

# Shetler Family Dairy

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Kalkaska, Mich. 49646

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Phone 231-258-8216

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## STILL A BUSY FARM

Hope this finds you all well and enjoying the winter. All this cold weather has been a little frigid and does tend to slow things down a little here on the farm. When it's so cold it just takes a little longer getting the machinery and equipment going everyday. George keeps the cows in the barn more when it's this cold so there is a little more feeding and cleaning to do then when they can be outside. Sunny days he usually lets them out for a few hours so they can get some fresh air and exercise.

We have all been doing fine. Grandpa Shetler was in the hospital for a week in January with congestive heart failure. He had a lot of fluid on his lungs which had to be removed and his heart was not strong enough to do any surgery. He is home now and feeling and looking much better. His doctor even told him he didn't need the surgery if he continues to take care of himself.

As for "bottled milk", we are still working on the project diligently everyday. We apologize for continually pushing the date forward. It is just so very hard to judge how long each of these jobs will take to finish on the equipment and hooking everything up. George only has one more electrical switch box to hook up. Fred Essner still has a couple of days work on the stainless steel piping. Temperature Control needs to come finish installing a chill tank which will make ice water that will go through a plate cooler to chill the milk after pasteurization. A friend of ours is building an elevator shaft where we will be moving the bottles from storage upstairs to the washroom downstairs where they will be washed and sanitized. We have an old bottle washer that resembles a small freight train. So please hang in there, we will have "Fresh From Moo to You" milk soon. We hope to be practicing and getting the equipment all running by the middle of the month. We can't promise but we hope to have our milk on the market by the first of March.

The milk will be bottled within 24 hours of milking time and should be in stores and to your door within the next 24 hours. To begin with we will probably be bottling once a week and as the demand grows we want to bottle twice a week. The pasteurization temperature will be kept low as to not damage as many of the enzymes and vitamins that are naturally found in milk. The milk will not be homogenized as to make it more easily digestible. We are using returnable glass bottles for freshness and taste. We will be bottling Fat Free Skim Milk, Cream-Line Whole Milk, Rich and Creamy Chocolate Milk, and Heavy Cream in 1 and 2 qt. sizes.

For those of you who do not know us, our farm is located in Kalkaska County. We've raised five children here and love farming as a way of life. We have always farmed sustainably using no chemicals or herbicides on our land. We do not use antibiotics or hormones (rBST) on any of our animals. We have always been concerned about the health of our soils and animals and ultimately the quality of our milk and meat that we produce.

There is still beef for sale February thru May. It is sold by the quarter (\$1.50/lb plus processing) or by the pound here on the farm. Our meat is processed at a USDA inspected plant.

Hope this answers more of your questions and we hope to be serving you soon!

Sincerely,  
George, Sally and family