

Grandma's Garden

Michele and Harlan De Boer

(pictured right with daughter Marliegh)

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When Michele De Boer was looking for an opportunity to generate income while home schooling her 5 children she turned to what she knew.

You might say gardening was in her blood. Her mother and grandmother always had large gardens, thus the name of her enterprise, Grandma's Garden.



Harlan and Michele's farm is located in the same neighborhood where Michele grew up so advice and help is available when needed. They started with a traditional, all natural garden and free range chickens.

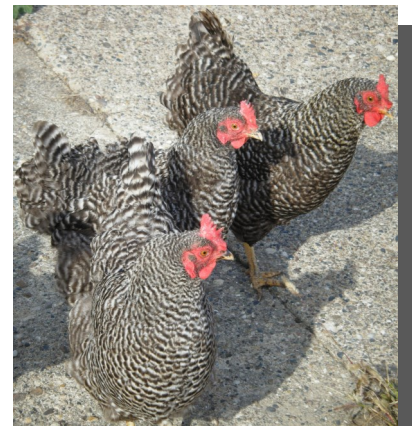
Adding a greenhouse and a high tunnel extends the growing season and has improved their efforts to reduce the insect damage since no insecticide or pesticide is used.

Cucumbers, zucchini, eggplant, cabbage, kohlrabi, broccoli, peas and potatoes are among many of the vegetables grown in the garden.

The De Boer family has more than 100 chickens and 5 different breeds, (1 breed purchased each year to keep track of their age). The children help to gather eggs for meals and for selling. Daily egg count in the summer months is 4 or 5 dozen per day.

Chicken manure is used to improve the soil to sustain the gardens.

This venture not only provides income but teaches self-sufficiency, responsibility and reinforces the importance of a healthy diet. The De Boers have hosted a horticulture class and their oldest son received education credits for helping to build the greenhouse.



They also harvest table grapes for making jellies and jams to sell at the Farmers Market in Pella.

Fruit trees, pumpkins and mums provide a colorful close to a bountiful season.