

Kevin, Linda, Michael and Jared Baird are four very busy people, but they wouldn't have it any other way. On their family farm in Scottsburg, IN, they grow over 20 different kinds of pumpkins, 350 acres of row crops, and more than 2,000 mums - as well as having an agritourism business that includes a corn maze, farm tours, petting farm, wagon rides, an old country store, and much more.

They're a true farm family that works hard and works together. And now, in recognition for all of their hard work, they have been selected as the 2013 Indiana Farm Family of the Year by Beck's Hybrids and Indiana AgriNews.

Kevin and Linda, along with their two sons, Michael and Jared, own and operate Cornucopia Farm. Starting with a small crop of pumpkins in 1992, the Bairds have worked hard to expand Cornucopia Farm to the agritourism destination that it is today, always keeping emphasis on fun, excitement and farm education that people of any age can enjoy.

"The first year, we didn't really know what we were doing as far as selling pumpkins, but we ended up selling a lot of them, so we had to continue the next year," Linda said. "We really wanted to be a produce operation for fall crops, but we found that we needed more to draw people to our farm. No one had done a corn maze in our area, so we decided that it would be a good venture for us."

And it has proved to be very successful. Since the addition of the corn maze in 1999, they have also added a short soybean maze. Signs with bible verses and agricultural trivia are placed throughout the maze to share their faith and educate the public on food, livestock and crop production.

In its 16th year, the Farm Family of the Year award honors a family for their work on the farm, and contributions to their community. Not knowing they were even nominated, The Bairds were extremely honored and humbled by the award.

"I got the call at the office and I was completely shocked," Kevin joked. "I actually thought it was a prank at first because I have never even envisioned it."

For the Baird family, contributing to their community is just as important to them as their farm.

The whole family is very involved with their local church, local 4-H and Farm Bureau chapters, and helps put on their local Ag Day every year. They were also very instrumental in founding and marketing the Washington County Farmer's Market which sons Michael and Jared are very involved with.

Currently studying at Purdue University, Michael (senior) and Jared (freshman) are also involved on campus; yet they still make time to come home every weekend to continue to work on the farm.

"We all pitch in where needed," Michael said. "And that's the neat thing about it," Kevin added. "If any of us have to be gone, anyone here can make sure things get done. Everyone has a strong point as to what they can do, yet we all can pitch in and do other things well."

Last year, Linda was diagnosed with breast cancer. Not only is she a survivor, but she used her experience to empower the community to raise funds for cancer research. They planted pink pumpkins and started an annual Breast Cancer Walk at the farm. In their first year, they raised over \$1,800 for the cause.

The Bairds are excited for what experiences are to come as the Farm Family of the Year and hope to use it as another platform to advocate for agriculture.

"The past year, as an AFA Student Advisory Board member, I have gotten to do a lot of

traveling and networking that has really increased my passion for advocating for agriculture,” Michael said. “And I think that this is a great opportunity to share our story with the public and connect with others.” Keep up with the Baird family and their journey as Indiana Farm Family on their Facebook page and website at www.cornucopiafarm.com.