

# Forsyth Farm

Shane and Brenda Forsyth have been farming 200 acres on the Bruce Peninsula east of Wiarton for thirty years. Their diversified operation revolves around sheep production with 500 breeding ewes and 400 to 500 lambs being fed for market at any one time. They also raise hogs, poultry and cattle.

The Forsyths are innovators and they routinely test new ideas to make the farm greener, more efficient and as humane as possible. At the heart of the enterprise is their conservation ethic, which manifests as improved soil management and energy conservation. Growing up on a farm near Chatham, Shane learned the importance of building soils from his father who was an early adaptor of soil conservation methods. Shane uses crop rotation and favours soil-friendly fertilizers, such as composted manure. He uses a homemade composter (made from a modified combine) to stir long rows of compost and promote aerobic fermentation which is needed for decomposition. To reduce dependence on fossil fuels Brenda and Shane are returning to the use of small square bales for winter feeding. The large round bales need to be moved by tractor several times and then chopped with a power feed mixer, whereas the load of square bales is moved one time only into the barn and then thrown into the pens by hand. As an example of attention to the animals' well-being, Shane recently built an improved farrowing crate. Most crates severely restrict a sow's movement to prevent her from lying on her offspring. This alternative design allows for free movement while still providing a barrier for piglet protection.



Brenda participates in all farm activities, but a few years ago she turned much of her attention to preparing meat pies using their own fresh lamb and beef. The business expanded quickly and two part-time staff now roll pastry and bake pies in a government-inspected kitchen on the lower level of the house. Processing at home on a small-scale means the Forsyths can ensure that products leaving their farm gate are of the highest possible quality.

## On the menu at...

Grandview Restaurant, Tobermory  
Rocky Raccoon, Owen Sound  
The Supermarket, Kensington Market,  
Toronto  
Spencers, Burlington  
Old Mill, Ancaster

## Shops

Around the Sound, Owen  
Sound (meat pies, lamb,  
pork sausage)  
Olliffe, Toronto  
Sanagans Meat Locker,  
Kensington Market  
Cumbrae's, Toronto

## At the farm gate

Lamb  
Beef  
Eggs  
Meat pies (chicken,  
beef, lamb, turkey)  
Tortiere (seasonal)