

# *Thankfulness*

## **November 22, 2020**

2020 has been a year like any other. No, there was no misspelling in the prior sentence and yes, you read it correctly. I fully realize there is an ongoing pandemic and many, many lives have been affected in unimaginable ways. Many have lost jobs or have family members who are either infected with the virus or have passed away. I do not want to minimize that in any manner. However, please allow me to explain the context in which my statement is being made.

As I write this article, we are preparing to celebrate Thanksgiving in the coming week. It is my opinion we continue to live in the most blessed country in the world. We are privileged to have an extremely stable, and affordable, source of food. America's farmers and ranchers spend untold hours each week working diligently to ensure this continues. They face the same health challenges as the general public and have the same concerns as to what this pandemic may mean to their business and family. Yes, we have experienced times this year where grocery stores did not have the supply of food we are accustomed to seeing. This, however, was not due to the lack of effort from this nation's farmer and ranchers. They continue to perform their vital role in this country's ongoing success. In fact, dairy and hog producers this year were, at times, asked to either dump milk or euthanize animals solely due to the lack of processing capacity. Those producers put their heart and soul into ensuring they provide the best product possible to the American consumer. Being asked to destroy what they were a part of providing was certainly not easy for them.

One U.S. farm presently produces the items necessary to feed 166 people both here and abroad. That is in contrast to the 26 people each American farm fed in 1960. That is a truly remarkable growth rate.

As I close, I want to go back to my opening statement. 2020 has been a year like any other. I say this from the perspective that, even during an unprecedented pandemic, America's farmer and ranchers continue to work diligently, and for the most part, thanklessly to ensure the American consumer has food to enjoy. This Thursday most everyone will take time to reflect on the things for which they are thankful. I wonder how many of those reflections will include the efforts of America's farmers and ranchers? As I can only control my thoughts, I know for certain, there will be at least one. Will you please join me in making sure there are more?