

# Winnebago County Success from the Field

## Buser Cattle Ranch Builds Grazing Operation

### Background

After many years of living and working out West, Katie and John Buser moved back to Winnebago County to pursue their dream of running their own cattle ranch. John worked on several large scale ranches after college and Katie, a Certified Nurse Midwife, earned her Master's degree in Utah.

They currently run 20 cow-calf pairs and a dozen yearlings on about 100 acres. The farm also is home to 10 horses, 10 chickens, three dogs, two cats and one goat.

### Program Successes

John and Katie first came to the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service in 2015 when they heard about the honey bee pollinator program sign-up. Through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), they established forage and biomass planting on 35 acres. John and Katie had recently acquired the land and wanted to include that in their grazing operation. This brought the total land under grazing to 55 acres of their own land and 42 acres of Department of Natural Resources land. NRCS also helped with funding on fencing, a livestock well, livestock pipeline, watering facilities and prescribed grazing.

"John and Katie have been great to work with. Not only are they passionate about grazing, but they are willing to share that passion with other grazers. They have hosted two pasture walks on their farm since 2017," said Merrie Schamberger, NRCS District Conservationist in Winnebago County.

"We pride ourselves in what we do, because we think cattle are meant to be eating grass and are meant to be in wide-open spaces," Katie said. "We feel they are cared for the most that way. My passion lies in care of the environment. If they are being grass-fed and have wide-open spaces, that's good for the earth. And knowing where my meat is coming from is important too. Knowing the meat is humanely raised; knowing they aren't being fed chemicals or hormones. And being able to provide that to other families in the community, I love the idea of local families having access to healthy food," explained Katie.



John and Katie Buser at their Twilight Pasture Walk on July 11, 2019. *Figure caption goes here. You can have one picture and some text in*



John and Katie's daughter, Ella Buser, shows off her riding skills en route to help move the cattle.

### Future Plans

Katie and John plan to continue raising beef on their ranch. Their ultimate goal is to convert to a strictly yearling operation, but for now, they plan to continue to graze cattle and continue to improve the land.

**Wisconsin  
Natural  
Resources  
Conservation  
Service**

[wi.nrcs.usda.gov](http://wi.nrcs.usda.gov)

