



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Sept. 11, 2023**

## **Greene County Commission 8<sup>th</sup> annual Ag Tour**



*SPRINGFIELD, Mo.* – The Greene County Commission toured five locations in the eastern part of the county on Friday, Sept. 8 that highlighted the importance of agriculture.

The 8<sup>th</sup> annual event was organized by the University of Missouri’s Extension and features local farms, businesses, and programs that play a vital role in Greene County’s economy.

### **Hillcrest High School Ag Ed**

Hillcrest High School’s Agricultural Education and Future Farmers of America (FFA) programs provide students in north Springfield with access to a variety of ag-related job skills.

The school provides training on ag construction, heavy equipment operations, veterinarian sciences, and financial statement record keeping. Some recent graduates have entered apprenticeship programs or enrolled into college.

This year students built a wagon cart for a pair of draft horses. Along with equine sciences the school has a hedgehog breeding program. Additionally, students volunteer hundreds of hours at local ag events to raise money and gain hands on working experience.



## Primatara Farm



Courtesy: Primatara

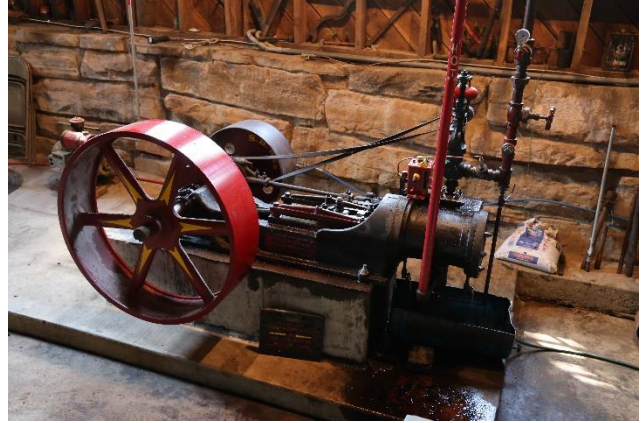
Primatara Farm is owned by the Low family in north Springfield. The 300-acre property is used to train dozens of horses that compete in premier races across the country and overseas. The horses are bred in Kentucky and graze in rolling pastures of Kentucky bluegrass on the farm in Greene County. The foals receive meticulous care on the farm for a year before being sold or go on to race.

## Wommack Mill



The Wommack Mill is a Greene County Historic Site in Fair Grove. Originally built in 1883 as a steam sawmill, it has also served as a flour and corn feed mill. It was last operated in 1969 by the Wommack family. The structure is maintained by the Fair Grove Historical Society and has numerous period artifacts and equipment. The mill is the town's oldest standing structure and serves as a backdrop for local events.





## CAT Cattle Company



The CAT Cattle Company in Fair Grove has a unique breeding program that uses embryology to recreate the best possible bovine genetics. Cattle with the best traits, such as easily keeping muscle and weight on, are selected to pass on their embryos which are stored in liquid nitrogen. The husband-and-wife team then use in vitro fertilization (IVF) and artificial fertilization (AI) with minimal drugs.

The company works with farmers across the country to breed specific types of cattle from show cows, dairy cows, and feeder cows. They're working on a certification to ship the genetics overseas. The business has seen a surge in wagyu beef genetics, one of the most expensive meats in the world. The owners are passionate about youth in agriculture, starting with their own children, who take active day to day roles on the farm before and after school.



## Mason Hartley Feedlot & Grazing System



The Hartley feedlot has a 900 head of cattle capacity in Fair Grove. The 260-acre farm uses a rotational grazing system to better manage the amounts of grass on each pasture. Cattle also rotate through a large barn and portable shade structures that help control the temperature and return on feed.

The farm is operated by Mason Hartley and his two other family members. The company tracks hay, feed, and cattle weight with an app to balance overhead costs down to the penny. The feedlot tries to keep everything local in the county.



### **Greene County agriculture profile**

According to the 2017 Census of Agriculture, there are over 1,800 farms totaling 223,000 acres in Greene County.

Farms across the county bring in over \$38 million to the local economy. Cattle make up the majority of sales followed by crops and hay.

Out of the 3,000 producers, 98% are family owned farms. Agriculture in Missouri is a \$93.7 billion industry.

“We appreciate the MU extension Office coordinating our Ag Tour once again. Greene County is a leading agricultural producer, shipping products around the globe. It’s always inspiring to witness the creative and innovative spirit that’s alive and well in our Ag community,” said Presiding Commissioner Bob Dixon.

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*Greene County is the State of Missouri's fourth most populous county, serving approximately 295,000 people. Its mission is to provide all citizens of Greene County, including those in its cities, a safe and thriving community through excellent customer service, unparalleled dedication, and the efficient use of taxpayer dollars. The Greene County Commission is the executive body of Greene County operating under guidelines established in the Revised Statutes of the State of Missouri. Within that authority the Commission enacts ordinances, resolutions and policies, supervises the activities of county departments, fixes salaries, adopts the annual budget, provides for construction and other services, and conducts hearings on planning and zoning matters.*

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