

LOVIN' THE LIFE



Kids of all ages can help gather the eggs at Weatherbury Farm.

# Working farm vacations

BY LORI VANOVER, ASSOCIATE EDITOR

## Farms and ranches open their doors and put guests to work.

As farmers and ranchers know, living off the land is a challenge. In an effort to diversify and boost their bottom line, many family-owned operations are now inviting guests to come stay with them and learn about agriculture. Farm vacations give visitors an authentic, hands-on experience while helping their hosts preserve and share their way of life.

### Dryhead Ranch, Lovell, Wyoming.

On this working ranch, run by Iris Bassett and her daughter Jennifer Cerroni, guests may join in on cattle and horse drives, wean calves and colts, fix fencing, look for strays and check water holes. Iris says guests go riding every day and participate in ranch activities as much as possible. History lovers won't want to miss the buffalo jump in Dryhead Canyon. The bunkhouse contains six guest rooms, and all meals are provided. The ranch is located in rural Montana under the eastern slopes of the Pryor Mountains, with an office in Lovell. 307-548-6688. [dryheadranch.com](http://dryheadranch.com).

### Hull-O Farms, Durham, New York.

The Hull family has worked this land in the northern Catskills for more than 200 years and seven generations. When Frank and Sherry Hull realized income from their dairy operation could no longer support their family, they decided to offer farm vacations. Kids and adults may help out by milking cows and nanny goats, gathering eggs and feeding baby animals. During haying season, guests get to ride on the tractor or toss bales of hay into the haymow. A corn maze is open in the fall. Three guesthouses are available, with breakfast and dinner provided in the main farmhouse. 518-239-6950. [hull-o.com](http://hull-o.com).



Hull-O Farms offers a corn maze and pumpkin patch for autumn visitors.

### Leaping Lamb Farm, Alsea, Oregon.

On this small farm, Scottie and Greg Jones raise sheep and turkeys, grow hay and corn for their animals, and plant a garden and greenhouse full of produce. They have offered farm vacations since 2006. Harvest season runs throughout the summer and fall, and guests may enjoy the fruits of their labor, including fresh jams and cider. Scottie says an extra hand is always welcome to assist with gathering eggs or feeding the animals. A private two-bedroom cabin near the main farmhouse can accommodate up to six guests. 877-820-6132. [leapinglambfarm.com](http://leapinglambfarm.com).

### Liberty Hill Farm, Rochester, Vermont.

Beth and Bob Kennett have hosted guests on their dairy farm for more than 28 years. A typical day begins with a country breakfast and ends with a homemade evening meal. "Our guests are allowed to interact



Scottie Jones of Leaping Lamb Farm says an extra hand is always welcome.

as much or as little as they desire in our farming operation," Beth says. "The actual activities may vary by the day or the season, but on a dairy farm there are always cows to be milked and calves to be fed. Kids can also snuggle with the barn kittens, collect fresh eggs and chase chickens." The family's Greek revival-style house includes seven guest rooms. 802-767-3926. [libertyhillfarm.com](http://libertyhillfarm.com).

### Weatherbury Farm, Avella, Pennsylvania.

On this grass-fed beef and lamb farm, Dale, Marcy and Nigel Tudor aim to teach guests about agriculture, with an emphasis on fun. "In our 21st year of offering farm vacations, we are finding the disconnect between city folks and the farm is definitely growing," Marcy says. "Last year Dale took guests to the garden. He dug up potatoes and onions; no one in the group knew these plants grew in the ground." Breakfast includes farm-raised eggs and produce, plus pancakes made with grains grown and milled on-site. Chores range from pumping water to collecting eggs and weeding the garden. Guests can also learn about farm machinery. Accommodations are available in historic buildings. 724-587-3763. [weatherburyfarm.com](http://weatherburyfarm.com).

For a guide to many more farm and ranch vacation destinations, visit [farmstayus.com](http://farmstayus.com).



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