

Updates from

# PLEASANT VALLEY FARM



JULY, 2010

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 4

## *Hello Friends!*

We get lots of requests for farm tours, so we are excited to announce that we'll be participating in the 4th annual Buy Fresh Buy Local farm tour. We will be showcasing the birds we raise with a short walking tour, and on that day only, you'll be able to visit us until 6:00 PM. Read more about this exciting event on page 2!

As spring turns into summer, we're offering different products for you at the stand. This month, we'll be featuring our grass-fed beef. We're also beginning to see zucchini and other summer squash in the garden, along with green beans, cucumbers, green and hot peppers, and the first new potatoes of the season. Although we don't offer much fruit at the stand, our blueberry bushes are looking to produce a good crop this year and will be ripening by mid-July. While we know that many folks come to farmer's markets just for the corn or tomatoes, please keep in mind that these crops don't generally ripen locally until August. Don't forget, you can check on what is available each week online on our Products Available Now page.

Emily continues to get creative in the kitchen, so look for some of our new processed products, too! We now have 2 delicious rhubarb jams— Orange-Rhubarb, which is light and citrus flavored, and Oriental Rhubarb jam with the flavors of ginger and spices giving it a tangy zip. We will also be offering freshly prepared horseradish and horseradish mustard. As the garden matures, we'll again be offering pickles, salsas, hot pepper rings and more!

Another major task in a farmer's year is making hay. The weather is finally cooperating, so don't be surprised to see us out in the hay fields putting away this year's crop on sunny days.

Farmer's Market Nutrition Program and the Senior Farmer's Market Nutrition Program vouchers are now being accepted here. Also, the "Kindergarten Ready, Set, Go!" punch cards can be redeemed here— bring your kindergartener and they will be entitled to \$5 towards any farm stand purchase!

See you at the stand!

*-Emily*

## *Saving Rare Breeds*

Did you know there are endangered breeds of livestock? Currently, there are over 150 breeds of livestock and poultry recognized as being in danger of extinction by the American Livestock Breeds Conservancy, a non-profit group dedicated to working to

protect these animals. Although many were once common, these breeds have fallen out of use due to the process of industrializing America's farms into large feedlots.

Here at Pleasant Valley, we are ALBC members and are actively breeding many of

these heritage animals, such as Barred Rock, Buff Orpington & Delaware chickens and Dexter cattle. The Belgian horses we use in the fields are also listed. Watch for rare breed spotlights in upcoming issues or check out [www.albc-usa.org](http://www.albc-usa.org) to learn more!

### **JULY HAPPENINGS:**

- ◆ Stand is open every Saturday from 10:00-2:00
- ◆ Buy Fresh Buy Local Farm tour to be held July 24 from 10:00 AM-6:00 PM
- ◆ Chicken & Pork available now
- ◆ Grass fed beef available this month
- ◆ Lots of fresh vegetables becoming available weekly, check our website for weekly updates!
- ◆ Redeem your Farmer's Market Nutrition Program Vouchers and "Kindergarten Ready, Set, Go!" punch cards here



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## *Buy Fresh Buy Local Farm Tour*

On July 24, join us for the Buy Fresh Buy Local Farm Tour! This event will feature farms throughout Western Pa. The cost is just \$10 per carload, and you can visit as many stops as you choose, in whatever order fits your schedule. All farms will feature some sort of demonstration, tour, or other hands-on activity where participants can learn more about an aspect of sustainable agriculture. You will also have to opportunity to purchase farm-fresh and homemade goods at each stop. These events will be ongoing, all day from 10:00 AM-6:00 PM. No pre-registration is required; you will pay at the first farm you visit and be given more information.

Here at Pleasant Valley Farm, we will have a short walking tour where we will be showcasing the

heritage poultry we breed and raise. Each stop will have information about the history of the breed as well as their use here on the farm. You'll have an oppor-



tunity to see our peafowl, Toulouse geese, Bourbon Red & Royal Palm turkeys, and a variety of chickens including Barred Rocks, Buff Orpingtons, Delaware, Giant Blue Cochins and Golden Phoenixes. Emily will be on hand to answer any questions you may have.

Our farm stand will be open extended hours to give you a chance to purchase any of the products we offer.

This will be a family event, so feel free to bring your children or grandchildren to see what a real working farm looks like! All we ask is that you provide close supervision to ensure everyone has a safe as well as fun time. For the safety of our livestock and guests, we do ask that you leave your pets at home, however. This event will be held rain or shine, so please dress for the weather as the tour will be outside. Sneakers, boots, or other closed-toed shoes are recommended.

For more information on other stops on the tour, please visit [www.tiny.cc/farmtour](http://www.tiny.cc/farmtour)

HERE AT PLEASANT VALLEY FARM, WE WILL HAVE A SHORT WALKING TOUR SHOWCASING THE HERITAGE POULTRY WE BREED & RAISE.

## *Brown Eggs and White Eggs– What's the difference?*

The only difference between white and brown eggs is the breed of hen they came from! There are no nutritional or taste differences between colored shells and white ones. However, there are other factors that affect the quality and taste of your eggs.

Many folks think brown eggs taste better, but the real reason for that is that white eggs are usually produced by hens in confinement cages. Industrial egg farms favor the Leghorn breed, which has been bred over the years to be a small white hen that lays lots of big white eggs. They also do well in tiny cages. A laying hen in these massive buildings is usually confined to a space no larger than a sheet of

paper. Brown egg layers usually aren't as healthy and don't lay as many eggs as the Leghorns when raised in confinement. These are the breeds that evolved as a barnyard chicken. Here, we rely on Delaware, Barred Rock, and Buff Orpington hens for our big brown eggs. They are raised free range, with access to the outdoors year-round. These hens are able to eat a more natural diet of grass and bugs and are more active. This is what produces nice, firm eggs with bright yellow centers. If the hens are

pastured, like ours, they will also be producing healthier, grass-fed eggs.

Another difference that affects taste is freshness. Those white eggs you buy in the supermarket are usually a month old or more when you take them home. (FDA regulations state that the "best by" date can be no more than *seven weeks* after the egg is packaged.) Our beautiful eggs are hand collected daily and are no more than a few days old when you purchase them.

We raise a variety of breeds here, so don't be surprised to find an assortment of browns and whites in your carton. We promise they are all equally delicious!



## Grass Fed Beef is Ready!

Our pasture raised, free-range beef will be available beginning July 3rd, just in time for holiday grilling! We will have a selection of ground beef, steaks, roasts and stew meat.

Our beef is leaner than what you find in grocery stores. That's because instead of being sent to an overcrowded feedlot, our cows live out their lives in our lush pastures, where they spend their days grazing. Because they are able to move freely and eat the diet nature intended, the meat is leaner and better for you.

Beef has a bad reputation for being a high cholesterol food. However, when you eat grass-fed meats, the ratio of good and bad cholesterol is reversed. Also, since fat has more calories than lean protein, simply switching to leaner grass fed beef could save you as much as 100 calories per 6

ounce steak! According to the *Journal of Animal Science* 80(5):1202-11, as referenced by the eatwild.com website, "if you eat a typical amount of beef (66.5 pounds a year), switching to lean grass-fed beef will save you 17,733 calories a year—without requiring any willpower or change in your eating habits. If everything else in your diet remains constant, you'll lose about six pounds a year."

Pasture raised beef is also a safer choice for your family. Studies have shown that being on a natural diet of grass changes the acid content of the cow's stomach and reduces the amount of *E coli* present in the digestive system. This, along with small scale processing, means a lower risk of contamination of your food.



We anticipate offering very limited amounts of freezer beef this fall, so if your family is interested in a quarter or half, please let us know!

### Our delicious grass-fed beef will be available in the following cuts:

Lean Ground Beef- \$3.25/lb  
 Round Steak- \$3.50/lb  
 Sirloin- \$6.00/lb  
 T-Bone-\$7.50/lb  
 Porterhouse- \$7.50/lb  
 Rib Steaks- \$5.50/lb  
 Chuck Roast- \$3.50/lb  
 R. B. Roast- \$3.50/lb  
 English Roast-\$3.25/lb  
 Tip Roast- \$4.00/lb  
 Rolled Rump Roast- \$4.00/lb  
 Stew Beef- \$3.25/lb  
 Soup Bones- \$2.50/package

IF YOU EAT A TYPICAL AMOUNT OF BEEF, SWITCHING TO GRASS FED WILL SAVE YOU 17,733 CALORIES A YEAR WITHOUT REQUIRING ANY WILLPOWER OR CHANGE IN EATING HABITS.

## Website Updates

Emily spends a lot of time keeping the website updated and trying to make it more user-friendly. Some recent changes have been made.

All past newsletter editions from this year are still available, but you'll notice that "Newsletter Archives" is now just "Newsletter" and has moved from a drop-down to a permanent spot on the bar.

There are also a couple of new pages. "Products We Offer" is a drop down that details the different things we raise and produce

throughout the year, not just what's currently available.

We think the most exciting new page is our "Field Work" page, which is under the "Why Work Horses" link, as it showcases many more kinds of our horse-drawn machinery. It is set up much like our Hay Making page. There are quite a few steps involved in preparing our fields, and there are pictures of all of them in action along with descriptions.

As always, we try to update weekly with the latest products

available and current prices for your information. We've also added a poll on our Products Available Now page so you can vote for what you look for first when you come to the stand. Having an idea of what you want helps us know what products to offer!

We hope you'll take a look, and tell us what you think. We love to hear your feedback and your ideas of what else you'd like to see.



PLEASANT VALLEY FARM

THIS MONTH'S RECIPES FEATURE PRIZE WINNING SUBMISSIONS BY MIKE WORMAN & ANNE BAKKER, ALONG WITH OTHERS FEATURING DISHES YOU CAN MAKE USING SEASONAL ITEMS. INGREDIENTS LISTED IN ITALICS ARE FOR SALE HERE AT THE FARM!

Cold Zucchini Soup

3 pounds unpeeled *zucchini*, coarsely chopped 

4 cups (or more) chicken stock

5 slices *bacon*, chopped, cooked crisp, and drained

1/3 C parsley, chopped.

1 garlic clove, pressed

1 t ground black pepper

paprika (garnish)

4 t's dry sherry (optional if you are a religious fanatic, required if you are a normal human being)

Combine all ingredients except paprika and sherry in a sauce pan and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer until zucchini is tender, about 15 minutes. Transfer to processor or blender in batches and puree, adding more stock if mixture seems too thick. Let cool. Cover and chill well.

This is a very tasty hot weather treat that should be served ice cold. It is also very low in calories and thus guilt free.



Submitted by Mike Worman

Pleasant Valley Won-Tons

Package of won ton wrappers

Block of cream cheese, softened (8 oz)

1/2 cup *Oriental Rhubarb jam*

Combine Oriental Rhubarb jam and cream cheese in a small bowl. Place a tablespoon of filling in the center of each wrapper. Gather the edges of the wrapper and pinch shut. Deep fry, in small batches, in oil for 1 minute or until golden brown.

Serve with *Thai Sweet & Hot Dipping Sauce*.

From Emily's kitchen

If you've got a great recipe for farm-fresh food you'd like to share, let us know! We'll be happy to include it in an upcoming edition!



Peaches and Cheese Stuffed Chicken Breast

Boneless, skinless *chicken breast*  
*Smoked sharp cheddar cheese*  
*Cranberry-Peach Conserve.* 

Take a fresh chicken breast and pound it thin. Season lightly with salt and white pepper.

Spoon a heaping tablespoon of the conserve onto half of the breast. Cover the conserve with slices of smoked white cheddar cheese. Fold the other half of the chicken breast over the filling. Transfer to a hot skillet with 2 turns of olive oil. Sauté until lightly brown on both sides.



Some of the filling will seep out into the pan~ turn the heat down and allow it to simmer. Remove the chicken and put on a cooking sheet. Finish in the oven at 350\* for 15 minutes or until done. Add a bit of conserve to the remaining drippings in the skillet with a touch of oil if needed. This makes a delicious sauce to pour over the finished chicken.

Serve with a seasoned herb rice and fresh garden vegetable.

Submitted by Anne Bakker

Cool Cucumber Pasta

8 oz penne or spiral pasta

2 medium *cucumbers*, thinly sliced

1 medium *onion*, thinly sliced

1 1/2 cups sugar

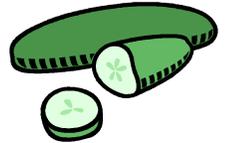
3/4 cup *white wine vinegar*

1 Tbsp vegetable oil

1 Tbsp prepared mustard

1 Tbsp fresh parsley, chopped

1 tsp pepper



Cook pasta according to package. Drain & rinse in cold water. Stir in the oil, then add cucumbers & onion.

In a jar with tight fitting lid, combine the other ingredients and shake to combine. Pour over the pasta mix. Cover and chill for a few hours or overnight for flavors to blend. Serve chilled, using a slotted spoon.