

A Day in the Life of an Amish Family



Amish fathers typically take their children into the fields to work together

Think you have a rough life? How about getting up at 4:00 every morning and milking cows? Every day of the year? That's only one part of the Amish lifestyle. It's a hard life, but a life that they truly love and wouldn't trade for anything.

To get an insight into Amish life I visited with Stevie Glick (39) at his 70-acre dairy farm in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Stevie and his wife Mary live on the farm with their five children. Their daughter, Miriam (15) is the eldest; the sons are Levi (13), Alvin (11), Johnny (8) and David (5).

If you think your life is hard, you may think differently after visiting this Amish family in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Farming the Amish way is challenging, but rewarding.

By Keith W. Strandberg

The two older boys take turns getting up with their father at 4:00 a.m. to milk the cows. Sometimes they have to round up the cows and bring them to the barn before the hour-and-a-half chore can begin.

"I do most of the milking, while the boys clean the cows and get them ready to be milked. When we are done milking, Johnny comes out and feeds the heifers, and we wash the milkers and clean up until about 7:30."

At 7:30 a.m. the whole family eats breakfast together. Family time is very important to the Amish—they work together as a family, eat, play and go to church together.

During the school year the children go to a one-room schoolhouse about five miles away; in the summer they work on the farm all day, just as their parents do every day of the year.

"If I'm not done plowing, then I get the



A typical Amish farm



“After that, I sat down and read the newspaper, then went to sleep. I try to get to bed around 9:30–10:00 p.m., because I have to get up so early.” 25

SUNDAY IS A DAY OF REST (EVERY OTHER WEEK)

“On Sunday, we milk the cows, then go to church, then we rest if there is time before the next milking,” Stevie explains. “We don’t have church every Sunday, we have it every other Sunday. On in-between Sundays, we take the day off, though we still have to milk the cows.” 30 35

It takes the Glicks almost an hour and a half to get to church by horse and buggy. “We try to get on the road by 7 a.m. Right now we get back from church between 3:00 and 3:30 p.m. Church lasts until 12:30, after which we eat lunch, then we come home.” 40

Whew! The Amish life is a hard one, but it’s one that Stevie and his family really cherish. 45

“We really like our lives,” Stevie says. “I can’t think of anything I don’t really like. I’m hoping that the boys will want to be farmers, but it’s up to them. They don’t like it now because it’s too much work.” 50

Amen to that.

horses, hitch them to the plow and spend the morning in the fields, and the boys will come with me,” Stevie explains.

THERE IS ALWAYS WORK TO DO, RAIN OR SHINE

The Amish life is very dependent on Mother Nature. If the weather is good, work is done outside. If the weather is bad, indoor chores, fix-it jobs and machinery maintenance are done.

At 11:30 a.m. everyone eats lunch. Then it’s back to work until dinner at 4:30 p.m. After dinner it’s time to milk the cows again.

Finally, Stevie might have time to relax and read the paper, unless something else needs to be done. “Last night after milking, I went out into the fields to cut alfalfa and I was at it until around 8:30 p.m., then I had to put the horses in the stable,” says Stevie.



The Glick's dairy farm in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania

EXERCISE

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A Day in the Life of an Amish Family**Exercise 1**

Match the words with the correct definitions.

Es. giving you satisfaction or pleasure **a**

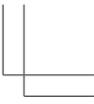
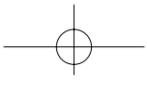
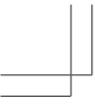
1. understanding something or learning more about it _____
2. to bring animals together in one place _____
3. an ordinary job that must be done regularly _____
4. a young cow that has not had a calf yet _____
5. work that is done to keep a machine, or piece of equipment in good condition _____
6. a plant with purple flowers that is fed to cows _____
7. a light vehicle with two big wheels pulled by a horse _____
8. the sound you make to show surprise or relief _____

- a. rewarding
- b. chore
- c. insight
- d. round up
- e. maintenance
- f. heifer
- g. buggy
- h. whew
- i. alfalfa

Exercise 2

Are the following statements true (T) or false (F)?

1. **T F** Levi and Alvin take turns to help their father milk the cows.
2. **T F** After the cows are milked, they are rounded up and brought to the barn.
3. **T F** They don't feed the heifers until the cows have been milked.
4. **T F** Early every Sunday morning, the Glicks go to church in their horse and buggy.
5. **T F** Stevie and Mary Glick don't mind working hard on their farm, but their children think it is too much work.



Exercise 3

Choose the correct answer to each question below.

1. How long does it usually take to milk the cows?
 - a) about an hour and a half
 - b) from 4 a.m. to 7 a.m.
 - c) from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.
 - d) not more than an hour

 2. Why are the horses important for the Amish?
 - a) All animals on the farm are considered to be family members.
 - b) They help keep the family warm at night.
 - c) They are used for plowing and to pull the buggy.
 - d) They are milked every other morning.

 3. Does Stevie read the paper every day?
 - a) Yes, he likes to relax every evening and read the paper.
 - b) No, he sometimes reads the paper after breakfast.
 - c) Yes, every day after he cuts the alfalfa he reads the paper.
 - d) If he has time in the evening, he will read the paper.
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Exercise 4



Listen and fill in the missing words.

For most of us, it's a curious () to visit an Amish farm. The Amish lead simple () that are very () from ours. Although they have some () on their farms, they generally avoid using (), and don't have telephones or cars. Many of them wear plain () without (). But their lives are hard, too, and children start to work on the farms at an () age.