



The expansive construction project rising from the ground off Hwy. 441 just south of Madison, is a dream come true for the Kelly family of Morgan County. The idea of a 40-acre agricultural retail market was planted years ago, and after being nurtured through hard work, sweat, and love, will finally be ready for harvest this fall. The Farmview Market complex, which will offer locally sourced products via a specialty grocery store, an in-house butcher shop and a farm-to-table café, is scheduled to be open for business at the end of October.



The Kelly family is overseeing all aspects of Farmview Market's operations. From left, Pam and Keith Kelly, son Brad Kelly, daughter Laura and her husband, Richard Rotroff.

Kelly Products, Inc., is the family-run engine behind this massive project. Headed by Keith Kelly, this diverse, Covington-based company sells products and services to all segments of the agribusiness industry. Providing information and efficiency to the agricultural is their livelihood.

Recognizing a need, and acting upon a feeling of responsibility to provide that need, when able, is their moral and familial credo.

A true family project, the majority of the coordination and management of Farmview Market will rest on the collective shoulders of the Kelly clan. Laura Rotroff, daughter of Keith and Pam Kelly, handles information distribution in her role as Marketing and Communications Manager, while her husband, Richard, will bring his supermarket background to the role of General Manager. Brad Kelly, Laura's brother, rounds out the team in the Business Development department and focuses on forming partnerships with local producers. Together with a team of individuals whose skills are exemplary in their respective fields, the Farmview Market is well on its way to becoming a place to bring the community and agriculture



together in a tasteful, vibrant, enriching, family atmosphere.

Soft-spoken and pleasant, Keith paints a picture of the old-school legacy of hard work, fairness, and a healthy dose of “If you’re going to do it, do it right.” This commitment is to his family, his community, and to setting an example of proactive action to preserve the things he deeply loves. “You have to be willing to do what you can,” he explains. Something he “can do” is to diversify his experience to a project that may prove to be epically impactful for his community. “It was a logical next step for us,” he says.

The first phase of this venture will be completed by the end of October. Although Farmview Market will be open in time for the fall harvest, it will be placed into hibernation shortly thereafter until spring, because the agricultural growing season is

suspended throughout the winter. This pause in activity, however, will give the Kelly family time to court local farmers and lock down their participation for spring harvest. The rest of the establishment? Year-round access to local products.



Logan Channell joined the Farmview team as Kitchen Manager and chef of the much-anticipated farm-to-table café. According to Logan, visitors are in store for traditional southern cuisine – with an original twist.

From grocery items, including locally processed meats, dairy, and locally-ground flour and coffee, to nutrition/wellness



products and artisan crafts, this multi-dimensional market will be stocked with items that local economists and tourism professionals believe will attract shoppers from surrounding communities – everyone from the consumers anticipating fresh produce to the local farmers who will be providing it. Reasons behind the collective excitement are varied, as this venture will affect the community in multiple ways. In fact, the positive effects of a successful regional food hub can impact the entire state.

Cindy Norton, agritourism manager for the Georgia Department of Agriculture, believes that this venture has the potential to bring 800,000 people per year to shop. This, she says, is typical of a business of this type lucky enough to be in such a prime location. The property, off Hwy. 441 within close proximity to the I-20 Corridor, should provide a draw



of traffic from travelers and residents alike. The caveat, she warns, is that, to see these types of numbers, businesses need to be sure the products are exemplary. “Keith [Kelly] has come to many of our functions here,” she explains. “He came to meet the farmers and their families who sell the products on the lists we keep. He has made a commitment to quality products and to promoting his community.”

Christine McCauley, Executive Director at Madison-Morgan Conservancy, is another champion of the Farmview vision. “The time is right for a business like this to thrive,” she says. In fact, the subject came up in 2010 at an educational forum called “The Future is Farming.” This forum resulted in the development of FARMeander, a farm-based map and tour of area markets, eateries, festivals, and inns. A follow up to that forum



was held two years later in the form of a series of meetings called by the Conservancy's Regional Food Hub committee. Keith Kelly was among the participants who discussed possible locations for a meat processing facility and the prospect of a retail market, also touching on the branding possibilities available to this region. Although the timing wasn't right for some of the proposals, the seed was planted, so to speak, for the idea that would sprout into the Farmview Market.

While across the nation, households are targeting the purchase of organic foods because the source of these foods and the methods by which they are processed are known, Brad Kelly makes the point that, by buying locally, they also are able to source their purchases. At Farmview, they'll be able to meet the actual farmers from



where their produce or dairy comes.

As with FARMeander, Farmview Market intends to highlight local offerings such as the beef produced by Verner Farms and the artisan cheeses crafted at Greendale Farm. The goal is to purchase (and hire) locally to support the health of the community and to draw tourism.

The two massive, historic barns being re-constructed to house the market and café are changing more than the view from Hwy. 441. When completed, it is hoped that these solid, majestic structures will be the centerpieces of a space that will change views on the importance of community, support of our agrarian heritage, and preservation of family.

The barns are built from reclaimed beams, creating a rustic feel and bringing a

sense of history to the complex.

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