

# What IS that?

As you travel around DeKalb County, you will see many different structures on farms. Everyone knows what a barn is, but do you know the difference between a silo and a grain bin? Can you tell which buildings are home to livestock, and which are used to store machinery? Here are some helpful clues.



## Grain Bin

Grain bins are the large, round, metal structures you see on many farms. They are used to store corn, soybeans, or other grains. Grain bins are wider than they are tall and have pointed roofs. They are almost when they are new but turn gray over time.



## Silo

Many silos seen on today's farms are no longer in use. They were built when more cattle were raised in wet areas. Silos are meant to hold silage, a wet feed made from chopped grass plants. Most silos are made of tan or gray cement. Some have a round metal roof.

Some farms now use pit silos. A pit silo is a long concrete or earth pit in which silage is stored. The feed is covered with large tarps which are sometimes weighed down with tires so they don't blow away.



## Hog Confinement

Most pigs today are raised in these clean, indoor hog barns. Like our horses, confinement buildings are kept cool in the summer and warm in the winter so the pigs are always comfortable. They have large fans to keep air moving. Special curtains can be raised to keep cold air out and lowered to let fresh air in. Automatic feeders and waterers let the pigs eat or drink as needed. Confinement buildings also protect pigs from predators and disease and make it easier for farmers to care for them.

## Harvestore

A Harvestore is a special silo. They are blue because the mineral cobalt is used in the outside casing. Harvestores are meant to be airtight, which means outside air cannot dry or spoil the feed. Like silos, some Harvestores you see are no longer in use. If you see both cattle and Harvestores on a farm, chances are those silos are still used. All Harvestores were built until the 1980s in DeKalb right here in our own county!



## Feedlot

A feedlot is an enclosed pen and building where cattle are fed and cared for until they are ready for market. Cattle that have been born and raised on pasture are brought to feedlots to be fed special rations or mixtures of grain, forage, and minerals. Feedlots allow cattle farmers to make sure the animals are healthy and will provide maximum meat for humans.



## Barn

Many barns were built over 100 years old. They were built of wood and meant to shelter several purposes. Livestock, tools, and machinery were kept on the ground floor. Hay to feed the animals or straw for animal bedding was stored in the loft. White most barns are red, some were painted white. Some farms still use the barns for storage or update them to house livestock.

## Grain Leg

When you visit a tall building, you may see the elevator. You go up at the ground level, the elevator car lifts you to the correct floor, and you get off. Grain legs are elevators for grain. Grain goes on at the bottom, is lifted to the top, and is unloaded into a grain bin.

Harvested grain is brought to the farm and dumped into underground pits near the bins. The bottom of the grain leg is in the pit. The leg is high above the grain bins. When the leg is turned on, rectangular buckets within the leg scoop grain out of the pit. The buckets work like elevator cars to carry grain to the top of the leg. At the top, each bucket tips grain into a pipe. The grain falls down the pipe into a grain bin. The empty buckets travel back down the leg, scoop up more grain, move back to the top, tip, and travel back down in a continuous loop. (This process is why grain storage facilities are called "elevators".)

Wheat Learning Standards  
1.2.2a, 1.2.2b, 1.2.2c, 1.2.2d, 1.2.2e, 1.2.2f, 1.2.2g, 1.2.2h, 1.2.2i, 1.2.2j, 1.2.2k, 1.2.2l, 1.2.2m, 1.2.2n, 1.2.2o, 1.2.2p, 1.2.2q, 1.2.2r, 1.2.2s, 1.2.2t, 1.2.2u, 1.2.2v, 1.2.2w, 1.2.2x, 1.2.2y, 1.2.2z, 1.2.2aa, 1.2.2ab, 1.2.2ac, 1.2.2ad, 1.2.2ae, 1.2.2af, 1.2.2ag, 1.2.2ah, 1.2.2ai, 1.2.2aj, 1.2.2ak, 1.2.2al, 1.2.2am, 1.2.2an, 1.2.2ao, 1.2.2ap, 1.2.2aq, 1.2.2ar, 1.2.2as, 1.2.2at, 1.2.2au, 1.2.2av, 1.2.2aw, 1.2.2ax, 1.2.2ay, 1.2.2az, 1.2.2ba, 1.2.2bb, 1.2.2bc, 1.2.2bd, 1.2.2be, 1.2.2bf, 1.2.2bg, 1.2.2bh, 1.2.2bi, 1.2.2bj, 1.2.2bk, 1.2.2bl, 1.2.2bm, 1.2.2bn, 1.2.2bo, 1.2.2bp, 1.2.2bq, 1.2.2br, 1.2.2bs, 1.2.2bt, 1.2.2bu, 1.2.2bv, 1.2.2bw, 1.2.2bx, 1.2.2by, 1.2.2bz, 1.2.2ca, 1.2.2cb, 1.2.2cc, 1.2.2cd, 1.2.2ce, 1.2.2cf, 1.2.2cg, 1.2.2ch, 1.2.2ci, 1.2.2cj, 1.2.2ck, 1.2.2cl, 1.2.2cm, 1.2.2cn, 1.2.2co, 1.2.2cp, 1.2.2cq, 1.2.2cr, 1.2.2cs, 1.2.2ct, 1.2.2cu, 1.2.2cv, 1.2.2cw, 1.2.2cx, 1.2.2cy, 1.2.2cz, 1.2.2da, 1.2.2db, 1.2.2dc, 1.2.2dd, 1.2.2de, 1.2.2df, 1.2.2dg, 1.2.2dh, 1.2.2di, 1.2.2dj, 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1.2.2hs, 1.2.2ht, 1.2.2hu, 1.2.2hv, 1.2.2hw, 1.2.2hx, 1.2.2hy, 1.2.2hz, 1.2.2ia, 1.2.2ib, 1.2.2ic, 1.2.2id, 1.2.2ie, 1.2.2if, 1.2.2ig, 1.2.2ih, 1.2.2ii, 1.2.2ij, 1.2.2ik, 1.2.2il, 1.2.2im, 1.2.2in, 1.2.2io, 1.2.2ip, 1.2.2iq, 1.2.2ir, 1.2.2is, 1.2.2it, 1.2.2iu, 1.2.2iv, 1.2.2iw, 1.2.2ix, 1.2.2iy, 1.2.2iz, 1.2.2ja, 1.2.2jb, 1.2.2jc, 1.2.2jd, 1.2.2je, 1.2.2jf, 1.2.2jg, 1.2.2jh, 1.2.2ji, 1.2.2jj, 1.2.2jk, 1.2.2jl, 1.2.2jm, 1.2.2jn, 1.2.2jo, 1.2.2jp, 1.2.2jq, 1.2.2jr, 1.2.2js, 1.2.2jt, 1.2.2ju, 1.2.2jv, 1.2.2jw, 1.2.2jx, 1.2.2jy, 1.2.2jz, 1.2.2ka, 1.2.2kb, 1.2.2kc, 1.2.2kd, 1.2.2ke, 1.2.2kf, 1.2.2kg, 1.2.2kh, 1.2.2ki, 1.2.2kj, 1.2.2kl, 1.2.2km, 1.2.2kn, 1.2.2ko, 1.2.2kp, 1.2.2kq, 1.2.2kr, 1.2.2ks, 1.2.2kt, 1.2.2ku, 1.2.2kv, 1.2.2kw, 1.2.2kx, 1.2.2ky, 1.2.2kz, 1.2.2la, 1.2.2lb, 1.2.2lc, 1.2.2ld, 1.2.2le, 1.2.2lf, 1.2.2lg, 1.2.2lh, 1.2.2li, 1.2.2lj, 1.2.2lk, 1.2.2ll, 1.2.2lm, 1.2.2ln, 1.2.2lo, 1.2.2lp, 1.2.2lq, 1.2.2lr, 1.2.2ls, 1.2.2lt, 1.2.2lu, 1.2.2lv, 1.2.2lw, 1.2.2lx, 1.2.2ly, 1.2.2lz, 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1.2.2uo, 1.2.2up, 1.2.2uq, 1.2.2ur, 1.2.2us, 1.2.2ut, 1.2.2uu, 1.2.2uv, 1.2.2uw, 1.2.2ux, 1.2.2uy, 1.2.2uz, 1.2.2va, 1.2.2vb, 1.2.2vc, 1.2.2vd, 1.2.2ve, 1.2.2vf, 1.2.2vg, 1.2.2vh, 1.2.2vi, 1.2.2vj, 1.2.2vk, 1.2.2vl, 1.2.2vm, 1.2.2vn, 1.2.2vo, 1.2.2vp, 1.2.2vq, 1.2.2vr, 1.2.2vs, 1.2.2vt, 1.2.2vu, 1.2.2vv, 1.2.2vw, 1.2.2vx, 1.2.2vy, 1.2.2vz, 1.2.2wa, 1.2.2wb, 1.2.2wc, 1.2.2wd, 1.2.2we, 1.2.2wf, 1.2.2wg, 1.2.2wh, 1.2.2wi, 1.2.2wj, 1.2.2wk, 1.2.2wl, 1.2.2wm, 1.2.2wn, 1.2.2wo, 1.2.2wp, 1.2.2wq, 1.2.2wr, 1.2.2ws, 1.2.2wt, 1.2.2wu, 1.2.2wv, 1.2.2ww, 1.2.2wx, 1.2.2wy, 1.2.2wz, 1.2.2xa, 1.2.2xb, 1.2.2xc, 1.2.2xd, 1.2.2xe, 1.2.2xf, 1.2.2xg, 1.2.2xh, 1.2.2xi, 1.2.2xj, 1.2.2xk, 1.2.2xl, 1.2.2xm, 1.2.2xn, 1.2.2xo, 1.2.2xp, 1.2.2xq, 1.2.2xr, 1.2.2xs, 1.2.2xt, 1.2.2xu, 1.2.2xv, 1.2.2xw, 1.2.2xx, 1.2.2xy, 1.2.2xz, 1.2.2ya, 1.2.2yb, 1.2.2yc, 1.2.2yd, 1.2.2ye, 1.2.2yf, 1.2.2yg, 1.2.2yh, 1.2.2yi, 1.2.2yj, 1.2.2yk, 1.2.2yl, 1.2.2ym, 1.2.2yn, 1.2.2yo, 1.2.2yp, 1.2.2yq, 1.2.2yr, 1.2.2ys, 1.2.2yt, 1.2.2yu, 1.2.2yv, 1.2.2yw, 1.2.2yx, 1.2.2yy, 1.2.2yz, 1.2.2za, 1.2.2zb, 1.2.2zc, 1.2.2zd, 1.2.2ze, 1.2.2zf, 1.2.2zg, 1.2.2zh, 1.2.2zi, 1.2.2zj, 1.2.2zk, 1.2.2zl, 1.2.2zm, 1.2.2zn, 1.2.2zo, 1.2.2zp, 1.2.2zq, 1.2.2zr, 1.2.2zs, 1.2.2zt, 1.2.2zu, 1.2.2zv, 1.2.2zw, 1.2.2zx, 1.2.2zy, 1.2.2zz

## Machine Shed

Machine sheds are used to keep equipment from being damaged by weather. They are like large garages for tractors and combines. Machine sheds are built of metal sheets attached to a framework of wooden posts. They often house the farm shop, where equipment is repaired. Sometimes the farm office is also located within a machine shed.



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## DeKalb County



# Farmers

## An Agricultural MAGazine

## You depend on farmers

At almost every moment of your life, you are using something grown by a farmer.

Right now you are holding paper made with wood pulp and corn starch. The words you are reading are printed with ink from soybeans. You might be sweating clothing made from cotton, harvested from cotton plants. Your next meal or snack will no doubt contain many farm ingredients.

You probably don't often stop and think, "Wow - a person planted and harvested the corn my bread is made from," or "I wonder who grew the wheat for my cereal?" Yet farmers sustain our lives in countless ways with the crops they grow and the livestock they raise.



## FARMERS: They are all different

When you imagine a farm, what do you think of? Maybe you imagine a big red barn and some chickens, pigs, and cows. Most of us learned the song "Old MacDonald's Farm" as a child. The make-believe farmer MacDonald had every farm animal you can think of.

In 1950, almost one in three people in our country lived on a farm. In those days families had to raise most of their own food. Instead of going to a grocery store, they had to have chickens if they wanted eggs. They needed at least one cow for milk and butter. They planted a large garden for vegetables, and may have raised other livestock for meat. These farms were more like Old MacDonald's Farm.

Today's farmers rarely raise a wide variety of crops and livestock. Instead, they specialize in just a few things that do well in the soil, climate, and facilities they have. This makes modern farmers able to efficiently and more easily produce food for more people.

Farms are as different as the farmers themselves. Some farmers enjoy raising livestock, and specialize in pigs, cattle, or other animals. Others would rather raise crops only. Some farmers expand their farms and employ family members and others to help. Others prefer to keep their farms smaller. There is no one "right" way to farm.

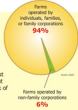


# FARMING...

## it's a family thing

You've probably heard the phrase "family farm." Did you know that 94% of farms in the Illinois are operated by families?

Instead of traveling to their place of work like most people do, many farmers live where they work. That means the entire family may be involved in the work of the farm.



## Awareness



**Kurt Sanderson** is 21 years old. He loves fishing, 4-wheeling, and snowmobiling. He works three jobs: one with the Wisconsin state department and another with a farm machinery dealer in Baraboo. His third job is as a farmer who raises cows, soybeans, and beef cattle.

Kurt got 'bony', his first calf, as a 4-H project when he was 6 years old. He was in charge of feeding, milking, and keeping records on 'bony'. As often as he could, Kurt would load up around the pasture so he would be being handled when it came time for the 4-H fair.

'Bony' was the start of a new adventure for Kurt's family farm. Today Kurt and his family own a 70-head cow-calf herd. Some of the calves are raised to be show cattle while others are raised to become food for people. The heifers (and/or steers) are kept to become mothers to more calves.

**PRO TIP:** Kurt Sanderson, 21, grows beef cattle. **Family:** Myra Decker, Sister Dale. Farm partners include Kurt, Dale, Steve Decker, Sanderson Farms and Cattle. **Location:** Northwest of Wisconsin. **Trivia:** Kurt raised several calves, including one that he kept through 10 years in a 4-H project. **Dream:** "I would be really glad if the next year there were no kids could raise their first calf," Kurt says.



If you want to know how important your cow and milking is to you, ask **Bill Deutch**. Just watch the cows. You can see they trust him by the way they crowd around him as he walks into the pasture. Some of them even nudge him with their noses, like dogs asking to be petted. Bill has a friendly smile, and his big laugh makes you want to giggle along. One way to make him laugh is to ask about Sarah. He'll say,

"Which one?" There are three Sarahs in Bill's life. One is his 26-year-old daughter. Another is a five-foot-three leading dog who Sarahs temporarily when you arrive at the farm. The third Sarah is one of his dairy cows. How Bill's dairy cows are cared for is no laughing matter. In the 30 years he has been dairying he has learned that healthy, comfortable cows produce more nutritious milk. As a farmer, "you worry about the cows before you worry about yourself," he says. 120 cows take care a lot of worrying. But Bill has good employees - including his high school-aged sons - who milk and care for the cows. Everyone who works with Bill is focused on keeping the cows content. As he says, "Happy cows produce more milk."

**PRO TIP:** Bill Deutch, 30, grows dairy cows. **Family:** Myra Decker, Sister Dale. Farm partners include Bill, Steve Decker, Sanderson Farms and Cattle. **Location:** Northwest of Wisconsin. **Trivia:** Bill raised several calves, including one that he kept through 10 years in a 4-H project. **Dream:** "I would be really glad if the next year there were no kids could raise their first calf," Kurt says.

## Dairy cows provide milk.

## Beef cattle provide meat.



**Kathy Beak** is allergic to bee stings, but she'd be out of business without honeybees.

She and her husband Steve own Honey Hill Orchard, near Watertown. They grow apples, raspberries, pumpkins, and grapes. Steve also raises honeybees, which are needed to pollinate all their crops.

If you want to see what Kathy's work day is like, you have to move quickly. She is always mowing, supervising employees, leading school tours, and making sure everything is just right. Being in the orchard business thirty years gives her the experience to know what makes customers happy.

Visiting the orchard on a sunny fall day is like walking into a picture book about farm life. A big red "Apple Harvest" sign in the middle of the lane with smaller signs surrounding it. A apple tree stretch in neat rows down the peaceful hillside. A fancy little donkey, a big white turkey, and a cartoon goat greet you from the peeling orange sun. In the apple barn, the fragrance of apples and cider fills the air. No matter what you see or do here, Kathy has worked behind the scenes to make the experience special.

As for Kathy's life allergy - "I'm not allergic, of course. I just have to be careful," she says with a smile.

**PRO TIP:** Bill Deutch, 30, grows dairy cows. **Family:** Myra Decker, 26, sister Sarah, 10, and sister Andrea. **Location:** Northwest of Wisconsin. **Trivia:** Bill and his family own a 70-head cow-calf herd. **General:** My goal is to raise high quality, nutritious milk for people to drink.

## Quality



## Pork is meat from pigs.



In the world of modern pig farming, **Doug Hartmann's** farm is unusual. Most pig farmers, known as pork producers, focus on just one stage of the growth cycle. The first stage is farrowing, when sows give birth to piglets. The second is finishing, or raising weaned piglets to market size. Doug has a 'farrow-to-finish' farm, meaning he cares for pigs through their entire life cycle.

Farm visitors may flock to the pig arena, but it is where Doug is most at home. He grows up raising pigs (also called hogs), showed them in 4-H and FFA, and never wanted to do anything but to be a pig farmer. His children also grew up raising and showing hogs. His son Dan graduated from Iowa State University with a degree in agriculture and now farms with Doug. Chances are Dan will be the 4th generation of Hartmanns who will raise hogs on his farm.

Raising hogs takes consistent dedication, says Doug. "You really have to care, and really have to pay attention," especially when working in the farrowing barn. Sows are fed by hand, and baby pigs are weaned to make sure they get enough milk from their mothers. Throughout each animal's life, Doug makes sure it is healthy and safe. After all, safe, healthy pigs mean safe, healthy food for people.

**PRO TIP:** Doug Hartmann, 43, grows pork. **Family:** Myra Decker, 26, sister Sarah, 10, and sister Andrea. **Location:** Southeast of Wisconsin. **Trivia:** Doug grows trees in the home where his grand-grandpa lived. **General:** Doug is committed to raising hogs. "There's something very special," he says. "You might walk into the farrowing barn one morning and see a sow raising 15 piglets."

**PRO TIP:** Jamie Walter, 31, grows pork. **Family:** Myra Decker, 26, sister Sarah, 10, and sister Andrea. **Location:** South of DeKalb. **Trivia:** Jamie planted 50 acres of yellow-green and white Bradford pears on his farm. **General:** Jamie likes about farming. "Being up in the trees."

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## Dedication

**Doug Hartmann's** farm is unusual. Most pig farmers, known as pork producers, focus on just one stage of the growth cycle. The first stage is farrowing, when sows give birth to piglets. The second is finishing, or raising weaned piglets to market size. Doug has a 'farrow-to-finish' farm, meaning he cares for pigs through their entire life cycle.

Farm visitors may flock to the pig arena, but it is where Doug is most at home. He grows up raising pigs (also called hogs), showed them in 4-H and FFA, and never wanted to do anything but to be a pig farmer. His children also grew up raising and showing hogs. His son Dan graduated from Iowa State University with a degree in agriculture and now farms with Doug. Chances are Dan will be the 4th generation of Hartmanns who will raise hogs on his farm.

Raising hogs takes consistent dedication, says Doug. "You really have to care, and really have to pay attention," especially when working in the farrowing barn. Sows are fed by hand, and baby pigs are weaned to make sure they get enough milk from their mothers. Throughout each animal's life, Doug makes sure it is healthy and safe. After all, safe, healthy pigs mean safe, healthy food for people.

**PRO TIP:** Jamie Walter, 31, grows pork. **Family:** Myra Decker, 26, sister Sarah, 10, and sister Andrea. **Location:** South of DeKalb. **Trivia:** Jamie planted 50 acres of yellow-green and white Bradford pears on his farm. **General:** Jamie likes about farming. "Being up in the trees."

## Sustainability

**Jamie Walter** grew up on a farm, went away to college, and became a lawyer. Then he came back to the farm. "I realized farming was the lifestyle I wanted for my family," he says. Now Jamie is a crop farmer raising corn and soybeans.

Like most farmers, Jamie spends a lot of time in the farm office. Much of the farm business goes down in a notebook and pen, and involving a notebook in 4-H and FFA, and never wanted to do anything but to be a pig farmer. His children also grew up raising and showing hogs. His son Dan graduated from Iowa State University with a degree in agriculture and now farms with Doug. Chances are Dan will be the 4th generation of Hartmanns who will raise hogs on his farm.

As a businessman, he wants his farm to be profitable so he can sustain his family. As an environmentalist, he wants his farm practices to protect and sustain the land and water. As a global citizen, he wants the food he grows to nourish and sustain people.

Jamie's four-year old son Josh is often with him while he works. Josh looks to help his dad by mowing the driveway or riding safely along in the 'buddy seat' of the cab tractor. Seeing Jamie on the farm with Josh makes a great video that he's excited to be a lawyer rather than a farmer. Here, his family can be part of his life all day long.



**Randy Willert** likes "watching the sky... seeing the sun rise, seeing the water set. It's a beautiful place to live." He loves the land, and being able to enjoy it every day is his favorite part of farming.

Randy grows organic corn, soybeans, oats, and wheat on his farm near Malta. He also raises beef cattle in partnership with his cousin and sister-in-law, Jamie Willert.

Randy is excited, but he won't say what some become advocates. It took courage for him to switch to organic farming. Very few farmers in his area grow crops this way, with no pesticides/herbicides or pesticides. Those who do have formed a strong, working community from which Randy can learn.

Being an organic farmer means giving up many usual ways of doing things and trying new methods instead. Fertilizers are not allowed to help crops grow, but they must be experienced and from natural sources (like potassium sulfate from dried lakebeds in Utah). Weeds must still be controlled, but rather than using herbicides, Randy uses people and machines to remove them from the fields. Sometimes the new methods don't work, and Randy has to try something else. In the twelve years since he started learning organically, he has slowly discovered what works best.



**PRO TIP:** Randy Willert, 30, grows organic corn, soybeans, oats, and wheat. **Family:** Myra Decker, 26, sister Sarah, 10, and sister Andrea. **Location:** West of Malta. **Trivia:** He and his wife wanted the Malta Foodshed 4-H Club and renamed the Malta Foodshed. **Dream:** "The farming opportunity will decrease the more corn that the world's population needs."

## Courage