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PHOTO: CHARLES RIEDEL

TO PARAPHRASE THE POPULAR nursery rhyme, Donnie MacDonald has a farm. He doesn't consider himself old, though, and judging by his daily routine—the 57-year-young dairyman still finds enjoyment working long days at his farm in Nova Scotia—and the fact that his family members before him worked into their 90s, he may well be right.

But that hasn't stopped Donnie from thinking about passing his farm on to his 26-year-old son, Gavin. In an

article that features them on page 14, the father-and-son team discuss some of what goes into the decision-making process, as well as what may be the reversal of an analogous and stubborn trend—youth leaving the farm.

Like so many others involved in agriculture across North America, Donnie and Gavin have noted what they believe to be a significant influx of young people back into farming or farm-related work. Recently, that anecdotal evidence was given statistical credence when the USDA released its latest Census of Agriculture, which showed a 1.1% increase of farmers under the age of 35. That's a modest increase, sure, but a welcome one, especially when we compare it to that demographic group's decades-long decline.

It's also terrific news since these young people will be tomorrow's leaders, who, we might add, are already making their mark today. Consider, for instance, members of the National FFA Organization who, as the story on page 18 shows, learn leadership skills in that group's lesser-known, yet immensely effective talent competitions. In the process, they also provide us with entertainment that soothes the soul.

In this issue, we also profile Dustin Edwards (page 8), whose success is driven by a knack for and love of farming. Just 32 years old, Edwards runs a 4,700-acre operation—and quite possibly growing—that runs on Massey Ferguson® equipment, big-picture thinking and no shortage of confidence. His approach to farming is certainly worthy of study, and his passion is downright infectious.

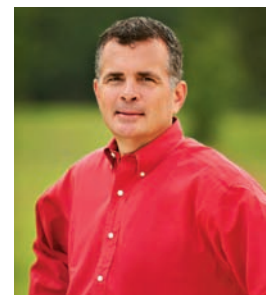
To be sure, agriculture's bright future comes through loud and clear in this issue, and we're happy to bring it to you.

A Message From Bob Crain: Young Blood, New Ideas

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