



Darrin Siemen

Sugarbeet Farmer

Harbor Beach, Michigan

Siemen farms with his wife Barbara; sister, Kelly Jo; brother-in-law, Mike; and his father, Larry, who is semi-retired. He has two sons, Elliot and Riley, and a daughter Adrienne, who also help on the farm.

INTERESTING FACT

Like many farmers in Michigan's sugarbeet region, he grew up on a farm and went to college. Siemen tried another career, in pharmaceutical sales, but quickly realized he'd rather be farming so came home and eventually bought out his parents.

WHAT DO YOU ENJOY ABOUT GROWING SUGARBEETS?

"There's never been a question of if we are going to grow them, but how we grow them and how we can do better. It's been very gratifying over the years, and I know technology has brought us to this point, but how much better we can do with the crop."

WHAT DO YOU SAY TO CRITICS OF AMERICA'S SUGAR POLICY IN THE FARM BILL?

"The frustrating part is most of your candy companies don't have storage. So we supply sugar to them every four days, three days, say. Whenever they want it, they call. They've got the perfect, the purest, product they can get. On demand delivery, we are right here. Domestic production. We don't understand why we are getting thrown under the bus so bad."