



Rita Herford

**SUGARBEET GROWER, FIFTH GENERATION
MICHIGAN SUGAR COMPANY**

Minden City, Michigan



Rita's family has been growing sugarbeets ever since her ancestors emigrated from Germany. Today, she farms alongside her parents and two brothers in Minden City, Michigan.

Why are sugarbeets important to you as a farmer? What role do they play on your farm?

"Sugarbeets for our farm mean crop diversity. In Michigan, we are the second most agriculturally diverse state in the U.S. So, we grow a wide variety of different crops. In our area, sugarbeets grow really well. Sugarbeets serve as another crop that we can rotate into our fields, which helps with healthy soil, crop diversity, and breaking disease life cycles. It's a really great way to elevate our farm."

Why does it matter that America can produce its own sugar?

"As a country, being able to grow our own food is huge for national security. It's very important that we are able to produce our own sugar and not rely on foreign countries for food production because that can be very unreliable."



Interesting Fact

Rita and her husband, Luke, both returned to their roots: each now farms the family land where they grew up.

