

Around the FARM

Deanne Frieders

Our “off-season” on the farm

Have you ever wondered what grain farmers do in their “off-season?” After the equipment has been washed and put away for the winter, there’s still work to be done around the farm.

And lest you think farmers spend their days of leisure on the couch watching entire seasons on Netflix, trust me — there’s more to our off season schedule.

Do we ever sneak in a get-away? You better believe it, or at least, we try! Wouldn’t you?

But for the most part, when the ground is blanketed in snow and the equipment is locked up tight in the shed, we’re still working.

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This is a time when we haul our corn and soybeans from the grain bins to the marketplace. Equipment repairs, upgrades, or improvements may be made.

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We have the extra fun job of preparing our taxes. Every year I say I will keep up with the receipt management yet in December and early January, I find myself commandeering the dining room table, receipts and bills spread everywhere, scrambling to capture all the data we

need to provide our accountant. Maybe this will be my year to stay on top of this!

Hopefully by now we’ve caught up on our missed hours of sleep. This allows us time to analyze data and make decisions about what crops to plant in what fields come spring.

We attend trade shows, where we can learn about new products, technology and methods. It’s an important tool in our continuing education to stay on top of our farm game.

All the farming duties aside, there’s also another element of winter in our farming family — reconnecting as a family. Fall harvest is stressful and doesn’t always allow us time for more than the necessities. It’s the nose to the grindstone time in our jobs. Sometimes sporting events or recitals get missed, or only attended in part.

But right now, we get to be “regular” people. We attend basketball games, or we’ll catch a movie. We don’t work until crazy hours of the night. We get a chance to unwind, slow down, reconnect and enjoy a meal around the dining room table.



Deanne Frieders is a farm woman from rural Waterman who raises four kids and a dog, constantly cooks, blogs, and helps her husband with the family grain farm.

There’s also a shift in our family dynamic as my husband, Ryan, is around more to offer his two cents on household operations. Fellow farm wives, I wonder if you can relate!

This time of year is equally important to us as the seasons of planting and harvest. If our family isn’t strong, our farming isn’t strong. If we don’t slow down and renew ourselves, we’ll be depleted before planting season even begins.

So if you see a farmer strolling the aisles of Farm & Fleet, or grabbing a bite to eat at the local diner... give us a smile or a wave. We’re making up for lost time. And you better believe we’ll hit the ground running in the spring, when it’s time to plant our crops. ■