

# Close the Gate

For this one farmer the worries are over, lie down and rest your head,  
Your time has been and struggles enough, put the tractor in the shed.

Years were not easy, many downright hard, but your faith in God transcended,  
Put away your tools and sleep in peace, the fences have all been mended.

You raised a fine family, worked the land well and always followed the Son,  
Hang up your shovel inside the barn; your work here on earth is done.

A faith few possess led your journey through life, often a jagged and stony way,  
The sun is setting, the cattle are all bedded, and here now is the end of your day.

Your love of God's land has passed on to your kin; the stories flow like fine wine,  
Wash off your work boots in the puddle left by blessed rain one final time.



You always believed that the good Lord would provide and He always had somehow,  
Take off your gloves and put them down, no more sweat and worry for you now.

Your labor is done, your home now is Heaven, no more must you wait,  
Your legacy lives on, your love of the land, and we will close the gate.

Painting done by Granddaughter Rylee Knock for Wally, Christmas 2025

*Furness Funeral Home*

Clark, SD (605)532-5772

# In Loving Memory



## Wallace "Wally" Knock

April 6, 1959 - January 4, 2026



**Wally's last drive in the tractor, cutting hay on the farm.**

**June 7, 2025**

Wallace "Wally" Leon Knock, 66, of Willow Lake, passed away at his home on January 4, 2026, with his loving family by his side after a hard-fought battle with cancer.

Wally was born April 6, 1959, to Arthur & Inez (Hassebroek) Knock. He grew up on the family dairy farm south of Willow Lake with 6 siblings. He graduated from Willow Lake High School in 1977 and attended South Dakota State University before returning to the farm.

On June 15<sup>th</sup>, 1979, he married his high school sweetheart, the love of his life, Kathy LaMont. They were married for 46 years and were blessed with four children, Eric, Jared, Ashley & Jennifer, of whom he was very proud.

In 1979, he had the opportunity to come home and work on the family dairy farm. Along with working with the dairy farm he also worked at an elevator, Willow Lake Sale Barn and at Davisco in Lake Norden. He also enjoyed playing amateur baseball and 5x5 softball.

In 1991, they purchased a farm that had been homesteaded by Kathy's family. This is where they started a beef cattle herd. The cows would become the cornerstone of the farm from that point on. Artificial Insemination and embryo transfer would be used on registered Maine Anjou cows to raise 4-H steers, heifers, and bulls- creating a lot of great memories and fostering future passions and interests for their children. Pigs were always around to help pay the bills. In 1998 the sows were creating more bills than they were paying, but when they left a new finishing site was built. A few years later Wally was out voted by other members of the family and sheep showed up. Wally enjoyed a wide variety of crops in his rotation, embracing the challenges and excitement that diversification brings. Wally and Kathy were focused on improving the land, and implemented many soil health practices- even re-establishing permanent pasture on some of the poorer fields- making room for more cattle.

Throughout his farming career, Wally made time to give back by serving in several leadership roles for organizations including Clark Community Oil, South Dakota Wheat Growers/Agtegra, Dakotaland Feeds, Clark County 4-H Leaders, South Dakota Value Added, South Dakota Agricultural Rural Leadership- Class III as well as the Willow Lake School Board. His 19 years on the school board allowed him to award all 4 of his children their high school diplomas.

He was currently a member of the Agtegra Board, the Land O' Lakes Corporate Board, National Council for Farm Cooperatives, SD Cattleman, SD Pork Producers, Chairman of the Clark County Commissioners and a member & councilman of the Lake Gospel Church.

Although Wally didn't do it for recognition, his service and commitment to leadership development didn't go unnoticed. He was awarded FFA Family of the Year in 2016, Farmer Co-op Director of the Year in 2024, SDSU Eminent Leader in Agriculture, Family and Community in 2025 as well as being the 100<sup>th</sup> inductee into the South Dakota Co-op Hall of Fame in 2025.

He loved the challenges and all the people he met on the boards he was on. Everywhere he went, someone knew Wally and wanted to talk, which meant he was usually the last to leave any venue!

He recently told someone in an interview, "First and foremost I am simply a farmer at heart. Dirt under my fingernails and on my boots when I come in at night and I know it's been a good day." His passion was to make sure that young people had that same opportunity and that is what he dedicated his life to doing. Judging by the fact that all his kids are involved in agriculture, he was very successful.

Wally took any chance he could get to brag about his 15 grandchildren. They meant so much to him and he was always so proud to talk about them and their latest accomplishments. The grandkids will long remember "Papa Wally" for all his funny jokes, playing, teasing and all the gopher hunting with the gator in the pasture.

Grateful for sharing his life are his loving wife Kathy, son Eric (Roxanne) Knock and children Rylee, RaeAnna, Rielle, and Roy, son Jared (Kati) Knock and children Millie, Ansley, and Alicyn, daughter Ashley (Tony) Konechne and children Addy, Elliot, Whitney, Kendra, and Cole, daughter Jennifer (Joe) Fischer and children Makenzie, Haley, and Kaden along with his father and mother-in-law, Roger & Sharon LaMont, brothers Tebbo Knock, Richard (Crystal) Knock, sisters Ruth Westling, Ardy (Marty) Conway and sister-in-law Sharry Knock, sister-in-law Karen (Dan) Wehde, brother-in-law Doug (Shawn) LaMont, and several aunts, uncles, nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents Arthur & Inez (Hassebroek) Knock, brothers Paul Knock and Roger Knock, sister-in-law Laurie Knock, and brother-in-law Bruce Westling.