

Alexandre Family Farm grows into egg power

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When Blake and Stephanie Alexandre started the Alexandre Family Farm in 1992, they had one focus — dairy cows.

That began to change as their children grew up.

Raising five kids on the farm in Crescent City was always part of the plan, but as the thought of sending their children to college came closer to reality, the Alexandres decided they needed a second income stream.

So, with the help of their oldest sons, Christian and Joseph, they began looking at hens and eggs.

“This chicken business was really a way of raising our kids,” Stephanie said “We started it when they were in junior high. We never intended to be in the egg business.”

Like most ideas, the egg business started slow. Originally, there were around 150 hens in a coop right across the street from their home. Over the years, it grew slowly with 600 hens and then 1,000.

But the big jump to make it a real business came from Christian. As part of an assignment in college, Christian built a business plan to expand the chicken operation to more than 20,000 birds. When he graduated from college, he brought the plan back to the farm with him and put it into action.

Christian now runs the egg business at Alexandre Family Farm. His plan to grow the hen flock to more than 20,000 birds is still increasing. Today, there are between 40,000 and 45,000 hens on 300 acres at the farm. Every day, between 20,000 and 25,000 eggs are collected from the birds.

Like their cattle, the chickens range freely. They have mobile coops that are moved twice a week to ensure the birds have fresh grass to graze on.

When the eggs are picked up daily, they are brought inside to be cleaned and examined. They are then boxed up and shipped along the west coast when they can be purchased at Whole Foods or Costco locations in California, Oregon and Washington. In recent years, they have even moved into Idaho and Arizona as business has grown.

The key to the egg business at Alexandre Family Farm is not much different than the dairy business. Great soil leads to grasslands that can be grazed almost all year round. The chickens, while they have a coop, are allowed to graze freely before coming home every night.

Because the chickens are most productive for less than four years, there are always new hens brought in. At any given time, 7,500 new hens are being raised to replace older ones. Last week, the hatchlings were just days old. But in time, they will be moved out to the fields to continue laying farm-fresh eggs.

The end result is great eggs that are good for you and delicious.

“It’s about nutrition,” Stephanie said. “Better food for people.”