By JERILYN JOHNSON

If you are interested in modern agricultural production, good fellowship and family fun, then check out the Missouri Young Farmers Summer Tour. Hosts Santa Fe Agri-Leaders offer all of this and more at their Aug. 2-4 tour in Lafayette, Pettis and Saline counties.

Santa Fe Agri-Leaders is one of Missouri Young Farmers/Young Farm Wives Association’s most active chapters, and members have been working to prepare a memorable tour. Chapter adviser John Morgan of Alma says the members went on their first Missouri Young Farmer tour eight years ago and came home convinced they wanted to host one.

“This year’s tour is the result of their hard work and years of planning,” Morgan says. “The tour reflects the diversity of Missouri agriculture and highlights some of our region’s best farms and agribusinesses.”

The tour’s theme is “The Heart of Agriculture, Where Family Pride and Tradition Run Deep.” The stops will illustrate this sentiment, with visits to 10 farms and ag businesses. There are also alternative tours to historic sites in the region.

Planned tour stops

- **Heins Family Farms.** The Heins family is constructing a 664-cow dairy facility on their farm near Higginsville, with plans to be operational by tour time. The expansion was started after Paul and Cindy Heins’ two sons decided to return to the farm. They will share their dairy farming knowledge, along with lessons learned about regulations, specifications and business planning.

- **Peters Orchards and Market.** This 100-year-old family business provides apples, peaches and other fruits, and homemade apple butter. It’s located along the bluffs of the Missouri River and the Santa Fe Trail. The apple orchard is the largest in Missouri.

- **Bredehoeft Farms Inc.** A Missouri Century Farm, this diversified farm is owned by a multigenerational family who are also actively involved in local agricultural groups and government in Lafayette County. The Bredehoefts currently raise corn, soybeans, hogs and beef cattle.

- **Alma Meats Inc.** This business is a well-known “gate-to-plate” foods processor established in 1944 at Alma. It continues to provide meats to the custom, retail and wholesale markets.

- **United Hog Systems and Zeysing Farms.** These businesses were established in 1974 by Robert Zeysing, a former FFA and adult ag instructor from Marshall. UHS is a swine-farrowing and breeding-gilt developer operation. The farm also includes a 5,500-acre rotation of corn, soybeans and wheat. David and Sharon Stephens, who were original charter members of Santa Fe Agri-Leaders, have been instrumental in the business expansion.

- **Salyer Farms.** David and B.J. Salyer and their three sons moved back to Lafayette County in 1987 to expand their farming operation. The combined 1,050-acre operation has pasture, corn, soybeans, wheat, alfalfa, oilseed sunflowers and Angus cattle. They finish 80 head of cattle yearly in a Hoop Beef System building. The Salyers also have a distillers grain-hauling business.

- **Cedar Lane Greenhouse.** Bob and Sherry Finkeldei and their sons transformed their traditional farm near Blackburn into a year-round, value-added ag business. Their wholesale and retail greenhouses feature 20,000 square feet of plant production, including 15,000 growing chrysanthemum flowers.

- **Mid-Missouri Energy.** This 100%-farmer-owned, new-generation cooperative ethanol facility near Malta Bend opened in 2005. MME staff and board members will give a full tour.

- **Peters Family Farms.** Clyde and Craig Peters and their families farm in Lafayette and Pettis counties. They raise corn, soybeans and beef cattle and do custom farming. Craig is an active member of the local and state MYF organizations.

- **Marshall and Fenner Farms.** This unique partnership is five families working side by side to support their traditional farm life. They produce grain crops and Angus cattle on farmland near Malta Bend. Hosts are Tom and Kristen Fenner of Sweet Springs. Tom is a past MYF president.

More information

Tour headquarters is the Santa Fe R-10 High School building at Alma. A barbecue, antique tractor show, modern farm equipment exhibits, and family entertainment will kick off the tour on Sunday evening, Aug. 2. Non-members are welcome. For more information, visit www.moyftour.info or call John Morgan at 660-909-2259.