

## Rosanna Bauman – Cedar Valley Farms

This is Kansas Profile. I'm Ron Wilson, director of the Huck Boyd National Institute for Rural Development at Kansas State University.

The farmers in Uganda are meeting to discuss farm issues. The person with whom they are meeting is a young woman from a farm family halfway around the globe in rural Kansas. Like them, she and her family are working to promote local foods and local farmers. It's today's Kansas Profile.

Rosanna Bauman is the young woman meeting with Uganda farmers. Rosanna and her family own Bauman's Cedar Valley Farms and related agribusinesses in Anderson County, Kansas. Rosanna's dad's family came to Kansas in the 1960s. At a church gathering, he met the woman who he ultimately married. In 2001, they bought 160 acres and moved to the farm. They had six children of whom four were boys and two were girls, Rosanna being the oldest daughter.

"We are members of the Old German Baptist Brethren," Rosanna said. "It's our faith that has driven our desire to work together."

The parents and children joined in to operate the farm from scratch. "We had the handicap – and the blessing – of not being able to say, 'This is the way we've always done it,'" Rosanna said. They were also working with limited acreage.

"We saw large farms that were having a hard time financially, so we knew we needed to do things differently," Rosanna said. "Organic farming and direct marketing were alternative ways that could maximize income," she said. Each family member pitched in and eventually took responsibility for different elements of the operation as it grew and diversified.

Over time, the Baumans rented ground, grew crops and livestock, and developed related processing and services. Today they farm 1,000 acres of non-GMO crops and raise cattle, sheep and poultry.

"We take the approach that we shouldn't gripe that something isn't being done if it's within our capacity to do it," Rosanna said. This led them to start several related businesses. They also work with neighboring farms. "Everything we do has a neighbor component," Rosanna said.

In addition to the home place (Cedar Valley Farms), they now have ANCO Processing (for poultry), Bauman's Butcher Block in Ottawa, Bauman's Farm Feeds, Bauman Brothers Custom Ag Services, and Bauman Pet Products which uses animal byproducts for pet food. Other than the butcher shop with its retail outlet in Ottawa, all these businesses are based on the family farm.

Bauman's Cedar Valley Farms is located near Cedar Valley Reservoir in a rural setting between the towns of Garnett, population 3,264, and Westphalia, population 163 people. Now, that's rural.

The Baumans deliver their self-processed non-GMO feed to feed stores in eastern Kansas. They also aggregate grains with neighbors. Their custom planting, spraying, harvesting and trucking business has grown to cover 30,000 acres. In addition to the butcher shop in Ottawa and sales on the farm, their meat products are sold through a mobile meat market which goes to farmer's markets.

"We were brainstorming about how to sell our meat and poultry, but carrying a bunch of ice chests to lots of farmers markets wasn't practical," Rosanna said. "So we

got a twenty foot enclosed trailer where we can display our vacuum packaged meats behind glass-doored freezers, and people can walk through and pick what they want,” she said. Baumans’ custom-made brats and burgers are a specialty.

“We like to be face-to-face with our customers,” Rosanna said. They also belong to the Kansas Department of Agriculture’s From the Land of Kansas program.

In 2017, USDA Rural Development awarded a grant which supported the work of K-State’s Heather Morgan to support the growth and development of local foods in southeast Kansas. Heather points to the Bauman family businesses as examples of local food production and entrepreneurship which could be emulated and encouraged.

Two years ago, Rosanna went to an international rural conference and connected with a woman from Uganda. That has led to international exchanges about agriculture.

“We believe our small family farm in Kansas can have an impact in the state, nationally, and internationally,” Rosanna said.

It’s time to leave this farm gathering in Uganda. We salute Rosanna Bauman and all the Bauman family for making a difference in agriculture, in Kansas and around the world.

For the Huck Boyd National Institute for Rural Development, this is Ron Wilson with Kansas Profile.