

Betty Lou Scott was born and raised on a farm in Mount Thom, Nova Scotia. Her father worked off the farm while her mother looked after the cows, pigs, and chickens.

"As kids, we all took turns on the farm," said Betty Lou Scott. "We had to milk the cows and collect the eggs."

She left the family farm in the late 1950s to earn Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Education degrees from Mount Allison. After graduating, Betty Lou worked as a teacher and then a guidance counsellor in various locations across Nova Scotia until her retirement in 1997.

In the 1970s, Betty Lou's parents died, and she and her husband, Bill, bought the family farm land from her two brothers and sisters. They started a few cows, mainly Herefords, but things changed when Lisa, their daughter, joined 4-H.

"Lisa was really interested in Black Angus cows and wanted one for her 4-H project. It didn't take much convincing," Betty Lou said. One Black Angus led the way for pigs, chickens, and a goat over the years.

"Lisa asked for a goat for passing her fifth grade," laughed Betty Lou. "She got one."

The Scott's farm is now home to twenty Black Angus cows, eight of which are expecting calves. While they do not plan to own any other animals, they do have six acres of blueberry land that they farm as well as a woodlot.

"I never did machine work, but I did do all the halter breaking and training of our cattle for the show/competition side of things when we were showing our purebred Angus cattle in fairs and exhibitions.

"I thoroughly enjoyed our cattle and still do. I just don't do the training for show anymore. We also had many 4-H members borrow our animals for their 4-H projects and I spent many, many hours in the barn working with those kids. Of the dozens of animals loaned, all but three stayed at home here in our barn and barnyard. One year we had five of our best heifers being used by 4-Hers and shown in four different counties in the province!

"I guess the 'paperwork' side of me meant I also did all the work involved in keeping our purebred status up to date on the cattle too."

Over the years, Betty Lou has contributed significantly to agriculture, as a practitioner and as a role model. In recognition of her decades of dedication to agriculture, Betty Lou received the Canadian Association of Fairs and Exhibitions Distinguished Service Award in 2008, was named Farm Credit Canada's Female Agriculture Leader for Atlantic Canada in 2012 and was awarded the inaugural Women in Agriculture Outstanding Woman in Atlantic Agriculture' Award in 2017.

Betty Lou's children continue to share their mother's love of agriculture. Her son, Sandy, raised beef cows and now grows blueberries.

"He's also mechanical, so I'm sure he's done work for most of the farmers that live nearby."

Her daughter Lisa married a farmer from Plaster Rock, New Brunswick.

"They milk over three hundred and have about a thousand Holsteins in total. They sold some of them recently due to the uncertainty in the dairy industry," said Betty Lou. "Her husband and her father-in-law are in a partnership. She does the business side of things while the men and her children work on the farm."

Lisa is also on the Board of Directors for the Agriculture Alliance of New Brunswick.

When asked how she juggled everything, Betty Lou didn't hesitate.

"Besides our kids being expected to play their part in household and other chores—which they did—my husband resigned from his truck mechanic job to be the 'mister mom' of the family, which involved lots of hours of running our son and daughter to piano lessons, 4-H project meetings and to many hours of highland dance lessons and the occasional competition.

"He also was often left to do the whole parent thing on many weekends as I attended conferences or workshops related to my activities. I couldn't have done it without his help!"