

Farm Connection

Your Meat CSA

Country Haven Farm

2010 Summer Issue 14

Marr's Valley View Farm

[Spring at Marr's Valley View Farms, LLC](#)

Spring is one of the busiest times of the year at our farm. Not only because we have animals but also because we raise our own crops. It's a season of rebirth for both. Most of the babies are born now but there are a few late ones lagging behind. Before we started direct marketing back in the fall of 1999 our mission was to have all of the babies born in as short of a time period as possible so they were all ready to go to sale on the commodity market at once. Today, in order to have a consistent supply of products to fill our direct marketing needs the birth of the animals is spread out over 3 to 5 months. The animals are certainly enjoying the lush pastures this spring. The wonderful rain we received this past week made the grass grow like weeds – those are growing too!



We raise our own feed for our animals for the winter so spring is always a busy time planning and planting crops. We have to determine which alfalfa (hay) fields need to be replaced due to age or winter kill of the plants, which fields will be planted in corn and which in soybeans. All of these decisions must be based on the amount of feed the animals will need to make it through the harsh Wisconsin winters. Once that is determined plans are put in place to execute the plantings.



Using the no-till method of planting for our crops means the seeds are planted directly into the ground without plowing it up from the previous year. This farming practice is very beneficial to the land and virtually eliminates soil erosion and valuable top soil loss from heavy rains. We also rotate crops on the fields from year to year. Each crop type uses different nutrients from the soil. Not planting the same crop in the same location each year helps maintain and replenish the nutrients. In the photo you see soybean plants growing in a field that was corn the previous year. Soybeans are a natural weed inhibitor so we

plant it as a cash crop to help with weed control and bring income to the farm.

Late May and early June is the time to bale first crop hay on our farm. We were fortunate to have cut most of the hay fields last week and got them baled just before the much needed rains came. The unfortunate part is we still have 2 fields that weren't cut before the rains came that need to be harvested. Mother Nature is not planning a long enough window of nice, sunny weather for the hay to be cut, a couple days to dry and





a day to bale. If the crop becomes too mature it begins to lose its feed value. Then it takes more of it to provide the animals with what they need to stay warm and keep growing during the winter so timing of harvesting with plant growth and maturity is critical.

Our niece Kim and her husband John were home for the weekend from Colorado so we had a nice visit with them this evening. We had quite a bit of rain again today. While leaving the farm this evening I captured this picture of a portion of a rainbow....still puzzled by where the rest of it was.

Thank you for your continued support of our family farm.

Everyone at Marr's Valley View Farms, LLC

Recipe Submitted by Shareholder Ann Ferrell

Greek Lamb Burgers with Spinach and Red Onion Salad

- 1/3 cup chopped fresh mint
- 2 teaspoons paprika
- 3/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 3 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- 1 1/3 pounds ground lamb
- 4 hamburger buns or small ciabatta rolls
- 1 1/2 cups baby spinach leaves
- 1 1/3 cups crumbled feta cheese
- 4 1/4-inch-thick red onion slices
- 1 1/2 teaspoons balsamic vinegar

Mix first 4 ingredients and 1 1/2 tablespoons oil in medium bowl; mix in lamb. Shape into four 3/4-inch-thick patties. Cook patties in large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat 4 minutes per side for medium.

Meanwhile, preheat broiler. Broil buns until golden, about 2 minutes. Top each bun bottom with burger. Toss spinach, feta, onion, vinegar, and 1 1/2 tablespoons oil in bowl. Place salad atop burgers. Cover with bun tops, pressing firmly to compact.

Pick Up Schedule

Your meat will be delivered frozen to the host families on Thursday, June 13th. Please pick up your share at your designated location between 3pm and 6pm that day. Pewaukee location between 4:30pm and 6pm. Farm pickups will be available in coolers on the porch after 5pm.

If you will be delayed, please contact your host so they can protect your product. Here are their addresses and contact information.

Franklin Pick-up – Deb Erdmann, 8520 S Golden Lake Way, Franklin, WI 53132
Phone: 414-529-3904/414-241-6787

Pewaukee Pick-up – Anna Maenner, Pewaukee Park'n Ride, Cell Phone: 920-988-4313

Shorewood Pick-up – Martha Davis Kipcak, 4043 N. Downer Ave., Shorewood, WI 53211
Cell Phone: 414-628-3456

West Milwaukee Pick-up – Jennifer Girtler, 2845 S. 70th St, Milwaukee, WI 53219
Cell Phone: 414-364-4775

Any questions – call us at 920-253-8515.