In July 1916, Herman Lyon and his wife, Hattie, purchased 60 acres of farmland in Mason, Michigan. The couple soon decided that they needed more land to support their family and for production, so they purchased an additional 40 acres of farmland and 40 acres of woods containing maple trees.

Herman and his son, Eugene, began producing maple syrup in the early 1920s. They moved a building formerly used as part of an interurban electric rail system to their property and began using it for syrup production. Other operations at the Lyon farm included raising Jersey dairy cattle, Corriedale sheep, and Duroc hogs and producing cash crops and livestock feed.

Eugene took on more responsibilities as the farm flourished. He married Alberta Gretton in 1919 and had five children, two of whom stayed to work on the farm. In December of 1926, Herman passed away and left the farm to Hattie. Eugene took full control of the farming operations following his father’s death.

Eugene’s son, Franklin, also had a keen interest in farming. He worked on the farm throughout high school and before and after he served in the U.S. Navy. He purchased the farm in 1965.

From the mid-1970s until the early 2000s, the land was primarily used for livestock feed for the Jersey dairy cattle. In 1982, the Jersey cow herd
had expanded and a new dairy barn was added to the farm. By 1991, the farm had the highest producing cows for butterfat in the state of Michigan.

The cows eventually had to be sold due to a drop in milk prices, and the farm turned to raising cash crops, including corn, soybeans, and wheat. In 2012, the farm was split and purchased by Franklin’s two sons, Jeff and Timothy.

Timothy and his wife, Tammi, continue to operate the farm today. The farm raises cash crops, rents out maple trees for syrup production, and raises some grass-fed beef. The couple’s children, Jason and Jarett, are very active in the farm and participate in 4-H and Future Farmers of America. The Lyon family plans to pass their love of agriculture through the generations for many years to come.