

# Hood Dairy Farm



Paw Paw, MI

Dairy Operation

Sizes 100' x 460'

90' x 120'

50' x 80'

30' x 96'

Built By

AK Equipment Inc

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## Steel Framed Fabric Covered Building Ideal for Dairy Expansion

Hood Dairy Farms is a four-generation family farm that expanded its dairy operation from 50 cows to 400 cows in 2000. For many generations, dairy and cash crops were the main business, but consistently low grain prices drove the need to change. After years of planning and research to grow the herd and use the land efficiently, Hood Farms chose fabric-covered buildings for their dairy operation.

"Before we made our decision, we visited another large Fabric Covered dairy facility in Wisconsin and we were totally impressed," says Tim Hood. "When I walked into their barn I thought to myself, 'If I were a cow, this is the barn I would want to be in.'" The long-term goal is to expand the dairy operation to 800 cows and have the facilities and cow management systems to accommodate this growth strategy.

Everyone who walks into our barns comment that the cows look very comfortable because there is so much natural light," says Hood. "The white material reflects light extremely well, reducing our operating costs and allowing us to have proper lumens to control day length in our barn. This is very important, especially on short winter days."

Superior air ventilation and clear-span design of the steel truss building were also important features to Hood Farms. "Because the roof is so much higher than a conventional barn, we have a large volume of air over the cattle. We were able to design the barn to get all the natural ventilation we need. The air always smells good in our barns."

The Hood family has four Fabric Covered Structures. All four buildings are connected to guarantee maximum cow comfort. The 100' x 460' main Freestall is attached to a 30' x 96' cross walk which leads to a 90' x 120' barn for close up cows. The close-up cow area is connected to a 50' x 80' holding area and parlor.

"We are a family Dairy operation, so we need the buildings to last generations," says Hood. "The materials that the buildings are constructed with are far superior to anything else. Metal buildings are prone to rust and treated post in wood barns can rot." These Buildings utilize galvanized steel tubing with corrosion barrier for the interior frame system. The Fabric cover is resistant to rust and virtually maintenance free. The four buildings were installed in just three weeks, preventing any rain delays for contractors to finish pouring the cement floor.

All these benefits add up to a more productive environment for cows and dairy operation. "When you purchase animals from a number of different sources, health issues can be a concern," says Hood. "We are confident that the combination of fresh air, natural light and good cow management are the reasons for excellent health. I'm pleased to say that we have maintained exceptional health of our herd during the transition period."



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