

## Big Agenda for Small Farms

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<http://newiprogressive.com/images/stories/S5/farm-family-s5.jpg>



***Sen. Jeff Smith writes about the ways we can support our state's family farms and preserve Wisconsin's status as an agricultural leader in the country.***

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EAU CLAIRE, WI - When it comes to farming, one thing is certain – it connects us all. Many of us in western Wisconsin can trace our roots to farming. But even if we've personally lost a physical connection to the family farm, all Wisconsin residents have an obvious connection to Wisconsin's agricultural heritage.

Many Wisconsinites share a romanticized view of our state's family farms: the rooster crowing, cows mooing and machinery running through the field. The same sounds and smells that we remember connects us all to the farm.

But, let's face it, one of the main reasons many Wisconsinites are connected to the state's farms is the need to eat. We must remember farming is a vital economic driver for the state, contributing \$104.8 billion to our state's economy every year. Wisconsin has a significant role in agricultural production within the country and even the world. In fact, Wisconsin exported more than \$3.3 billion of agricultural products to 151 different countries in 2019, according to the [Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protections \(DATCP\)](#). It's also worth noting the agricultural industry's contribution to Wisconsin's workforce, which makes up 11.8% of our state's employment.

