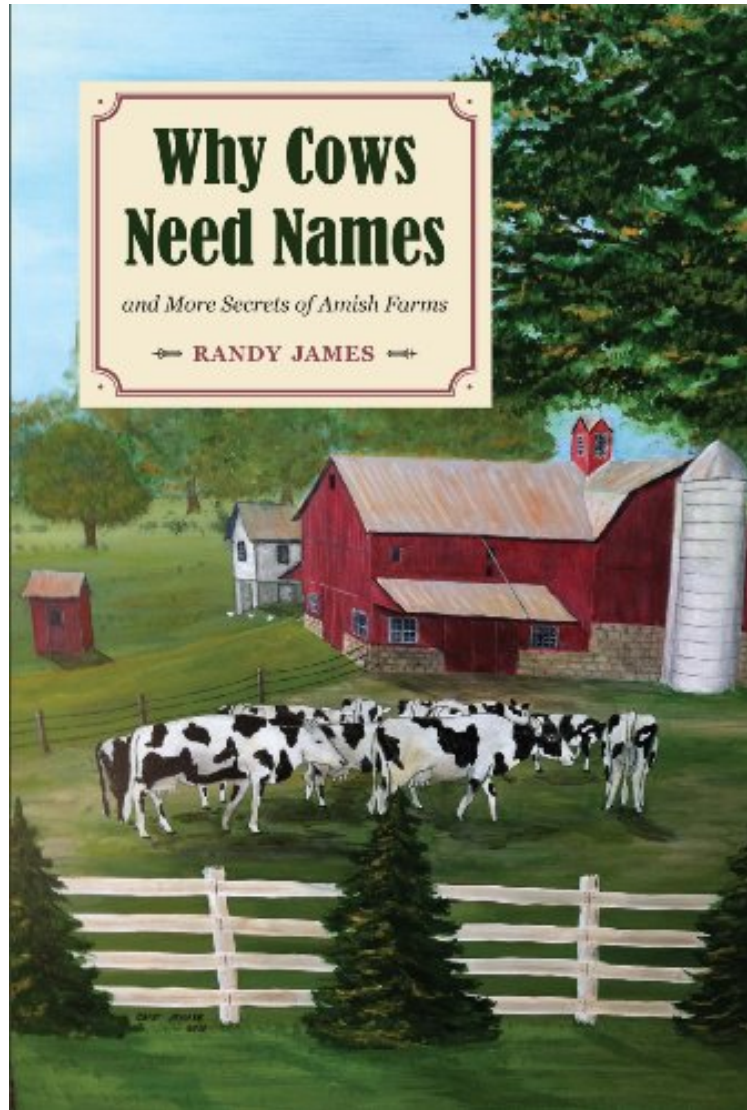


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Why Cows Need Names: And More Secrets of Amish Farms

Randy James

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Randy James : Why Cows Need Names: And More Secrets of Amish Farms before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Why Cows Need Names: And More Secrets of Amish Farms:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Debunking conventional wisdom: If you have 20 cows you should get 200 and if you have 200 you should get 200,000 - that's bull!By Jamie WolfLast week I was in the right place at the right time and barged into a conversation since the topic was books. Two books to be specific, Why Cows Learn Dutch and Why Cows Need Names, and the author himself was present - Dr. Randy James. Dr. James received his

Ph.D. in agronomy from Ohio State University and has served as county agricultural agent in the Geauga County Amish Settlement, the fourth-largest Amish settlement in the world, for more than twenty years. He is also an associate professor for Ohio State University's College of Food, Agriculture, and Environmental Sciences. Agriculture continues to be the largest industry in the United States with over 2.2 million farms. Randy's writing debunks the myth that bigger is always better in American agriculture and points out that, amazingly, well over 100,000 new small family farms have sprung up in the past few years . . . and almost no one has noticed! Surrounded by a factory-farm world, Randy guides Amish farmers to employ a business model that flatly rejects the dogma of economies of scale and instead focuses on the diversity, flexibility, and efficiency that only a small family farm can capture. Randy has a dry sense of humor and a strong backbone; he has spent a career bucking conventional wisdom, becoming an outlier amidst his peers with their research focus on large-scale factory farming, calling out the fallacy of subsidies, and patiently advocating that there is real profit to be made in taking your time, choosing an animal for your herd based on knowing its attributes rather than just its number, and even doing things the old-fashioned way! Time and again his research, his observations, and his hands-on experience with a community of small farms proves that small, independent farmers can be, and are, profitable in today's challenging economy without subsidies, without giant loans, without massive equipment budgets, and without a completely callous disregard for the very animals that are often at the center of human livelihood. One takeaway might be that long-standing practices, our universities, our politicians, our lobbyists, and our US Department of Agriculture say we need factory farming, we need subsidies, we need tariffs, we need corporate monopolies of our food supply and every single bit of it is flawed. My opinion; I encourage you to read Dr. James' wonderful books to get his perspective from the field, literally! The reality is that much of what has been accepted practice in farming could be thrown out and we could successfully do things very differently. But it's difficult for the non-farmer to find the truth amidst the propaganda so we continue with status quo even to our detriment. That's why Dr. James' wonderfully well-written, satisfying, and enjoyable book is so delightfully important for anyone considering going back to the land, anyone interested in the topic of organics, anyone who loves cows, or just anyone with a curious nature!

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Wonderful! By RITAS this is one of the best books of its genre - ever! Not only does it hold your attention and interest but it is extremely informative. It makes you want to spend time on the farm and really explains how simple and uncluttered life can be. Randy James through his writing just makes a person feel good.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Love! By AnnaKFI loved this book. Randy's honest and yet non-idealized view of the Amish is so interesting. His expertise on small family farms made me wish it were easier and cheaper to only purchase food from small local farms. I really loved this book both for its view on the Amish and the interesting things I learned about family farms.

An inspiring glimpse into the struggles of a young Amish farm family. Agriculture continues to be the largest industry in the United States with over 2.2 million farms. Amazingly, well over 100,000 new small family farms have sprung up in the past few years . . . and almost no one noticed. *Why Cows Need Names* follows one young Amish family as they dream about and then struggle to establish a profitable and quintessentially American small farm. The story starts with Eli Gingerich's first timid phone call to author Randy James, the county agricultural agent in Ohio's Geauga Amish Settlement, the fourth-largest Amish settlement in the world, and traces the family's progress over the next five years. Through gentle dialogue and true stories, James captures the challenges of creating a simple business plan that will lead to the family's radiant success or dismal failure. As the narrative unfolds, readers get a rare glimpse into what it's like to work in the fields with draft horses; in the barn with cows, calves, children, and Chip the family dog; or to sit at the table talking with family and friends over a noontime meal. A picture emerges of how quietly living a shared goal and doing without during hard times can strengthen families and provide an appreciation for what is truly important in life. In addition to the business aspects and day-to-day farm activities, James interweaves commentary on our complex relationships with animals. The stark differences in the way animals are treated and valued in agribusinesses versus on small family farms is a recurring theme, as is debunking the myth that bigger is always better in American agriculture. Surrounded by a factory-farm world, the Gingerich family employs a business model that flatly rejects the dogma of economies of scale and instead focuses on the diversity, flexibility, and efficiency that only a small family farm can capture. *Why Cows Need Names* provides a partial roadmap, not only for other small farms but for the many thousands of family businesses that are created each year and largely ignored in our national psyche. It will appeal to anyone interested in business management, our food supply, animal welfare, and Amish family life.

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About the Author Randy James is professor emeritus with the Ohio State University's College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences. His Ph.D. is in agronomy, and his faculty position for almost 30 years was to serve as the county agricultural agent in the Geauga Amish Settlement. He now lives in Beaufort, South Carolina, and visits old friends in the Amish Settlement as often as he can.