

John & Pam Sponaugle

John was raised in Highland County, Virginia, the sheep capitol of the state. His family always had sheep at home and John started his own small flock with the purchase of 6 Suffolk ewe lambs from Mr. Kenton Rexrode from Blue Grass, VA in the mid 1960's. However, college and other time restrictions forced him to let them go. After college, John began a career as a high school math and physics teacher. With a desire to farm, John purchased a small farm in 1976 and 10 registered Suffolk ewe lambs from Ansel Luxford. He has never lost the love for the beautiful Suffolk sheep since.

On May 12, 1979 John and Pam were married in the front yard of their new 75 acre farm and so began Sponaugle Suffolks. They were blessed with two daughters, Sarah born in 1981 and Laura born in 1985. The family has grown to include six grandkids.

One thing John and Pam are most proud of is the creation of the Virginia Junior Suffolk Sheep Breeders in 1988 and its growth to the Virginia Junior Sheep Breeders Association. The VJSBA will celebrate its 25th year in 2017.

John and Pam have exhibited Suffolks at the Rockingham County Fair and consigned rams to the Virginia Performance Test for the past 38 years. They have exhibited their sheep at the local, state and national levels throughout the years, with a highlight being Reserve Champion Suffolk Ram at the 1992 Midwest Stud Ram Sale selling for \$11,000. John has been very active in the Virginia Sheep Producers Association and has served as president of the group numerous times.

On a national level, John served two terms as director of the National Suffolk Sheep Association in the late 1980's and early 1990's. He also led that group as President in 1990. John is very proud of his work with Mr. Jim Caras, President of the American Suffolk Sheep Society, in producing an ad in the Sheep Breeder magazine to jointly promote Suffolks. He also was instrumental in working with Mr. Caras and Mr. Craig Van Arkel on joint sponsorship of the Suffolk show in Louisville after the NSSA had been in Kansas City for two years. In 1999, John had the honor of judging the National Suffolk Show in Louisville, Kentucky.

John is currently a 4-H leader for a local club. He and his daughter, Laura, and son-in-law, JT, are still actively working with youth and their lamb projects. Pam has in recent years shown her support of the Suffolk youth by donating a stained glass art piece to the juniors silent auction.

Their philosophy has always been: "If it's worth doing, then do it right!"