

# Trent Goss helps with tasks on the farm

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back and plant crops in fields they couldn't get to before because they were too muddy, or to replant sections that didn't grow for various reasons.

The first crop Trent harvests is the barley, which is usually ready in June or July. In August, green corn can be harvested by chopping it. This corn is used to make silage, which is fed to the cattle. These cornfields are then planted with barley, which serves as a cover crop for the winter. After the corn has dried, it can be harvested using a method called shelling. To do this, Trent uses the combine in mid-October to comb the rows and remove the corn from the stalks. After the corn is collected, the soybeans are gathered and stored in one of the farm's two grain bins. The second bin is used for the corn. From there, one of two things happens to the crops.

"We'll use some of the corn for our ground feed for our cattle, and the rest we sell," Trent says. They also sell the soybeans, and if there is any surplus of barley — meaning they don't need it to feed the cattle — they'll sell that, too.

Summer is also the time to make hay, which Trent cuts, rakes and bales using various baling equipment. The Goss farm makes both square and round bales and uses them to feed the animals throughout the year.

Trent also mows most of the grass and helps out wherever he is needed.

"If we're working on something in the shop, I'll usually stick with one thing. Like if we're painting, I'll be the one to fill the paint cans," he says.

He also washes down the equipment before it gets put away. The farm has three tractors, a combine, and numerous other pieces of equipment used at various stages of the farming process.

"That's a job and a half to wash, for as big as it is," Trent says of the John Deere combine. "Depending on how clean you want to get it, that'll take a good half a day." The combine itself represents a crowning achievement for Trent. After he learned to drive it this past summer, he was able to say he could drive and use all of their equipment.

But the real bread and butter of the farm — or rather, the en-



*Sentinel photo by BRADLEY KREITZER*

Trent Goss's family farm produces about 12,000 pigs a year for Country View Family Farms, which currently supplies pigs to Hatfield Quality Meats.

deavor that really brings home the bacon — are the pigs. The Goss farm was a dairy farm until 1995. At that point, dairy farming became a practice that was not very profitable. To keep the farm going, Tim built two barns for pigs, and eventually the Goss farm became part of Country View Family farms, which supplies hogs to Hatfield Quality Meats. Trent's family

gets the animals when they weigh about 60 pounds, and they raise them until they are between 260 and 280 pounds. The Goss finishing barns can supply about 4,200 pigs every 15 to 16 weeks; the number is hard to pin down exactly because the batches come and go on a rolling basis. Whenever the hogs arrive or depart, Trent is there to help load and unload them.

Every day, Trent can be found walking around the center aisle of the barns checking the automatic feeding system. He also checks for leaks in the water lines. The process takes about 20 minutes twice a day, unless something goes wrong and a motor or hose breaks.

To round out the day, Trent checks on and feeds his 4-H animals again, and then heads in-

side for dinner. Sometimes, that doesn't happen until late at night.

"They're late night farmers," Tina says. "It's nothing for us to eat dinner at 9:30." Trent says he sometimes eats close to midnight during the summer, because he works outside until the daylight is gone and then goes to the barn.

If it sounds time consuming, that's because it is. At one point in his life, Trent was involved in sports as well, but after he learned to drive a tractor, he gave up the sports. It cut into his farm time, and farming is what he loves.

"He is a very responsible child," Tina says. "His first love is definitely the farm, so if it came down to going to a football game or helping on the farm, he would choose the farm."

His sense of responsibility shows. From sun-up to sun-down and into the night, Trent's duties on his family's farm are his number one priority. It is a dedication that he is proud of, and it carries over into other parts of his life.

"When I have a goal, I usually stick to it," he says. And the reason he takes his role on the farm so seriously?

"They're counting on me."

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