

Farm Connection

Your Meat CSA

Country Haven Farm

Issue 6

Marr's Valley View Farm

Wow – I can hardly believe that summer has come to an end! We've really enjoyed providing your family with wholesome meats this summer and we're excited about those of you who are continuing your shares over the winter.

Those of you who have been full summer shareholders will be getting a turkey as your poultry share this month. This was the first time we've grown heritage turkeys and it was a learning experience. The birds have more bone structure than chickens and aren't as 'plump' as butterballs. Your young tom or hen turkey will weigh between 9 and 11 lbs. We hope you enjoy them!

Deposits for the winter share are due 11/1/09. Share prices will remain the same for the six months (Nov – April) with large shares (Family Plan) for \$780; medium shares (Couple Plan) for \$600 and small shares (Single or those who dine out often) for \$480. You may pay with a single payment or you may pay in thirds...1/3 by 11/1/09; 1/3 by 1/1/10 and the final 1/3 by 3/1/10. If you wish to pay by check you can mail to: Country Haven Farm, 211 Canal Road, Waterloo, WI 53594. If you have a credit card on file, I will contact you prior to 11/1/09 to confirm your payment options.

Preparations for Winter

The rainy, cool weather and the changing of the leaves, tells us that winter is on its way but it's the shortening days that trigger changes for the animals. Breeding season for our Scottish Blackface sheep stretches from September thru January. We put our rams and ewes together around October 15th and they stay together through the end of November. This means the lambs will be born from the middle of March thru April.

Preparations for next spring's lambing have already begun. Last Saturday, was sheep roundup day! We gathered family, friends and neighbors to help move our flock from their summer pasture up to the farm. Our farm is split by the Maunasha River...with summer pasture on one side and the farm with winter housing on the other. Access is via a town road bridge about ¼ mile from the farm. Sheep are gathered into a corner of their pasture, the gate is opened, the sheep calmly traverse the bridge, make a right turn, walk up the hill and into the farm driveway...or so we had hoped.

This year, 65 of the 70 came home just fine...the other 5...well that's another story. One decided she was going "thru" the river and did make it home totally wet and covered with a variety of "sticky" vegetation in her wool. The other four took the long route through the neighbor's



David Kier, a professional sheep shearer, gives Layne her Autumn haircut. Since being shorn in May, the sheep have grown about 4 inches of wool.

cornfield and back thru the swamp! Thank heavens for son-in-laws. Ours waded in after the strays and got them out of the predicament they had gotten themselves into!

All were safe and warm for the shearer on Monday. It may seem like a strange time to give the girls a haircut but it's with good reason. With the four inches of wool they've grown over the summer, it's hard to see or even feel how each ewe is doing. With a new haircut we can see their body condition (how fat or thin they are), we can check for and remove any freeloaders (ticks) and we can be sure no one has any cuts or injuries that need treating. Until their wool grows a bit, they'll be snug and warm inside the barn. Also, their wool is beautiful after being naturally washed by warm rains and scoured by the summer sun.

Before mating (or tugging as it is called in Scotland) the ewes will get a pedicure and an overall health evaluation. If all is well, they'll meet the boys mid month.

Shepard's Chili – one of our cool weather favorites!

Ingredients

- 1 pound lean ground lamb
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 (14 1/2-ounce) cans diced tomatoes – chili style w/onions
- 1 cup chicken broth
- 1 1/2 teaspoons ground cumin
- 1 1/2 teaspoons dried oregano
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- chili powder to taste
- 1 (15-ounce) can white beans, drained
- 1/4 teaspoon hot sauce (optional)

Preparation

Combine lamb and garlic in a Dutch oven; cook over medium heat until browned, stirring to crumble. Drain; return mixture to pan. Add tomatoes and next 6 ingredients (tomatoes through chili powder); bring to a boil. Cover, reduce heat, and simmer 2 hours; stir occasionally. Stir in beans and hot sauce. Cover; simmer 30 minutes. 8, 1 cup servings.

Pick Up Schedule

Your meat will be delivered frozen to the host families on Thursday, October 8th. Please pick up your share at your designated location between 3pm and 6pm that day.

Farm pickups can be made after 5pm.

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

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.