
Celebrating 'Eggs'ellence

Progressive egg farm and feed mill takes historic ties into its future

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Braswell Family Farms annually produces a staggering 65 million dozen eggs and makes 200,000 tons of feed for chickens, turkeys and hogs. Yet, this progressive family farm never loses sight of its 75-year history, evident in its renovated old feed mill, some of the original henhouses still in use and the commitment to its values.

“When you walk into the lobby of our new office, our intention is to take you back where we began,” says Trey Braswell, the fourth-generation president of Braswell Family Farms, a major egg and feed producer based in Nashville. “We have our original grinding stone from the old mill sitting in the middle of the floor on a pedestal. We have rough-sawn wood on the walls and a stone foundation. We really wanted to go back and pay tribute to where we started.”

That start was in 1943, when J.M. and E.G. Braswell ground cornmeal at the circa-1830s Boddie Mill in Nash County. More than 75 years later, the farm ranks as one of the largest organic feed producers



on the East Coast and the second-largest Egglad's Best franchisee in the United States.

“For some reason, God has had His hands on this company,” Trey says. “We seek to honor Him and glorify Him in the way we run this business and how we take care of our people. We are building upon the foundations laid by the generations before us.”

SHELLING OUT INNOVATION

Braswell Family Farms sells specialty feed in bulk to chicken, turkey and hog farmers in North Carolina and Virginia. The farm markets its eggs from its roughly two million hens up and down the East Coast. Their eggs sell under the brands of Egglad's Best, Natural Choice, Nature's Finest, Land O'Lakes, Born Free and a variety of private labels.

Chances are, an Egglad's Best-brand egg sold in a North Carolina store came from Braswell Family Farms. Trey's grandfather, Ronald, was a founding member of Egglad's Best in 1989, years before the company recognized the success of its nutritionally enhanced eggs. Ronald died in 1991.

“My dad always has said that was an incredible gift that my granddad left,” Trey says. “He never got to see the fruits of that investment.”

Milestones like this shape the farm's success story. In the 1950s, the Braswells bought an old flour mill in downtown Nashville and



Nashville's Braswell Family Farms has remained family-run for more than 75 years and four generations.

began to custom-mix feed. In the 1960s, the family built a new mill on the same site and transitioned into bulk feed. Within the next decade, the family started to raise pullets (young female chickens) to sell to egg farms.

In the 1970s and '80s, the Braswells began producing their own eggs. The Eggland's Best franchise followed, and today, the family has added more layer and pullet houses, expanded its packaging plant and updated processing equipment. They were also one of the first to produce cage-free and organic eggs so they could provide consumers with a choice, all while maintaining a historic touch.

"We still want people to understand where we came from," says Trey, whose father still serves

as an advisor for the company. "On our main farm, we still have the first chicken houses and a timeline progression of all types of housing through the years. We are still in our old feed mill, now upgraded from 70 years ago."

GROWING FOR GENERATIONS

A sizable portion of the 230 employees at Braswell Family Farms have worked there 20 or more years, says John Watson, vice president of sales and marketing.

"It's all about our core values," Watson says. "This company was founded 75 years ago as God's business and that we are stewards of His business. How we conduct the business to be stewards of God has transitioned through four generations

and is stronger each shift."

Those guiding principles attracted Watson to the business in 2016. He visits with longtime employees who share stories about how the company has evolved, yet how it maintains an unwavering commitment to the values of family, accountability, integrity, teamwork and humility.

"To be able to come to work every day with a company that believes we are running a business for God is a big blessing," Watson says. "I'm going to do this for the balance of my career. God willing."

See More Online

To learn more about the Braswells, their products and farm story, visit braswellfamilyfarms.com.



Trey Braswell, right, now helms the family business. Many of its 200-plus employees have worked there for more than 20 years.

