

# Why Are Boys Still Attracted to Farming?

While scrolling through Facebook the other day, I came across a video intriguingly titled, "[Why Boys Still Want to Be Farmers + Why that's OK.](#)" Clicking on the link, I got a brief glimpse into the life of farm father Justin Rhodes, his two young sons, and their two friends.

In the course of the video, the little boys (who appear to range in age from eight to 10) chase chickens, milk cows, and mark out pastures by installing electric fences. They seem to revel in country life and take pleasure in doing tasks that others might find mundane.

When asked if they would like to be farmers when they grow up, they seem a bit reluctant, but finally admit that, yes, they do find farming an intriguing profession they would like to pursue (although being a soldier is a close second).

So what's the draw? Why, in an age of video games, technology, and other dazzling work opportunities are these little boys so eager to head back to the farmer's life?

Their actions in the video seem to suggest three reasons:

## **1. Demand for Physical Labor**

Surprisingly, there are few – if any – complaints about chores from these little boys. Instead, they seem to enjoy hauling fence posts, lugging buckets of feed, and milking cows. Perhaps this is because boys thrive on manual labor.

As Michael Gurian explains in his book, [The Minds of Boys](#), males are full of "boy energy," an energy that "involves a lot of physical movement and manipulation of physical objects." If

channeled properly, this energy, although often annoying to teachers and mothers, helps boys to process, learn, and become innovators. Thus, a farm and the labor it offers becomes the perfect avenue for little boys to become independent and mature thinkers.

## **2. Eagerness to Provide**

One of the themes that surfaces several times in the course of the video is summed up in Sam's statement: "I'm going to make money selling milk and eggs."

Such a comment hints at the ingrained male desire to be a provider. As an article from *Harvard Business Review* [explains](#), men base their value and purpose in life on how well they provide for those around them. If that ability disappears, so does their sense of self-worth.

Little boys have not yet grown into men, but they undoubtedly have that same provider desire bubbling up from within. Does farm life allow them to channel that provider nature at an earlier age?

## **3. Desire for Role Models and Companionship**

The four boys in this video likely didn't choose farming all on their own. As the video shows, they have a solid male role model who takes them under his wing and works alongside them. In this sense, farming offers the wisdom, community, and male fellowship that so many young men crave, but struggle to get in a society that insists on equality and sameness between the sexes.

As Justin Rhodes explains toward the end of the video:

*These guys give me hope and when they say "I want to be a farmer when I grow up," I want to encourage that – I don't*

*think that's a bad thing! I think they're a part of the solution. ... Would I be happy if they can provide for themselves and for others in a meaningful way and leave the spot they did that with a better place? Yes.*

Not every little boy has the opportunity to work on a farm. But would we do our little boys a service if we provided more opportunities for them to engage in physical labor, have male companionship, and fulfill their provider instincts?

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