
Bear-ly News

Bear Creek Farm

www.bearcreekfarm.net

July 2010

Upcoming Events

Cameron Park Farmers' Market

La Crosse, WI

Fridays 4pm-8pm

July 23

July 30

August 6

August 13

Bear Creek Farm

Blair, WI

Red, White, &

Blue Farm Day

Saturday, July 24

10:00-2:00

Corn Crackin' Day

Saturday, August 21

10:00-2:00



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Storms, Tunnels, and PLUs

Few would argue the point that this summer has been more stormy and rainy than recent past summers. For some crops this has been great (corn and blueberries). For many vegetable crops—not so great. Although the weeds have been thriving, many of the vegetables are just sitting and waiting for more sunshine and less water around their roots.

We have been very fortunate in several ways. We have had much rain—the lower fields remain flooded and cultivating the upper field is rarely possible. But more importantly, in every storm that passed we were spared the damaging winds and hail that was predicted. Weeding does become easier when it rains this much—another perk if one looks at the whole picture with the right perspective. So, although we cannot care for the vegetables the way we would want, we at least have vegetables to care for when it dries out again. It will dry out again, right?

In the high tunnels there is a different story to tell. Because these areas are covered, the weather has less of an impact on the tomatoes grown there. The growth of the heirloom tomatoes seems unbelievable—often 6-8 inches per week. Many tower over us as we trim and

clip the vines. Each vine is heavy with the first crop of the season—tomatoes just beginning to blush the promised color of the season whether it be red, yellow, green, or a rich purple. The vines have evidence of the second crop of tomatoes setting on already, with promise of many blossoms for the third crop developing. Bob and I have decided that the tunnels are one of our favorite places to work on the farm—and the driest currently.

Finally, over the past few weeks I have been doing a little research on PLUs—those little stickers that appear on many fruits and vegetables in the grocery store. PLU—Product Look Up—stickers are the industry's attempt to help consumers identify the conditions that the fruit and vegetables were grown under. All of the stickers have four numbers that identify the type of fruit or vegetable on the shelf. If only four numbers are on the sticker, then the item was grown using conventional methods including potentially dangerous herbicides and pesticides. If the numbers are preceded by an 8, then the item has been grown from genetically modified seed (GMO). When the numbers are preceded by a 9, the fruit or vegetable has been grown using organic methods—no GMO seed or potentially dangerous herbicides and pesticides.

Specials of the Month — call/email ahead for delivery at Market

Hanger, Flank, Skirt

Steaks

\$7.00/pound

Lean Ground Beef

5 pounds or more

\$4.00/lb.

T-Bone Steak

\$10.75/pound

Bear Creek Farm

608-790-5898 or 790-5882

Pricelist

Individual cuts priced per pound

Lean Ground Beef	\$4.75
Roasts	
Chuck/Arm	\$5.50
Rump	\$6.25
Sirloin	\$6.75
Steaks	
Round	\$6.25
Sirloin	\$10.50
Porterhouse	\$12.00
Rib-eye	\$12.00
T-bone	\$11.50
Tenderloin	\$13.75
Soup bones	\$3.00
Liver	\$1.50
Free Range Chickens	\$3.99
Eggs (dozen)	\$2.00

Bear Creek Farm Vision Statement

To offer the best quality meat products and organic vegetables to our customers at affordable prices.



Recipe of the Month

Hamburger Soup with Black-eyed Peas and Kale

1 pound lean ground beef
1 medium onion, chopped
2 small cloves garlic, minced
2 medium carrots, diced
2 cups chopped kale
2 cups beef broth
1 can (14.5 ounces) diced tomatoes, undrained
1 can (15 ounces) black-eyed peas, drained and rinsed
1 cup corn kernels
1/2 teaspoon salt, or to taste
1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper

Heat oil in a large saucepan or Dutch oven over medium-low heat. Add beef and onion; saute, stirring, until the ground beef is browned. Add garlic and carrots and cook for 1 minute longer. Add the beef broth and bring to a boil. Simmer for 10 minutes. Add the kale, tomatoes, peas, corn, and seasonings. Cover and simmer for 20 to 25 minutes. Serve with cornbread or corn muffins.
Serves 4.

Christine's Corner

July is half over—and so is the summer from my perspective. As I look out the window, the hosta plants that were just breaking ground a few short weeks ago (it seems) are in full bloom. Several hummingbirds and bumblebees stop long enough to enjoy the sweet nectar of the blooms, then zip off to other adventures. The cats lounge along the concrete platform—sunning and awaiting their usual feeding time. Several kittens are scrambling up the locust tree, attempting to catch the tail of the first one to venture the high branches.

There are few times as quiet as early morning here on the farm, a cup of coffee and the laptop are my companions during these moments. If I am lucky, and I am lucky every morning, Bob ventures into the kitchen to prepare our breakfast. Life could not be better.

Please consider visiting the farm this Saturday, July 24th for our Family Farm Day. Come to see what is growing, as well as enjoy some food and family fun. There will be a showing of the movie Food, Inc. in the packing shed, so bring a lawn chair to rest in.

Christine

Announcements

Directions to the Farm:

Travel east on Hwy. 16 to Valley View Mall area; take left onto Hwy. 157 which becomes Hwy. 53 after crossing over Interstate 90. Continue on Hwy. 53 for about 20 miles—you will go past Onalaska, Holmen, and arrive at Galesville. At the stoplight by Galesville, merge to the right and follow the Main Street through Galesville (you will still be on Hwy. 53). Continue to travel another 12 miles on Hwy. 53—you will pass Ettrick and Beaches Corners. Bear Creek Farm is on the right side of the highway, across from the Trempealeau County Humane Society building. There is a large wooden Bear Creek Farm sign by our driveway.

From the Herd

Where did June go? As I head out to the greenhouse and high tunnels, it is difficult to believe that summer is passing so quickly. We were able to get the squash fields prepared and planted in between rainy seasons, but the plants certainly look different than other years. The rain has helped to keep the grass in the pastures thick, but the thistles, burdock, and nettles are also thriving.

We are beginning to harvest tomatoes; the very first of the season were enjoyed over the weekend—by me, of course. The crop looks very promising, which is exciting for us. We continue to pray and hold-our-breath every time the storms roll in. There is a great crop of weeds in the garden as well.

As for the herd, the cows are also looking great on the plentiful supply of grass and the weeds we pull from the garden—too bad they won't eat those field weeds too. The calves are getting good sized now—and curious of Annie or any cats that venture into the fenced area. Spirit's Golden Chumani can be found sunning and running the pasture daily.

Bob