

# WHO'S YOUR FARMER?

## HELENE & DAVE PAGORIA

### Helene's Hilltop Orchard LLC



#### DESCRIBE YOUR FARM

I am Olivia Pagoria-Telschow, and I farm with my parents, Dave and Helene, who own the orchard. Helene's is a brief 20 minute drive north of Wausau, nestled into the picturesque hills just south of Merrill. During the fall, you can enjoy a fantastic view of colorful leaves while you drive. Our orchard is a family-oriented farm with a main focus to be a place where families can be together and enjoy for generations. Whether picking apples, eating at our commercial bakery, looking for the perfect pumpkin, or even taking a ride on our cow train, Helene's is for everyone. We strive to make our guests feel welcomed and at home while having the opportunity to experience Wisconsin unlike anywhere else.

#### WHAT BROUGHT YOU INTO FARMING?

Before Helene's became an apple orchard in 1979, it was first established as a dairy farm in the year 1919 by Helene's grandparents. Years later when Dave and Helene purchased the farm, they decided to transform the simple dairy into an orchard. As the apple trees grew, so did their business. Since then they have added an on-site commercial bakery in 1992 and continue to make Helene's a family tradition for everyone who comes to the orchard.

#### WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE THING YOU PRODUCE?

My personal favorite is our Apple Dumpling Ala Mode. The perfect Red Mac apple picked at the right time wrapped in pastry dough with homemade cinnamon ice cream makes the best treat.

#### WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT FARMING?

For me, it's a combination of many things. Farming on the land that has been in my family for almost 100 years is an incredible feeling, and growing a product that is of the highest quality makes working at Helene's even more special. However, the best part is seeing the satisfaction of our customers when they come to the orchard. Knowing that we are providing that satisfaction is so fulfilling and extremely rewarding.

#### WHAT IS MOST DIFFICULT ABOUT FARMING?

There have been several instances where nature has impacted our crop tremendously. Weather is always difficult for our orchard; rain, hail, and drought (or even snows) is always something we try to prepare for in advance. We use a weather computer to anticipate and monitor weather conditions. We prepare the best we can, but sometimes there is not much we can do. Sometimes weather wins.

#### WHERE CAN YOU BE FOUND?

Look for Helene's red tent at the Saturday morning Wausau Farmers' Market. During the fall (Mid-September through Halloween), we are open Tuesday through Sunday at 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. Website: [HeleneshilltopOrchard.com](http://HeleneshilltopOrchard.com) Facebook: Helene's Hilltop Orchard

#### WHAT IS YOUR HOPE FOR FARMING?

My hope is that our orchard leaves behind a legacy known to many generations for our commitment to the land and the community, all while embracing the new technological advancements in agriculture that improve our orchard and continue to make it a memorable destination for families.