

My MN Farmer

Our Family Blessed
To Feed Yours

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Our Wonderful 'WWOOFers'

My Minnesota Farmer CSA members might wonder how Farmers Dean and Jean and their seven young children grow for over 100 CSA member families, several local restaurants, educational institutions, food hubs and farmers markets each week of the growing season.

My Minnesota Farmer runs with the help of people who come to the farm as part of the WWOOF program, a worldwide program that links volunteers with organic growers to promote cultural and educational experiences.

The WWOOF program is based on trust and non-monetary exchange, and its purpose is to help build a sustainable, global community. That means "WWOOFers" aren't paid but, rather, receive room and board on the farm for an agreed-upon amount of working hours. Some WWOOFers stay a week, some three or four months, and My Minnesota Farmer couldn't exist without their help.

This year, some of My Minnesota Farmer's WWOOFers include:

- Deiter - Deiter, who came to Minnesota from Germany in April, spent three months at the farm. Deiter celebrated his 68th birthday last weekend, but for Deiter age is just a number because he amazed the Braatz family as he took over chores, planted, harvested, weeded, and even cooked several family meals. The Braatz children took to Deiter right away, and learned some German as Deiter practiced speaking English. The Google Translate app was extremely valuable as they discussed farming practices and differences in cultures. Deiter left Monday, but during his stay with the Braatz family had the opportunity to attend a local baseball game, go fishing and celebrate Easter and his birthday.
- Pablo and Alberto - Pablo and Alberto are WWOOFers who come to the My Minnesota Farmer CSA from Mexico. Pablo, a law student, and Alberto, a dental student, are using their WWOOFing experience as an opportunity to learn about organic farming practices and as an English language immersion experience. This also gives the Braatz family the opportunity to practice Spanish which they are learning as part of their homeschool curriculum and which will better equip them to continue to do mission work in Honduras.
- Gabi - Gabi is a student at the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point. She is WWOOFing to gain agricultural experience towards her Soil and Land Management major. Hardworking, spunky and fun, the Braatz children love working alongside Gabi in the high tunnels, pack shed, fields and at farmers markets. And it must be said: when it comes to harvesting, Gabi is a pea-picking guru!
- In the coming weeks, Farmers Jean and Dean will welcome several additional WWOOFers to their farm. The family looks forward to working alongside Maria and David, Shane, and Laura and Marcus and their four children. Every person that visits bring new diversity and learning to the farm. Farmers Jean and Dean are happy to provide housing and meals through this cooperative program that is both educational and fun.



The My Minnesota Farmer CSA operates with the help of volunteers who come to live at the farm to learn about organic farming. Pictured are the Braatz family and four of their WWOOFer volunteers, Deiter (back row, third from left), Gabi (front row, left), Pablo, front row, second from left) and Alberto, (front row, right).

What is WWOOF?

WWOOF is an acronym and started out in the early days as "Working Weekends On Organic Farms." This changed in time, as it was realized that people wanted to volunteer and host anytime. Now various WWOOF organizations use a variety of meanings, including "World Wide Opportunities On Organic Farms" and "Willing Workers On Organic Farms." For more information, visit <https://wwoof.net/>

