



Rural Portraits

Farm family: Bob and Lucy Roberts

Hometown: Battle Lake, Minnesota

Children: Rachel (27), Nora (26), Eric (25), Brian (23)

FarmFacts: Operates Amor Pork, a farm direct retail pork business

It's the classic city girl marries country boy story. Lucy and Bob Roberts met, married and moved to his farm near St. Paul, Minn.

When Lucy arrived in Battle Lake in 1978, there was nothing but a barren oats field. But today, the Roberts proudly offer their company's *Amor Pork* products to city and country folks alike.

Amor Pork requires good people to not only raise the 8,000 butcher hogs marketed annually, but to sell nearly 25 percent of those hogs in the retail sector.

23-year old Brian, one of two Robert's sons, is the farm's crop manager. And their oldest son, Eric works part-time on the farm, helping to grind the feed and mix all the rations. The Robert's oldest daughter, Rachel is the office manager, and her husband Jeff is a salesman for the retail segment of their pork business.

The Roberts own 620 acres, and rent even more, along with 3 other farm site finishing barns. Their farm has always specialized in hog production, and the Roberts currently own 400 sows, having just recently reduced their sow herd.

The forward-thinking family has been involved in retail sales of a portion of their pork for nearly

five years. The family used a two-ton truck, and placed a freezer box aboard, along with their family farm brand sign *Amor Pork*.

They began their truck route in Fergus Falls and then moved into Battle Lake, selling to consumers on a regular schedule. Whole and half hog orders are accepted, along with those of various cuts.

The Roberts slaughter and process at local

locker plants, currently relying on two main plants about an hour from the farm. Twenty to thirty hogs are shipped at a time, cut to specifications, priced and cryovac packaged.

The community of Battle Lake, population 700, is well known for its tourism industry during the

summer months. And the next largest town with 12,000 residents, is Fergus Falls.

Battle Lake is primarily of Norwegian heritage. Lutefisk and Lefse are popular fare on residential tables. Community youth organizations, including groups from the Lutheran and Catholic churches and FFA are popular for hometown kids.

Just one lumber store serves the closely-knit community, a family operation that has been in business over 50 years. The hometown bank is also family owned and operated.

The northern Minnesota townspeople have certainly embraced the Roberts operation. After all, what better way to obtain premium-quality and fresh tasting meats, than the products of *Amor Pork*.

Bob and Lucy Roberts family farm

- ◆ Offers consumer-direct pork products through their family brand: *Amor Pork*
- ◆ Sales channels include web-site and two-ton truck with freezer box