

Bear-ly News

Bear Creek Farm

www.bearcreekfarm.net

May 2010

Upcoming Events

Cameron Park
Farmers' Market
La Crosse, WI
Fridays 4pm-8pm

May 21
May 28
June 4
June 11
June 18

Farm Baby Day
Bear Creek Farm
Blair, WI

Saturday
June 19
10:00-2:00



In this issue:

Specials	1
Recipe of the Month	2
Christine's Corner	2
From the Herd	2

Planting time has arrived!

Finally—the time has come and we are planting vegetables into the fields. Many rows of onions, leeks, and scallions are marching over the small knoll in our back field. Along side these are the Napa cabbages, cauliflower, kale, and broccoli plants—all very tolerant of the recent cooler nights. Of course, a few new items—for us; fennel, dandelion greens, and endive, along with romaine head lettuce seem to be thriving despite the cooler weather. The garlic looks great—though planted a little close together; but this will force us to thin and provide spring garlic to our customers in early June. And, perhaps I should mention the several rows of peas—both shell and snap.

In the greenhouse we continue to seed new items—mostly the late summer to fall crops. For second plantings: broccoli and cabbages. We are starting our sweet corn in plug trays in the greenhouse—to be planted for a more consistent stand in the field within the next few weeks. We are dibbling oregano and basil currently—a most tedious job our son stated this past weekend. We are also beginning to seed the squash for our large field crops—both acorn and kabocha; we will have five other squash varieties to choose from beginning in late September—all to be started in the

greenhouse in the next few weeks, along with pumpkins and Brussels sprouts.

In the first high tunnel, the tomatoes are in and looking good: red Brandywine, Cherokee purple, hillbilly potato leaf, and green zebra varieties. Soon we will be securing the vines with clips and pruning them back—a weekly task to ensure good ventilation between the plants and optimal production. The second high tunnel has the framing in place; we hope to pull the plastic over the top later this week so we can fill it with San Marzano paste tomatoes. We have three different varieties of cherry and grape tomatoes, as well as husk tomatoes.

As one would guess, there seems to be an overabundance of transplants currently on the farm, a common problem for us every year. We are so concerned that we may experience a germination loss, that we over seed many varieties. We offer transplants for sale every Friday evening at the Farmers' Market and directly from the farm. If interested, come by our space at the Market or contact us and we can have your order ready for pickup at the Market on Fridays. The plants are all so healthy, we feel compelled to plant every last one—and even on 40 acres—space is limited.

Specials of the Month

Chuck Roast	\$5.00/lb.	Summer Sausage (~1.5# stick)	Transplants
Round Steak	\$5.50/lb.	\$6.90 per pound	Vegetables and Flowers
T-Bone Steak	\$10.50/lb.	Lean Ground Beef	4 & 6 packs \$3.00
		>10 pounds \$4.00/lb.	4" pots \$4.00

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

Pepper Steak Soup

12 oz. lean beef round steak
1/2 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. black pepper
4 1/2 cups beef broth
1/2 cup tomato sauce
1/4 tsp. dried thyme
1 tbs. olive oil
1 medium sweet white onion, thinly sliced
2 medium green bell peppers, cut into strips
4 cloves garlic, finely chopped
2-3 tbs. water
1 1/2 cups halved cherry tomatoes

- Thinly slice round steak on the diagonal into 1/4 inch slices; sprinkle with 1/4 tsp. salt and pepper. Set aside.
- In large saucepan, stir together beef broth, tomato sauce, and thyme. Cover, heat to boiling; reduce heat and simmer 10 minutes.
- Meanwhile, in large skillet, heat oil over medium high heat until hot. Add half the beef slices and cook, turning once, until browned. Transfer cooked beef to bowl and cook remaining beef.
- Add onion, bell peppers, garlic and remaining salt to skillet. Mix well and add 2 tbs. of water. Reduce heat to medium, cook and stir 10 minutes or until vegetables are tender—if gets dry, add remaining water. Add tomatoes and cook, stirring often, 5 minutes or until softened.
- Add beef, beef juices, and pepper mixture to the broth mixture. Warm through, but do not boil.

Christine's Corner

When I started this newsletter last week, I really wondered what had happened to spring. The past week of rain and cold weather reminded me more of March than May. Thankfully, the cold seems to be behind us—but not before it took out our tender basil plants. Oh well, we have more in the greenhouse so we will replant this week and hope for warmer nights.

This weekend has been a welcome relief from the rain. The wrens are continually singing outside our windows, a sign that they too are enjoying the sunshine and warmer temps. The grass is so long—our son's frustration was apparent as he tried to mow our lawn for us. "Why did you let the grass get so long?" he questioned his father—as if Bob had any control over the rain-filled week.

The greenhouse is a wonderful refuge, both rain and shine. Here rows and rows of green plants—of all sizes and hues—line the benches. It is peaceful here; only the occasional sound of water dripping or a bug buzzing in attempt to leave the enclosure it has wandered into. Ah, sweet solitude.

Christine

Announcements

Our newest grand-daughter, *Evelyn Jeannine*, was born two weeks ago. She is cute as a button and has visited us on the farm and in the greenhouse several times already.

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

I, too, have a few words to say about the past rainy season—but perhaps this is not the right venue for those statements. The fields are soggy, the pastures slippery, and the driveway is a muddy mess. I even had to start the wood furnace up again and cut wood to keep us warm. The warm weather of April spoiled us.

But the sunshine is back—and there are better things to report. Some of our babies have been born—all of the beef cows had beautiful, healthy babies this year. They are so cute—just running across the hillsides with their tails straight up in the air. Every day shortly after lunch, the herd comes in for water. The calves all lay down along the hill outside our kitchen window—nap for an hour—then up and over the hill they go, to find new adventures with their mothers.

We have a few batches of kittens, but the mothers are very good at hiding them. The grandchildren will need to come and search for these little ones. It is Spirit's first baby, and she seems to be overdue—waiting for her foal to arrive is agonizing. Ah, sweet beginnings.

Bob