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John's Farm ... Healthy soil, healthy food and healthy people

By Mandy Gross, FAPC Manager of Communications Services

(Stillwater, Okla. – Jan. 26, 2012) John's Farm represents four generations of farming history by taking pride in organic farming techniques.

Located in Fairview, Okla., owners John and Kris Gosney are both descendants of Oklahoma farming pioneers and maintain family Oklahoma Centennial Farms.

"Rewarding family relationships and successful family business are the passions that motivate each of us to work diligently to ensure the grain raised and the cattle grown exemplify the purest nature has to offer," Kris Gosney said. "Each member of our family contributes to the farm in a unique manner from tillage to sales."

The goal of John's Farm is to develop a healthy soil and grow healthy plants and animals so consumers can have healthy choices.

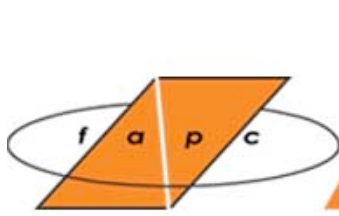
"Farming techniques and animal raising practices are measured by crop and livestock environmentally friendly practices and procedures, sustainable systems, and organic standards," John Gosney said. "We believe that this is the way God intended us to farm."

Using organic methods since 1996, John's Farm is certified organic by the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry, and became the first farm and ranch in Oklahoma to become certified through this organic certification program in February 2003.

The company produces Cattle Tracks Beef, Fairview's Best Organic Whole Wheat Flour, Fairview's Best Organic Wheat Berries, Gloss Mountain Beef Jerky, and Behind the Barn chili mixes and all-purpose spices.

The Gosneys are first to admit that running a family business is rewarding, but also challenging in the same respect. That is why they sought assistance from Oklahoma State University's Robert M. Kerr Food & Agricultural Products Center.

Both John and Kris attended FAPC's Basic Training for food entrepreneurs in February 2000, and the FAPC has worked closely with the Gosneys since that time.



In early 2005, they contacted FAPC for assistance in marketing and developing packaged organic whole-wheat flour and other organic whole wheat.

“To cover the expenses associated with marketing and development of value-added products, they applied for and were awarded a Farm Diversification Grant from the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry, and branded their product as ‘GO Organic™,’” said Chuck Willoughby, FAPC business and marketing relations manager. “The FAPC assisted with the writing of this Farm Diversification Grant.”

The FAPC also helped them understand and develop their pricing system, evaluated the quality of their wheat, provided nutrition facts and performed a review of their label to evaluate FDA compliance.

In late 2009, the Gosneys sought to re-brand their whole-wheat flour as “Fairview’s Best.” In order to market the flour in a printed flour sack modeled after an original sack sold in the 1900s by Fairview Milling Company, they received another Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Farm Diversification Grant in February 2010.

Since being awarded this grant, the FAPC has provided nutrition facts, graphic design consultation, FDA compliance label review and sensory analysis assistance.

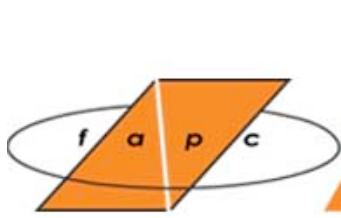
Recently, John’s Farm received a United States Department of Agriculture Value-Added Producers Grant for the marketing of value-added organic beef, and the FAPC will provide in-kind support to assist with product development, marketing promotion and other technical assistance needs.

“Our work with John’s Farm is a good example of how FAPC brings together the expertise of various team members to take an entrepreneurial client, and in this case an agricultural producer, from an idea to a successful value-added enterprise,” Willoughby said.

In addition to all the grants received, the Gosneys were selected the 2010 Fairview Business of the Year, John Gosney was featured for his grass-pastured, organic operation in the September 2011 Stockman Grassfarmer, and John’s Farm was awarded the Environmental Stewardship Award for the 2011 Henry Bellmon Sustainability Awards.

“It’s relatively simple to come up with a product idea; it’s a difficult task evolving an idea into a saleable product which includes meeting standards and regulations for food safety, labeling and marketing,” Kris Gosney said. “Finding the FAPC opened up a world of experience, expertise and knowledge. We are blessed to have opportunity to have been able to share our adventure with the FAPC.”

Because of the Gosney’s experience, many agricultural producers turn to the Gosneys for value-added product recommendations.



Robert M. Kerr
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“Other producers ask me for advice in ag-related product ideas,” John Gosney said. “My answer is simple – contact the FAPC.”

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