The Amish chose the Tomah area for the rich and fertile farmland, low real estate prices, and the lay of land. They also chose this area because it was far from a city of any size, which might influence their youth to the worldly ways – and yet close enough to a small town that has exactly what they need. A bank, post office, grocery store, hardware store and a feed mill.

The Amish in this area have rapidly increase in population in the past years, now growing to over 200 families. The average family will have as many as 10-14 children.

The Amish community is divided into several church districts. Each church district is led by a Bishop, two Ministers, and a Deacon. Most Amish are farmers, but many have taken up a craft or trade to make their living.

The Amish way of life revolves around the family and their church community. Quilting bees, barn raisings, and Sunday services in the home are just a few of the ways the Amish keep the family unit strong.

The Amish school their children in their own one room schoolhouse where all eight grades are taught. The children start school at age 6 and will usually complete all of their schooling by the time they are 13 or 14. No higher education is allowed as this might lead to losing them to the English culture. The three basics: reading, writing, and arithmetic are all that are required in the Amish schools.

Next, you will find a self-guided driving tour through our Amish community south of Tomah!
To begin your tour, travel south down Superior Ave/Hwy 12. Leaving Tomah, this road not only speeds up, but changes to Hwy 131. You will know when you are entering the Amish community by the yellow caution sign with an Amish buggy on it. At the top of the hill you will need to turn left onto County Hwy A.

Travel 2.3 miles down County Hwy A before taking a right on to King Road. King Road is where you will find the majority of the Amish families’ homes in our area. Your trek on King Road is only about 8 miles, so be sure to drive slow and take it all in. Be aware of the sharp turns and pedestrians.

At the end of King Road you will be taking a right onto Hwy 71. Since this is a Highway you will need to increase your speed here. You can travel about 3 miles before turning right, back on to Hwy 131 north to Tomah or you can continue on the trip to Down a Country Road Amish Gift Shops & Tours.

If you choose to go further, continue on Hwy 131 (which turns into Hwy 71/131) through the communities of Wilton and Ontario. After about 11 miles (in the village of Ontario) turn right onto Hwy 33. Follow Hwy 33 for around 8 miles, this will lead you to Down a Country Road Amish Gift Shops & Tours (on your left hand side).

On the next page you will find a map to guide you on your way. It’s an Amish Area Woodworking, Craft and Greenhouse Map (last updated in 2012)!
BAKERY/CANDY
4. Country Side Bakery
30. Irish Ridge Sweet Shop
33. Amish WM
35. Hill & Vale Bakery
37. Miller’s Produce & Candy
49. Andy Miller Candies
54. Maple Grove Bakery
55. Sunrise Bakery
66. Country Lane Wood.

PRODUCE/FOOD
13. CDC Grocery Outlet
17. Harness Shop
33. Amish WM
36. Jacob Detweiler
37. Miller’s Produce & Candy
42. Cashion Produce Auct.
43. Old Country Cheese
46. A&M Bulk Foods
52. Pine Grove Candy Shoppe
51. Christ Hershberger
57. Pasture Pride Cheese
58. Produce

GREENHOUSES
11. Valley View Green.
12. Brush Creek Green.
24. Gingreich, Neil & Mahlon
25. Miller’s Greenhouse
27. Irish Ridge Green.
31. J&R Greenhouse
50. Hershberger’s Carpen.
53. Hickory Valley Green.
70. M&M Greenhouse

CRAFTS
1. Down a Country Road
2. Keim’s Crafts & Trout
9. Valley Farm Parts
11. Valley View Greenhouse
14. Meadow Valley Furn.
36. Jacob Detweiler
41. Hickory Bent Furniture
51. Christ Hershberger
55. Sunrise Bakery
71. Rolling Acres Wood

QUILTS
4. Country Side Bakery
17. Harness Shop
30. Irish Ridge Sweet Shop
41. Hickory Bent Furniture
71. Rolling Acres Wood

WOODWORKING
3. Valley Woodworking
5. Chair Caning
6. Pleasant Hill Log Cabin
7. Brush Creek Antler Mount.
14. Meadow Valley Furn.
15. Hidden Valley Wood.
16. West bend Furniture
21. Oak & Bedroom Sets
22. Detweiller Workshop 2
23. Custom Kitchen Cabs.
24. Gingreich, Neil & Mahlon
26. Log Cabins
28. Ruuben Miller
29. Meadow Ridge Cabins
32. Hill & Valley Furniture
38. Detweiller Workshop 3
39. Shady Maple Workshop
40. M&M Bedrooms
41. Hickory Bent Furniture
44. Coffee & End Tables
45. Shady Nook Lawn Furn.
48. Levi J.R. Miller
50. Hershberger’s Carpen.
51. Christ Hershberger
59. Customer Barn Board Furn.
60. Cedar Chest
63. Ridgeeland Oak Wood.
64. Custom Woodworking
65. Oak Woodworking
66. Country Lane Wood.
67. Rustic Cedar Furniture
68. Daniel Yoder Cabineis
69. Hershberger Cabineis
71. Rolling Acres Wood.
72. Miller’s Rustic Furniture
73. Valley Wood Products

BAKERY/CANDY
4. Country Side Bakery
30. Irish Ridge Sweet Shop
33. Amish WM
35. Hill & Vale Bakery
37. Miller’s Produce & Candy
49. Andy Miller Candies
54. Maple Grove Bakery
55. Sunrise Bakery
66. Country Lane Wood.

PRODUCE/FOOD
13. CDC Grocery Outlet
17. Harness Shop
33. Amish WM
36. Jacob Detweiler
37. Miller’s Produce & Candy
42. Cashion Produce Auct.
43. Old Country Cheese
46. A&M Bulk Foods
52. Pine Grove Candy Shoppe
51. Christ Hershberger
57. Pasture Pride Cheese
58. Produce

GREENHOUSES
11. Valley View Green.
12. Brush Creek Green.
24. Gingreich, Neil & Mahlon
25. Miller’s Greenhouse
27. Irish Ridge Green.
31. J&R Greenhouse
50. Hershberger’s Carpen.
53. Hickory Valley Green.
70. M&M Greenhouse

CRAFTS
1. Down a Country Road
2. Keim’s Crafts & Trout
9. Valley Farm Parts
11. Valley View Greenhouse
14. Meadow Valley Furn.
36. Jacob Detweiler
41. Hickory Bent Furniture
51. Christ Hershberger
55. Sunrise Bakery
71. Rolling Acres Wood

QUILTS
4. Country Side Bakery
17. Harness Shop
30. Irish Ridge Sweet Shop
41. Hickory Bent Furniture
71. Rolling Acres Wood

WOODWORKING
3. Valley Woodworking
5. Chair Caning
6. Pleasant Hill Log Cabin
7. Brush Creek Antler Mount.
14. Meadow Valley Furn.
15. Hidden Valley Wood.
16. West bend Furniture
21. Oak & Bedroom Sets
22. Detweiller Workshop 2
23. Custom Kitchen Cabs.
24. Gingreich, Neil & Mahlon
26. Log Cabins
28. Ruuben Miller
29. Meadow Ridge Cabins
32. Hill & Valley Furniture
38. Detweiller Workshop 3
39. Shady Maple Workshop
40. M&M Bedrooms
41. Hickory Bent Furniture
44. Coffee & End Tables
45. Shady Nook Lawn Furn.
48. Levi J.R. Miller
50. Hershberger’s Carpen.
51. Christ Hershberger
59. Customer Barn Board Furn.
60. Cedar Chest
63. Ridgeeland Oak Wood.
64. Custom Woodworking
65. Oak Woodworking
66. Country Lane Wood.
67. Rustic Cedar Furniture
68. Daniel Yoder Cabineis
69. Hershberger Cabineis
71. Rolling Acres Wood.
72. Miller’s Rustic Furniture
73. Valley Wood Products
Cranberries are native to the marshlands of central Wisconsin; Native Americans have harvested them for centuries. Commercial production in Wisconsin began in Green Lake County in the early 1850s. The center of the industry later moved to marshes around Tomah, Warrens, and Wisconsin Rapids.

By 1956 Wisconsin had become the second largest source of cranberries (behind Massachusetts) and in 1994 became the country’s leading cranberry producer and still holds that title today.

Historically, during harvest the marshes were flooded with 6 to 10 inches of water to make the berries float to the surface, where seasonal workers wielding cranberry rakes collected them. Each fall, large bunkhouses in Tomah and Wisconsin Rapids filled with migrant workers. Native American workers would set up camp on the grounds of some of the larger marshes to work as pickers. Workers were paid 75 cents per bushel, and in 1875 pickers averaged two bushels per day.

During the 1945 season, German prisoners of war confined in Wisconsin worked in the cranberry bogs. The prisoners worked in the marshes all summer, weeding the beds, digging drainage ditches, and assisting with the harvest.

Cranberries are one of only three native fruits to North America (the other two being blueberries and concord grapes). Cranberries are produced on low growing vines that blossom in late June or early July. You can see the cranberry blossoms and the bees that pollinate them on June 30th at the Wetherby Cranberry Company during their annual Cranberry Blossom Day!

If you can’t make it for the summer cranberry blossoms be sure to come for harvest time generally around October. The berries are floated to the surface of their beds and are then dislodged by a mechanical harvester. You can join Wetherby Cranberry Company for their annual Harvest Day Celebration on October 6th to see a cranberry harvest up-close and in person. (They even let you take pictures in the floating berries)!
This tour is 42 miles, so you’ll need between 1-2 hours to see all the sights, as well as, stop by the Wisconsin Cranberry Discovery Center.

Keep in mind, while on the Cranberry Driving Tour, you are passing by private property... so, please do not trespass.

From Superior Ave/Hwy 12 travel north to County Hwy O (about 6 miles from downtown Tomah). Turn right onto Hwy O and travel about 4 miles. On your right, you will begin to pass by Gebhardt cranberry marsh.

Continue driving about a mile to catch another glimpse of Gebhardt marsh before heading into Warrens.

When you reach the stop sign, take a right onto Main Street. Here you will see the Wisconsin Cranberry Discovery Center. The Discovery Center is dedicated to preserving the heritage of the cranberry industry. The Center offers guided tours of the displays and area marshes, an educational video, daily wine tasting, available along with samples of gourmet cranberry food products! You can stop at the Discovery Center now or at the end of your tour!

To continue on the tour, travel across the train tracks on Main Street and turn right onto County Hwy EW (here you will see more of the Gebhardt cranberry marsh).

You will travel about 2 miles down EW before seeing more cranberry beds on your left. These beds belong to the Russell Rezin cranberry marsh (the water on both sides of you, much like other ponds and reservoirs in this area are used to cultivate cranberries. The water is dark in color because of the amount of acid in it from tamarack trees). After you pass the water, keep your eyes peeled for more cranberry beds lining both sides of the road.

A bit down Hwy EW you will come upon Jim Potter’s cranberry marsh. On the right, you will see a heron rookery (nesting) area. Herons nest high in trees near wetlands, so be sure to look up!

Continuing on, take a right on to Auger Road. Here you will see the Wetherby Cranberry Company.

This marsh is owned by the VanWychen family, who produce their own cranberry wine and also sell fresh cranberries when they’re in season. When leaving Auger Road and the Wetherby Cranberry Marsh, take a right back on the Hwy EW.

Now travel .2 miles down the road and turn left onto Augusta Road. Here, you will see close-up views of the Jack Potter cranberry marsh (the Potters are the oldest family of cranberry marsh owners in the area)!

Return to Hwy EW by turning left off of Augusta Road. Continue traveling east for about 5 miles until you come to County Highway EE. Here you will turn left and travel about 1 mile, continuing straight onto County Highway HH. You will travel on Hwy HH for 10 miles, passing 8 marshes. In the first 3 miles you will pass three marshes, so keep a close look out!

After the third marsh on Hwy HH you will come to an open area where sphagnum moss is grown. The moss is known as WI’s invisible industry, since it is a major, but little known state resource.
Immediately following the moss area you will start to see several tamarack trees on both sides of the road. These trees are abundant in our area and have a golden yellow lacy look in the fall. Contrary to popular belief tamarack trees are not pine trees and do lose their needles in the winter.

The fourth and fifth marshes on Hwy HH, the Van Etta Marsh and Northland Marsh, are both located off the main part of the road. Continue traveling and watch for the beds of the sixth marsh, Craig Scott marsh, to the right. A mile further is the seventh marsh, Menitz Marsh, which has beds located on both sides of the road. Two more miles down you will see the Walworth Marsh on the right.

Turn left onto Hwy O. Travel three miles back to the village of Warrens. Here you will come back to Main Street and the Wisconsin Cranberry Discovery Center. Now would be a great time to stop if you didn’t before you started your journey through cranberry country!