

Blackberry Meadows Farm



HIGH TUNNEL #3

THIS ONE'S EXTRA TALL!

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In 2007 we purchased a high tunnel from the Food Farm for a heck of a bargain. We're finally putting it up and dreaming about what we'll grow in it over the winter time. It's on some pretty rocky ground so we might indulge and put in some raised beds and luxurious organic compost!

GROWING NUTRITIOUS FOOD FOR A HEALTHY COMMUNITY

Last week we harvested for the CSA in the cold damp misty weather. It dipped down into the high 30's at night and gave us scare. With just a touch of frost our eggplants and peppers are toast! We harvested what we could out of the eggplant field, so unless we get a surprise burst of warm weather, we won't be seeing anymore eggplant until next year. That said, the cool weather crops are coming back on - so prepare yourself for a bunch of kale, tat soi and arugula. Also - we've got a good crop of Haukeri turnips (the small, white, sweet turnips) on the way.

Fall is a great time of year here on the farm. The hard work is winding down and it's time to start cleaning up and putting tools and equipment away. We have one last major planting due for the end of October and would like to invite you all out for a **Garlic Planting Potluck Party** on Saturday October 17th from 2 - 5 pm. This will be loosely organized, so bring whatever dish you'd like to share, dress warmly, bring the kids and help us plant a couple hundred pounds of garlic! Afterwards, at 5 pm, we'll hang out by the wood stove or campfire and share a great meal!

Winter Squash Pancakes

From Local Flavors, by D. Madison

- 1 butternut squash 2 -3 lbs
- salt and pepper
- 3 Tbs butter
- 1 Tbs sage
- 1 4-ounce smoked mozzarella
- 3 Tbs parsley leaves
- 1 garlic clove

1. Bake the squash in a oven at 375 degrees. Cut the squash in half, scoop out the seeds and strings, brush the cut surface with oil and place cut side down on a sheet pan. Bake until very soft when pressed with a finger, about 40 mins. Scoop out the flesh and beat it with a fork to smooth it out. Season it with a little salt to taste.
2. Melt the butter or heat the oil in a medium skillet. Add the sage and cook over medium heat for a minute or two to flavor the butter. Add the squash and smooth it out. Cook for 15 minutes, then give it a stir, scraping up the browned undersides and pressing a new layer to the bottom of the pan. Continue in this manner as long as you have time for. The more it browns, the better it will be.
3. While the squash is browning, thickly slice the cheese and chop the parsley and garlic together. Just before serving, pat the squash evenly in the pan once more, lay the cheese over the top, then cover and cook for a few minutes longer for the cheese to soften. Remove the lid, add the parsley-garlic mixture and serve.

Things you ought to know about

On October 24th, Greg and Jen along with a panel of other experts will be judging pies at the 4th annual [AppleFest](#) from 11 am - 2 pm at the Union Project. This is a free event and there's lots of fun activities for the whole family. Come on out!

The very next day we'll be kicking our heels up at the [PASA Sunday Supper Jamboree](#)

Come and join us! You'll have a great time at the Jamison's farm in Latrobe, PA eating locally grown produce and listening and dancing to one of the Appalachian region's best [old-time string bands around!](#)

We're gearing down in the barn for the end of the CSA, so we won't be buying many more "in stock" items. If you're interested in **stocking up your own reserves of pop**, you can order a case of Cherry, Grape, Punch, Mint, or Root beer for \$30. Or a case of Ginger beer for \$40. (24 bottles/case). Email jen@blackberrymeadows.com if you're interested.

We still have some chicken left. If you'd like to **reserve a few birds for the winter** -

just email jen@blackberrymeadows.com and we'll put your name on them. We're selling the chicken (pasture raised) for \$4.00/lb, which averages about \$15 - \$20 per bird.

We'll have your Frankferd Farm order for you at the CSA pickup on October 7th or anytime thereafter. This will be the last Frankferd order.

We still have a couple slots available for the **Winter CSA**. A share costs \$165 for 6 weeks. It starts **October 28th and will go until December 2nd**. If weather conditions permit - we'll go for an additional (optional) 2 weeks for \$27.50/week. If you'd like to sign up, please email jen@blackberrymeadows.com

CSA pick up at the **barn is Wednesdays from 11 am - 7 p.m.**, at the new **Oakland location (Phipps Conservatory from 2:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.** and at the **Boyd Community Center on Saturday from 9 am - 11 am**. and at the **Gateway Farm Market in Monroeville from 9 am - 12:00 p.m.** Don't forget to

bring along **bags** to take all your veggies home in.

Thanks for supporting local organic agriculture!!

Your farmers - Jen, Dave, Corinne, Heath and Greg *and* our Interns (Ray, Dave & Mandy, & Shari)

This Week's Menu

Tat soi, arugula, turnips peppers, hot peppers, leeks, potatoes and more!



Ten years ago, I would never have imagined that today I would own an Organic farm and actively be farming. Back then, I had just graduated from college with a Bachelors Degree in Spanish and was looking forward to going to grad school. The problem was that I missed the registration deadline. So, in the meantime, I decided to take a couple computer classes, which was and still is a hobby of mine. After finishing some of the classes that I was taking, my Uncle (who owned a small computer business) called me and asked if I would be interested in coming to work for him. Since I was not busy at that time, I took him up on his offer. I ended up working there for 6 years.

Now a question that I often get is, how did you end up farming? Well, in 2005, the other owners (Jen, Greg and Heath) and I formed Urban

Homesteaders, LLC. It was to be a sustainability consulting company with me as the website manager and general administration person. As with most startup companies, we were slowly moving along, getting a few odd jobs here and there. During the summer of 2006, Greg and Jen were living in the South Side and went to the local farmers market where they met the Duffs, who owned Blackberry Meadows. The Duff's expressed their interest in retiring and wanting to sell the farm. We agreed to a transition year (2007) to see how feasible it would be for us to purchase the farm. In February 2007, I quit my job as a computer technician and began farming in March.

When I started, I did not know a thing about what to do. I had no experience other than the occasional home garden (which Jen had done most of the work for anyway). I started out from ground zero learning about seeding trays, running tractors, how to prepare fields, irrigate, plant, pick, and wash produce. I also sold at all of our farmers markets. Everything was new to me but I was having a great time learning about it all and also improving the areas that needed it.

Now, two and a half years later, I find that I am looked to by our interns and volunteers as one of the experts on the farm. And although I feel that there are many things that I still do not know or understand, I have most of the answers to their questions.

Sometimes, I think back about all that has happened in the past five years and am quite amazed how things have ended up. And amidst all of the change, I found time to get married and early next year we are expecting our first child, which will be another huge change in our lives. All in all, I am extremely happy with where I am at in my life. I am grateful to have a business of my own that I love to work at and also have a great wife who supports me completely.