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Frank Newman (right) is following in his father, Cary, and mother, Leigh Ann's, footsteps and is raising Morgan horses near Cavendish.

Cavendish teen has a head for horses

With help from 4-H and his natural abilities, Frank Newman is taking steps to raise a herd of Morgans

Posted: Monday, February 2, 2015 12:00 am | *Updated: 7:11 am, Mon Feb 2, 2015.*

By MARY STONE of the Tribune | [0 comments](#)

CAVENDISH - At 14, Frank Newman knows as surely as anyone could what he'll be doing in five years.

Surrounded by a small herd of sturdy, easygoing horses at his family's farm on the rolling prairie high above the Clearwater River, the Kendrick eighth-grader explained his plans.

A mare he is leasing from his parents is due to foal in May. That greatly anticipated little horse will be the beginning of his own herd of Morgan horses, an American breed his family is working to help preserve.

"By senior year, I should have five horses - five babies," Frank said.

At 57, Frank's father, Cary Newman, is looking ahead to retirement, and he hopes his youngest son will take over the farm about two miles southeast of Cavendish when he hangs up his hat.

The Newmans say the FFA program at Kendrick Junior-Senior High School has given their family a way to help prepare Frank for that possible future and gauge whether it's a good fit for him.

Frank's FFA adviser, Tom Walker, said it's Frank's family who deserves the credit for preparing the teenager for a career in agriculture.

"He has a really great support system with his parents," Walker said. "They really work with him well, and it's good to see that kind of thing."

The Newmans' 700-acre wheat farm pays the bills and makes possible their second endeavor: Cream Ridge Morgans, a herd currently numbering 14.

In the last decade, Cary said, the breed has gone from seeing 3,000 foals registered a year worldwide to fewer than 600.

His hope is that, with better marketing and a renewed economy, the breed he describes as athletic and all-purpose will take off again. Cary recently helped organize the Morgan Stock Horse Association, a nonprofit group with a website and Facebook page to help connect Morgan owners and share information about the breed.

Starting his own herd, Frank said, is part of the plan to help "promote (the breed) and keep it going."

Frank's mother, Leigh Ann, encouraged him to apply for a \$1,000 grant to help cover expenses for his horse-breeding project. The grant from the National FFA Foundation will help pay for feed, veterinary expenses and grooming supplies - the real-life costs Frank has learned raising horses entails.

Walker said a student Frank's age working on a project of this scope and successfully applying for a grant is unusual.

"He's really kind of ahead of his game," he said.

Frank travels more than half an hour each way from the farm, between Kendrick and Orofino, to school in Kendrick, meeting the bus part way. Though his now-grown siblings attended school in Orofino, Leigh Ann, works in Lewiston, and it just made more sense for him to be traveling the same direction as she.

Though farm work - helping put up hay and picking rocks - keeps him busy, Frank's interests aren't limited to horses.

He is a manager for the Kendrick varsity basketball team and plans to play JV basketball and summer baseball.

"He's one of those kids, he's not afraid to step out there and do things," Walker said. "Around the whole school, he's got a good leadership person. He comes by that naturally."

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