

My name is Alyssa Webb, and I live right outside of Pomeroy, Ohio. I grew up on a dairy farm and still reside very close to it. I still help out on the weekends and whenever I can. My husband and I bought an old dairy farm down the road and turned it into a beef facility. We run 500 head of beef stockers on our land and land we rent. I also started my own business 12 years ago growing pumpkins and planting a corn maze to run in the September and October each year. I am involved in three businesses that rely on the weather to make them run smoothly and profitable. This summer has been a very challenging one to say the least. I cannot speak for every farm in my area but most of them were pretty similar. The rain that came this summer was very spotty and was less than 5 inches total up until the middle of September. We have received a little rain since September to revive the green grass but the springs and ponds are still very low.

On the dairy farm we milk 180 head of Holsteins. This means we calve roughly 90 head of heifers that stay on the farm for two and a half years before they start milking. These heifers are out on pasture in the summer, and since its been so dry, my dad has had to haul water to them since the end of June. He is still currently hauling around 700 gallons of water every other day to different pastures. The dairy farm is short 300 round bales and 3,000 square bales to get through the winter. If you know anything about a dairy, it's the fact the cows need fed a very strict diet every single day so they produce milk. The milk is what makes the farm money so food is very important. The corn silage also didn't grow to its full potential in height and the ears of corn did not fill out correctly.

The beef farm has also been challenging. We started feeding round bales in July and had to pull groups of cattle off of pastures that did not have a water tap on them. The ponds and springs dried up and we had to sell all but 2 loads of cattle due to the fact that there was little to no grass. We used a portion of round bales that were supposed to be used this winter, so now we are short 100 bales. We may not be able to buy feeder calves back this fall and winter due to lack of hay and pasture. The cattle also did not gain efficiently since the grass wasn't there and not growing back. The cattle market flooded in August causing the prices to drop which hurt our profits.

My pumpkin and corn maze business was still able to open for the season, thankfully. I planted around 4 acres of pumpkins and maybe $\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre was worth picking any pumpkins off of. I had to compensate and buy pumpkins to fill my stand. The corn maze was half the height it usually is and did not produce ears of corn.

This summer has been a challenging one all around due to the lack of pasture, no second cutting hay, a poor corn crop and little to no water in springs. I know other crop farmers in the area had much lower grain yields than in the past. People don't realize that farming can be not only physically challenging but also mentally challenging. There are a lot of farms in Ohio affected by the drought so I hope you can take into consideration all the farmers who have a story to tell.

Thank you for your time,

Alyssa Webb

