Everything about agriculture draws me to it, from the feel of warm soil in my hands and the aroma of a tomato plant, to playful goat kids bouncing off my back and the sound of milk squirming into the pail. There are so many directions and approaches that can be taken with farming and no one right way to do things. I love the innovativeness that is needed. Opportunity, really, is everywhere on the farm!

Not coming from farming backgrounds, it has taken us time to dabble in many different farming enterprises. With my husband working off the farm, and two young children, small is better for our farm presently. Much of what we do presently could be considered a “hobby” by many; but I don’t see it that way at all. I see it as farming practice without a lot of investment and commitment.

It’s a great way for us to test our markets, discover our likes and dislikes, as well as gain the experience we’ll need to make the leap into something more serious in the future. Doing this on a small scale also enables us to foster a love for this lifestyle in our girls, feed our family gourmet quality food and sell the extra.

Currently we raise vegetables, dairy goats, chickens, rabbits and a few hogs. We’re adding some geese, hair sheep, and apple trees to the farm this year and will also be expanding our berry patches. I make natural soaps with milk from our dairy goats as well as herbs and vegetables we grow to use as natural colorants and exfoliants. We sell the soaps online and around North Dakota. It’s admittedly a lot of directions to be going in, but I wouldn’t want it any other way. I love the diversity of it.

I dream that our daughters will want to start some enterprises of their own. They are in the beginning stages of their meat rabbit project. They’ll just be for our family’s use for the time being, but if and when they’re ready to expand it or another project into a business, we’ll be there to encourage and guide them. I dream that they will grow into young women that have the desire and necessary skills to keep the family farm operational and flourishing.

I dream of our farm eventually going in more of an agritourism direction, most likely offering U-Pick vegetables, berries, and apples, as well as having a small petting zoo. I love seeing the excitement on kids’ faces when they get to pet a goat and see chickens for the first time. We’ll have a quaint little farm store that will carry our goat milk soaps, jams and jellies, free range eggs, and root crops. I am passionate about sharing the farm experience with people.

Apryl Lunde, Feral Farm in Rolette, ND, inside her cucumber tunnel on the farm. Apryl has taken the FARRMS farm food safety program.
New and emerging farmers are in need of resources, interns, loans and grants from FARRMS. For $100 or more, you can provide tuition for new farmers to attend Farm Beginnings and grow their businesses from the ground up.

Give online at www.farrms.org or call 701-527-5169 to become a sustaining donor with an easy automatic monthly donation.

$100 or _________(other) will provide tuition for farmers to become better equipped to stay on the farm by attending Farm Beginnings or other classes offered by FARRMS and is partners.

Name: _____________________________________________

Address: _____________________________________________

City: ___________________ State: __________ Zip: _________

Email address: _____________________________________________

Phone: __________________________

Every contribution goes to work immediately helping farmers with under three years experience. Partner with us by supporting farmers with your gift to "Grow Farmers."

Your gift will impact the lives of the next generation of farmers and families.

Please mail to: FARRMS, 2145 34th Street, Mandan, ND 58554

FARRMS offers privately funded Grants to Grow - giving farmers grants and loans to begin or add sustainable farming practices. Loan recipients are required to attend Farm Beginnings - a Land Stewardship course to prepare farmers to become successful businesses. FARRMS is the only organization in the state to provide this eight-session intensive well-rounded training with experienced farmers and educators. Farmers who successfully finish the course are armed with a farm food safety plan, business plan and networking opportunities.

But FARRMS doesn’t just provide money and education to farmers - it supports success through additional programs like:

- Internships
- Mentoring and on-site visits
- Farm business management one-on-one training
- Consumer education
- Farm to School Networking
- Webinar education series

Apryl Lunde has a farm dream