



## Economic Impact of Some of Kent County's Preserved Farms

**Bradford Dairy Farm:** This is a large, family owned dairy operation in Sparta Township. They employ 24 people and are the largest taxpayer in the township. Most of their milk is transported to Country Fresh in Wyoming, MI, which is a division of Dean Foods, the largest distributor of dairy products in the U.S. The Wyoming plant employs 256 people (according to an MLive article from 2009) and produces milk, cottage cheese, sour cream, chip dip, water and juice for retail stores.

**Heffron Farm:** This farm is operated by Tim Heffron of H & W Farm Market in Grattan Township. Tim says in 2011 a newly developed type of soybean was grown on this preserved farm for Zeeland Farm Services. (This was one of few farms selected for this field test.) ZFS hopes this soybean will produce cooking oil that has similar qualities of olive oil, which would be an exciting new product for ZFS.

**Kingsbury/Bettes Farm:** This family farm grows apples, field crops, boards horses and hosts horse shows/riding lessons. Their apples are packed by Jack Brown Produce, which recently underwent a large expansion of their facility in Sparta Township. Jack Brown employs up to 50 people during the packing season.

**Koning Farm:** The family added a new horse riding arena and horse barn to the farm. Mr. Koning's sons started a new horse business and are active volunteers in 4-H and the Kent County Youth Fair. They help organize many horse shows at the Fair Grounds in Lowell, which bring hundreds of people to our county annually.

**Nauta Farm:** This farm was purchased by a young farmer and his wife. They are adding tile to the property and have hired two part time workers. They have plans to add beef cattle to the farm and sell beef through local retail stores.

**Rittersdorf Farm:** This farm produces field crops as feed for area beef cattle as well as Herbruck's Poultry Ranch. Herbruck's is Michigan's largest egg supplier and producer of organic eggs. They are a family operated company that supplies eggs to Meijers and McDonald's Restaurants east of the Mississippi River.

**Robinson Farm:** This family owned and operated dairy farm milks between 150 and 200 head. Some of their milk is transported to the Allendale, MI Lapreno cheese plant as well as Yoplait yogurt plant in Reed City, MI.

**Wilcox Farm:** The farm grows alfalfa for Maple Row Dairy Farm in Ionia County which employees approximately 20 people.