



# Fountain Prairie

Inn & Farms  
 John and Dorothy Priske  
 W1901 Highway 16  
 Fall River, WI 53932  
 920.484.3618

[priske@centurytel.net](mailto:priske@centurytel.net)  
<http://www.fountainprairie.com/>  
 Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/FountainPrairie>



4 South Baldwin St.  
 Madison, WI 53703  
 877.229.9201  
[info@sge.us](mailto:info@sge.us)  
<http://www.sge.us/>



19052 26th Avenue #107  
 Surrey, BC V3S 3V7  
 888.440.4451  
[info@endurancewindpower.com](mailto:info@endurancewindpower.com)  
<http://www.endurancewindpower.com/>

**Prepared by:**



222 S Hamilton St. Madison, WI 53703  
<http://www.renewwisconsin.org/>

“A genuine portrait of the Wisconsin farmer... where sustainable farming, environmental stewardship, and productive business are one and the same”

John and Dorothy Priske, owners and operators of Fountain Prairie Inn & Farms, had a vision... a farming operation that did not harm the local ecosystem or the health of its customers, but rather one that existed in harmony with the surrounding environment and society. The Priskes worked toward this goal over their 25 years on the land and replaced a conventional row-crop farm with a more sustainable farming operation including sixty acres of restored tallgrass prairie and wetlands. The Priskes specialize in locally grown produce, Berkshire pork, and grass-fed Highland beef which are raised naturally without growth hormones or antibiotics in their feed. Fountain Prairie is located outside of Madison, just six miles west of Columbus, on Highway 16. The 1899 Victorian farmhouse and picturesque natural landscapes are well worth the journey for a relaxing daytrip or a refreshing overnight stay, but if travel's a problem, Madison-area residents and visitors can taste the local produce and meats at the Dane County Farmer's Market and various Madison restaurants (see list below).

The couple's approach to farming relies on natural processes that continually regenerate the resources needed to sustain a farming operation. The Highland cattle eat grass that captures the free solar energy that bathes the farm, and as they freely range in the paddocks, the cattle continually replenish the soil with vital nutrients. The Priskes' conservation ethic minimizes their farm's intake of fertilizer and other fossil fuels that go into conventional farming practices.



### Turbine Specifications

- Turbine Model: Endurance E-3120
- Tower type: Free-standing lattice
- Hub Height: 140 feet
- Capacity: 50 kW
- First-year avg. output: 95,000 kWh
- Utility: Wisconsin Power & Light
- Year of installation: 2010
- Manufacturer: Endurance
- Installer: Seventh Generation
- Incentives:
 

Focus on Energy grant	\$99,000
USDA REAP grant	\$71,000
Treasury grant	\$86,000



As part of the Priskes' continuing efforts to create a more holistic farming experience, the couple decided to take their commitment one step further, and power their farm with clean and renewable wind energy. Says John Priske: "every farm that has good wind should have a turbine. Why not take advantage of wind we have right here on our prairie?"

Once the financial planning was completed, the 140-foot wind turbine was erected on the west side of Fountain Prairie in September 2010. The turbine was manufactured by Endurance Wind Power of British Columbia, Canada and installed by Seventh Generation Energy Systems, a Madison-based renewable energy installer. The 50 kW wind project proved financially feasible with grants and incentives from several government programs, including funds from Wisconsin's Focus on Energy, the USDA's Rural Energy for America Program (REAP), and a U.S. Treasury 1603 Grant.

The Priskes paid for the remaining amount of the \$292,000 project after acquiring a government guaranteed loan from USDA Farm Service Agency preferred lender, Farmers & Merchants Union Bank in Columbus, Wisconsin. The Fountain Prairie wind project was the first time the bank applied for such a loan, and has since continued to use the USDA REAP program to enhance the energy efficiency of other farms in the area. Seventh Generation explained in their coverage of the project that, "just as investments in equipment and animals are paid off through the income they generate, the wind turbine's final cost will be returned as a reduction in energy costs to the farm, plus additional income from net generation sold back to the utility."

The turbine produced approximately 95 megawatt-hours of energy in its first year of operation, which is considerably more than Fountain Prairie requires annually. In fact, that is enough energy to power three similarly sized conventional farms. The energy produced by Fountain Prairie's wind turbine is exported onto Alliant Energy's distribution grid and provides area residents with a clean, renewable source of energy. An excerpt from a Seventh Generation report on the project explains the importance of rural wind projects across the state:

*In many cases, and most in rural locations in particular, wind energy is still the most economical option for distributed generation of electricity. For farmers, or any rural business, promising developments in recent years have optimized systems for low to moderate wind regimes and typical load requirements. Sites such as Fountain Prairie can now make significant power at a site where they might not have just a few years ago.*



### **Area Beef Purchasers :**

L'Etoile

<http://www.letaille-restaurant.com/>

Nitty Gritty

[www.nittygrittybirthdayplace.com](http://www.nittygrittybirthdayplace.com)

Brasserie V

[www.brasseriev.com](http://www.brasseriev.com)

Bradbury's Coffee

[www.bradburyscoffee.com](http://www.bradburyscoffee.com)

Madison Sourdough

<http://www.madisonsourdough.com/>

Graze Gastropub

<http://www.grazepub.com/>

Steenbock's on Orchard

<http://steenbocksonorchard.com/>

Promega's Bio Bistro

The Victory

<http://www.thevictorymadison.com/>

Pasqual's

<http://www.pasquals.net>



One year after completion, John and Dorothy have reaped nothing but positive results from the wind turbine, and feedback from guests and visitors has been outstandingly positive. Explains John Priske: "the turbine has high exposure from the highway and attracts interested passers-by that stop to inquire about the benefits of the turbine." For many Fountain Prairie guests, their visit to the farm is their first up-close encounter with a wind turbine. It's a chance for visitors to see how wind energy supports a working farm, and an overnight stay at Fountain Prairie Inn will quickly dispel one's perception of wind turbines as noisy and aesthetically displeasing machines.

The wind turbine also has had no measurable ill effects on the Priskes livestock. In fact, the Priskes have witnessed a noticeable advantage for the cattle that pasture near the turbine. On hot, sunny days some cattle take refuge in the shade of the shadow cast by the turbine, and John has watched the cattle move with the setting sun to keep cool. The wind turbine has even contributed to Fountain Prairie receiving two important achievement awards, including the 2011 Aldo Leopold Restoration Award for Excellence in Ecological Restoration Practices, as well as being named the Wisconsin Land and Water Conservation Farmers of the Year in 2010. The wind turbine represents an even greater movement towards truly sustainable farming, setting an example for other like-minded Wisconsin food producers.

