
Bear-ly News

Bear Creek Farm

www.bearcreekfarm.net

March 2011

Coming Event

March 10, 2011
Franciscan Skemp
CSA Open House
4-7pm
Mathy Center
Viterbo University

Delivery Schedule

Thursdays
4:00-4:45 La Crosse
5:15-5:45 Midway

March 17
March 24
March 31
April 7
April 14

Delivery Sites

10th Street-La Crosse
(between Market and
Jackson by Viterbo)
and
Kwik Trip—Midway

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Patience . . . Patience . . . Patience

Well . . . the groundhog did not fail me, but winter seems to continue to plague us with colder temperatures and 'wintry mix,' as the weatherman calls it. Today is no different. The cold wind from the North, coupled with the snow and ice on the ground makes me wonder if spring will ever arrive.

The few warm days that we have experienced over the past few weeks forced the carrots, lettuce, and spinach to jump to attention in the greenhouse and high tunnels. Bob has been picking spinach—for my salads of course—over the past two weeks. He anticipates that within another week we should be able to open the market to our customers. The romaine lettuce will be transplanted to the high tunnel in a few weeks for mid-spring harvest; and the carrots show promise to be ready for market in May.

As we patiently wait for warm weather and snow to melt, there are other things to keep us busy. The daily chores, feeding and watering the cows, horses, and chickens, can sometimes be an all-day event. Last week we separated Chumani, last year's foal, from his mother. Believe me, neither was happy and it was noisy for several days in and out of the barn. All is

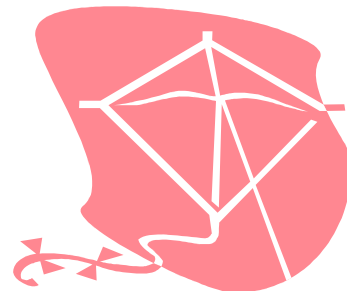
settling down now, and it helps that we are spending extra time with Chumani, exercising and grooming—he loves the daily brushing.

Bob and Sam have been in the greenhouse preparing the transplant tables and bringing plug trays and flats out of storage. Always trying to improve transplant health and growth, I requested a germination chamber for this growing season. This dark, insulated box will provide a warm, humid environment for seeds to begin to grow. Bob is great at designing and constructing all of the 'great' ideas that I come up with. I have plans for a hardening-off area as well, but probably need to wait for the snow to melt before I share that with him.

Last weekend, we ventured in to the Organic Conference for a day of networking with other farmers and knowledge enhancement. It is always interesting to see and learn of new methods for germinating, planting, and cultivating vegetables. Sam joined us for the day, finding great interest in renewable energy sources—wind generators in particular. I have wanted a windmill for a long time—but I don't think that is what he is talking about. Very interesting!

March Specials

Chuck Roast	\$ 5.00/lb.
Round Steak	\$ 6.00/lb.
Beef Jerky	\$ 3.00/2 oz.
Spinach	\$ 4.00/8 oz.



Bear Creek Farm
608-790-5898 or 790-5882

Pricelist

Individual cuts priced per pound

Lean Ground Beef	\$5.00
Roasts	
Chuck/Arm	\$5.80
Rump	\$6.55
Sirloin Tip	\$7.10
Steaks	
Round	\$6.55
Flank/Skirt/Hanger	\$7.35
Sirloin	\$11.00
Porterhouse	\$12.60
Rib eye	\$12.60
T-bone	\$12.10
Tenderloin	\$14.45
Summer Sausage	\$6.80
Soup bones	\$3.25
Certified Organic Chicken	\$3.99
Boneless Chicken Breasts	\$10.75
Eggs	\$2.25/doz.
Baby Bear Beef Bundle	\$81.00
Momma Bear Beef Bundle	\$167.00
Papa Bear Beef Bundle	\$397.00

Bear Creek Farm Vision Statement

To offer our customers the best quality meat products and certified organic vegetables.



Recipe of the Month

Wine Braised Pot Roast

- 1 lean chuck roast, boneless, about 3 to 4 pounds
- Grill seasoning, such as steak seasoning or similar, or salt and pepper
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 5 slices bacon, diced
- 1 medium onion, coarsely chopped
- 2 carrots, diced
- 3 ribs celery, thinly sliced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 3 tablespoons tomato paste
- 2 cups dry red wine
- 1 cup chicken broth
- 1 large fresh or dried bay leaves
- 1/4 teaspoon of dried leaf rosemary, crumbled
- 2 cups frozen pearl onions or fresh peeled pearl onions

Heat oven to 300°. Sprinkle grill seasoning or salt and pepper all over the roast. In a large Dutch oven or oven safe pot over medium-high heat, heat the oil. Sear the roast on all sides until browned, about 2 minutes on each side. Remove the roast to a plate and set aside. Sauté the bacon until almost crisp. Remove the bacon to paper towels to drain. Remove and discard all but 1 tablespoon of the drippings. Add chopped onion and celery to the drippings and cook until just softened. Add the garlic and carrots and sauté for 1 minute. Stir in tomato paste, wine, and chicken broth. Put the roast and bacon back in the pot and add the bay leaves, rosemary, and pearl onions. Bring back to a simmer. Cover tightly and bake for 3 hours, turning the roast after 2 hours. Strain juices from the roast and pour the juices into a saucepan. Cover the roast and vegetables and keep warm. Put the saucepan with strained juices over medium high heat and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium and simmer for 5 minutes. Taste and add salt and pepper, as needed. Slice the roast and serve with the vegetables and juices. Serves 6.

<http://southernfood.about.com>

Christine's Corner

Ah . . . Spring Break. Thoughts of sleeping late . . . warm weather . . . sunsets on the beach . . . wait a minute. That doesn't sound right . . . let's try again. Mental list for spring break: seeding charts, organic certification paperwork, CSA open house, clean the basement—yeah, that's more like it.

I welcome this short vacation from my teaching responsibilities and look at it as an opportunity to re-connect with the farm life. It is somehow comforting to move among the horses in the field, tend to the seedlings in the greenhouse, and recognize how quiet and almost simplistic life can be on the farm.

That is not to say we do not have our share of complications and stress. The rising price of gasoline—both regular and diesel fuel—is often a topic of conversation as we plan for the growing season. The uncertain weather patterns from the past few years haunt the memory and raise concern for this new season. And yet . . . we continue to plan—anticipating success, not failure, and a most bountiful harvest. *Christine*



Thumani



From the Herd

What? Spring Break? Already? You know what that means . . . Christine is home . . . for a week . . . making lists and thinking about things for me to do. Honestly, it really isn't that bad. She has pretty good ideas; it's the construction and follow through that can be challenging. And, I do enjoy her company and assistance in the greenhouse; after all, we are in this together.

The political climate near and far raises many concerns for us on the farm. Fuel prices affect us directly and indirectly; seed, shipping, and supply costs are on the rise. Our customers, feeling the pinch of shrinking economic resources, are fearful of rising food prices and the deterioration of our food supply. Ensuring quality food, at affordable prices, will be the true challenge. The statement "Be Vocal-Buy Local" will mold the lifestyle for many consumers during the summer of 2011.

Yes, there are challenges to farming, but equally many rewards to overshadow them. And just when one thinks they can take no more of winter . . . the sun shines. *Bob*