

## Ida County is Tops!

For Immediate Release: February 5, 2009

**Galva, Iowa** – It's OFFICIAL! Our SECRET is out! Progressive Farmer magazine announced over the weekend that IDA COUNTY was selected as the 3<sup>rd</sup> *Best Place in the Nation to Raise a Family!* Each year, Progressive Farmer compiles a list of rural counties based on certain criteria which includes:

1. home and land prices
2. crime rates
3. environment
4. education
5. economic factors
6. access to health care
7. others

Counties are first ranked using a formula based on the above statistics. In addition, they also consider FFA and 4-H enrollment numbers. After Progressive Farmer's magazine staff travels to the selected counties and conducts personal interviews, the counties are arranged again based on editorial opinion.



In his article, Gregg Hillyer writes the following:

Pulitzer Prize-winning author James Agee once wrote, "You can never go home again." Don't tell that to Delayne Johnson.

Like so many of his generation that grew up on an Ida County, Iowa, farm, Johnson graduated from college and moved away to start his career.

But now he's back in an area fueled by agriculture, renewable energy projects and light industry. "It was always my goal to live here," says the general manager of Galva Holstein Ag LLC. "My wife, Anne, and I want our children to live in a community where your neighbor will lend a helping hand whenever you ask." Helping others seems to come naturally to the people who live here in the gently rolling hills of northwest Iowa. Several foundations have been established to help fund everything from recreation centers to a new 384-seat performing arts center that's set to begin construction this year. In addition, the BCIG Citizens' Scholarship Foundation has given an amazing \$1.24 million to high school seniors over the past 14 years.

Quality education is a high priority. "Bringing industry and good jobs to the community goes hand in hand with making sure our schools have the proper curriculum that complement employers' needs," says Rita Frahm, president of the Ida County Economic Development.

The Des Moines Register recently recognized Galva-Holstein as one of the state's top college prep schools.

For Clint and Heather Conover, Ida County offers more than just good schools. It's a great place to raise their kids: Christian, 12, Alexia, 10, Grant, 8 and Ty, 4.

Clint is a fourth-generation farmer who also works at a local car dealership. But he spends much of his free time helping the kids with their 4-H projects, particularly showing champion Berkshire hogs. "4-H teaches them responsibility. They learn skills that stay with them for the rest of their lives," says Clint.

The Progressive Farmer national recognition simply re-affirms what we Iowan's have known all along ... that Ida County is a great place to live, work, raise a family and enjoy life at its fullest! Congratulations on living in Ida County and making a difference! The world is watching us ... so stand tall and be proud!

Check out the February issue of Progressive Farmer magazine or view the article on-line at:

<http://www.progressivefarmer.com/farmer/bestplaces/articles/3ida.html>



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|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Hamilton County, Nebraska  | 6. Fayette County, Texas     |
| 2. Chippewa County, Minnesota | 7. Oconee County, Georgia    |
| 3. Ida County, Iowa           | 8. McPherson County, Kansas  |
| 4. Harvey County, Kansas      | 9. Obion County, Tennessee   |
| 5. Clinton, Iowa              | 10. Madison County, Virginia |