

Blackberry Meadows Farm



WWW.BLACKBERRYMEADOWS.COM

CONTEMPLATING THE GREAT OUTDOORS
THEIR FIRST DAY OUTSIDE THE COOP!

We let the chicks out last week to enjoy the dwindling sunny warm weather. Since they are still technically “teenagers” we were a bit worried about how they would integrate with the rest of the flock. No problems, but they still haven’t figured out that they should go *in* the coop at night. Instead, they’ll sit by the door and wait for us to put them in!

GROWING NUTRITIOUS FOOD FOR A HEALTHY COMMUNITY

We’re winding up another great growing season and, with a one week breather, we’ll start back up again for our Winter CSA. Extended season growing is tough, but rewarding work. It’s so amazing to eat fresh vegetables deep into the winter!

As our 3rd here, we feel like we’re beginning to understand and smooth out some of the systems and daily operations. The last two years were huge learning curves and it’s great to see our hard work paying off.

So, thanks for hanging in there with us and being so supportive. It’s great to know that our customers, (which are

now quickly becoming friends), care about the farm and appreciate our hard work. That’s the beauty of having a CSA farm, there is no anonymity. We look forward to Wednesdays and Saturdays, where we get to see your smiling faces, swap recipes and share stories. We aren’t doing this only to grow nutritious food, we’re also doing this because we want to help foster a healthy community.

If this was your first year with our CSA, thanks for trying us out. Each year is different. Each year, you’ll become more familiar with all the crazy veggies that we grow. Each year gets better and better!

Potato Arugula Salad

From www.allrecipes.com

- 1 1/2 pounds red potatoes, cubed
 - 3 tablespoons white vinegar
 - 2 cloves garlic, minced (optional)
 - 1/2 teaspoon salt
 - 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
 - 1/4 cup olive oil
 - 1 bunch arugula - rinsed, dried and torn
1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add potatoes and cook until tender but still firm, about 15 minutes. Drain, and cool. Transfer to a large bowl.
 2. Meanwhile, mix vinegar, garlic, salt, and pepper in a mixing bowl. Drizzle in olive oil, whisking until mixture thickens.
 3. Toss potatoes with vinegar and oil mixture and arugula. Serve at room temperature.

Things you ought to know about

Please join us on **October 17th for The Great Garlic Planting!** We'll start planting garlic cloves at 2pm, finish up at 5 pm and start eating. This will be a potluck event - so bring your favorite fall dish and join us! We'll be able to keep your dishes warm in the oven and have a toasty campfire in the evening. What a great way to celebrate the fall season! Email [Jen](mailto:jen@blackberrymeadows.com) if you and your family might make it. Hope to see you at the farm!

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 still have some chicken left. If you'd like to **reserve a few birds for the the last pickup** - 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 be in touch over the winter about signing up for next year. We'd love to see you all back again and welcome any questions or comments about how to improve our CSA or how great we're doing!

We're organizing a **CSA Planning Group** (7 people or so). If you'd like to get together this winter and help us cater more to the CSA member's needs - please let [Jen](mailto:jen@blackberrymeadows.com) know. We're open to new and innovative ideas!

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.

A great big THANKS to Jack, Linda, & Barbara (and her daughters, Courtney & Nicky) for coming out to the farm so regularly on Tuesday to help harvest. Your work was invaluable and kept us from staying up until 10 pm washing vegetables on Tuesday night.

Also - a great big THANK YOU to our interns. Ray, Dave, Mandy, Kristen, Shari, and Glen. You all are real troopers! You helped to make this year easier and very enjoyable!

Finally, THANKS to Barb and Ted Boulos. They stepped up whenever we needed a few extra hands. And, they washed the white bins clean every week!

Thanks for supporting local organic agriculture!!

Your farmers - Jen, Dave, Corinne, Heath and Greg *and* our Interns (Ray, Dave & Mandy, & Shari). Kristen will be back for this last week too!



So, here we are. The last week of this season's CSA. Even as we all talk about winding down, there is still so much to harvest and so much to do. For me, the season started with a long, detailed list of things to do taped to the wall, penned by Jen. She went away for a week for organic inspector training. So for that week, Dave, Dean and I crossed things off that list in between rainy days. Then, it was all about taking things out, dusting them off, setting them up and figuring out where everything is.

Then the explosion of things to do. We suddenly had no time to patiently drop seeds into 128-cell trays in the greenhouse and listen to WYEP. Still, we made time for porch jam sessions, collectively making desserts from scratch, movie nights, field trips to other farms, learning the ins-and-outs (pun intended?) of chicken processing, and watching the summer storms roll in.

Now it's about time to put on the long johns, roll up the fencing, mow down what weeds are still having a blast in the fields, put everything away where it will be easier to find again in the Spring. Of course we will still be stretching out every possible week of winter harvest. I'm finding out there is a lot one can do to extend the growing season long past sanity.

I'm waiting for later mornings, to give the frost on the kale a chance to thaw before harvesting. I'm waiting for the leaves to catch on fire and spiral off the trees...into tidy piles, right? I'm waiting for the dark evenings that feel like midnight. I'm waiting for mid-day-hot-apple-cider breaks and laughter over anthropomorphic vegetables. You won't see an eggplant like that in the supermarket, I'll tell ya.

(P.S. Thank you to everyone who helped share the work. Your hands and conversation are gold.)





My wife and I are full subscribers to the motto "Food is love." After a summer at Blackberry Meadows, I can add another truism: "Food is work."

Even though Mandy and I were part-part-timers — splitting a half-time schedule between the two of us — I hoed enough rows and cut enough basil and bagged enough lettuce to learn that the value of local organic produce goes far beyond its deliciousness and nutritiousness. It requires of a lot of thoughtful planning, loving attention and serious sweat from people who are equally serious about good food.

As CSA members, you are supporting the work of some incredibly hardworking, generous and committed young farmers. Good for you. You are creating a viable alternative to the over-processed, over-traveled, under-performing "product" that passes for food in modern America. Good for you again.

I have enjoyed this season at the farm immensely. We came here to see if organic farming was a possibility for us, and we're leaving more excited than ever. I encourage you to continue supporting Blackberry Meadows and the efforts of all local food growers. I also encourage you to come out to the farm on a Tuesday or Friday harvest day. Somehow,

food tastes even better when you've picked it yourself.

A special thanks to Jen, Dave, Heath, Corrine, Heath, Ray, Glen and Kristin for a summer of sage advice, farming tips, tasty recipe ideas and loads of lively conversation. We're proud to have been a small part of Blackberry Meadows.

