



B3 INC.

Immigrating to the Gallatin Valley by way of Michigan from the Netherlands, the Braaksma family first settled in the Gallatin Valley in 1894. The Braaksma dairy business began in the 1950s and later moved to its current location just outside of Amsterdam MT in 1965. Three brothers, Rick, Doug, and Joe took over the farm from their parents. Rick and Doug currently run the operation with their children, Greg and Darren, on approximately 2,275 acres of land in the Gallatin Valley. B3 Dairy milks approximately 400 cows daily. They rotate animals through irrigated and dryland pasture and farms both irrigated and dryland cropland.

Over the years, improvements to farming techniques, technologies, markets, and the increased population growth in the valley has presented both challenges and rewards.

More recently, B3 Dairy has moved to permanently protect over 700 acres of agricultural land with an easement through the Gallatin Valley Land Trust. Past and present improvements have been made, such as the recent conversion of wheel lines to pivots, construction of a waste storage facility, installation of variable drive pumps and implementation of a nutrient management plan, to ensure the sustained viability of their business and way of life while conserving the resources that sustain these values.

Gallatin Valley Land Trust

Since their founding in 1990 they have helped conserve over 67 square miles of land in Gallatin Valley and the surrounding communities through partnerships with private landowners, using voluntary conservation agreements. Through public and private partnerships GVLTL has helped expand the Main Street to the Mountains trail system to over 80 miles in length, providing recreation, transportation and a connection to nature. GVLTL founder, Chris Boyd, was a true visionary. He could see this area changing and saw the need for an organization to care for its future. They have been carrying that torch ever since.

In 2015 the Gallatin Valley Land Trust built on this foundation by taking on the role of lead partner in developing the inaugural Regional Conservation Partnership Program. Collaborating Partners include:

- Gallatin Conservation District
- Association of Gallatin Agricultural Irrigators
- Montana Audubon Society
- City of Bozeman
- Gallatin County
- Gallatin County / MSU Extension
- Gallatin Local Water Quality District
- Gallatin National Forest
- Greater Gallatin Watershed Council
- Montana Association of Land Trusts
- Montana DNRC
- Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
- Montana Land Reliance
- National Park Service Rivers & Trails
- Trout Unlimited
- Trust for Public Lands

This amazing effort is a true partnership of agricultural and conservation groups throughout the Gallatin Valley. This partnership secured over \$3.7M in funding through the Regional Conservation Partnership Program. This program created a special 5-year funding pool for conservation projects in the Gallatin Valley and promoted coordination between NRCS and local partners to deliver conservation assistance to producers and landowners. The funding was used to compensate landowners for conservation easements on important agricultural properties; and to implement farming and ranching practices that protect and enhance water quality, soil health and water quantity.