities run smoothly. Volunteers ranged from other local farmers to veterinarians, MSU Extension staff members, Washtenaw County Farm Bureau members, and representatives from other agriculture industry businesses and organizations. They performed a variety of fundamental roles, from serving beverages and ice cream to helping young ones milk a mock cow to teaching attendees about the feeds that cows eat to explaining

how the milking parlor works and answering any questions that attendees might have.

"Dairy farming has changed immensely since the 1970s and 1980s, and many people are not familiar with the new technology," said Nancy Thelen, Washtenaw County MSU Extension director. "Breakfast on the Farm provides a fun setting to come face to face with the farm families who are responsible for producing our affordable and safe food supply."

The Breakfast on the Farm program was created in 2009 by MSU Extension to help non-farm families learn how a modern-day dairy farm operates. The Washtenaw Breakfast was organized by the Washtenaw County MSU Extension office and the Washtenaw County Farm Bureau.

Statewide sponsoring partners for the 2010 Breakfast on the Farm are the Michigan Milk Producers Association, Dairy Farmers of America, Dairyland Seed, Greenstone Farm Credit Services, Pioneer and the United Dairy Industry of Michigan.

For more information about the Breakfast on the Farm program, visit [www.breakfastonthefarm.com](http://www.breakfastonthefarm.com).



