



North Dakota Discovery Farms are working farms and ranches whose owners partner with natural resource managers. Together, they evaluate the effectiveness of various practices at reducing environmental impacts while maintaining farm profitability. The program is a cooperative effort involving North Dakota State University, the North Dakota Department of Health and U.S. Geological Survey.

**More Information**

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# Amann Family Ranch

Kim and Denise Amann, together with their son, Dusty, ranch southeast of Dazey, N.D. They run about 200 commercial spring-calving cows and background the calves on the ranch. The family was eager to join the North Dakota Discovery Farms program to determine whether their operation affects Baldhill Creek, which flows through Amann land and drains into Lake Ashtabula and then the Sheyenne River.



**Kim, Denise and Dusty Amann**

One Discovery Farms gaging station monitors runoff as it leaves the crop field where the cows graze and are fed for the winter. This station collects samples to measure the amount of water flow and also nitrogen and phosphorus levels. The second station, adjacent to Baldhill Creek, does the same but also determines how much of the water and nutrients is absorbed naturally by pasture vegetation versus reaching the creek.

The Amanns hope to gather information from the program that will be valuable not only for themselves but also for their neighbors and friends in the industry.

“We are doing this for all of us,” Denise says. Like others, the Amanns have begun to feel pressure from environmental regulators because of the ranch’s proximity to local waters. Not knowing whether runoff really is of concern to the Baldhill, the family turned to Discovery Farms for help finding the answer.

If program data show an environmental impact, the Amanns will work with natural resource managers to decide what changes would lessen such effects while keeping the family business profitable. Ranch improvements that the Amanns already have made include moving their small feedlot to a more protected area, building up shelterbelts around it and decreasing the time that calves are in the lot with longer winter grazing.

As the Amanns work to expand their family business, they will continue to make decisions with the environment in mind. Kim and Dusty say that future plans include increasing cattle numbers and crop yields; properly managing resources will be instrumental to this endeavor.



**This flume at the Amanns’ second collection site is equipped to measure water flow and obtain samples for nutrient testing.**