



## *Hello Friends!*

You may have noticed that our June edition is a few days late. That's because, since the weather has finally cleared, we've been spending all of our time outside! The garden is now fully planted, and new vegetables are ripening weekly for sale at the stand. We're already offering rhubarb, radishes, green onions and salad mix, and things like peas, green peppers and beets will be following shortly. Look online each week under the "Now on Sale" page to see what we'll have! In addition to the garden, we've also been busy making the first hay of the season. While the rain made it hard to get planting in on time, the hayfields grew like crazy. We were able to put our first loads of dry hay into the barn on June 2, the earliest ever for us! We're continuing to put hay up, and anticipate a second cutting later in the summer. Making lots of quality hay is very important, as the amount and nutritional quality of our hay determines how many animals we'll be able to keep over the winter, which in turn affects the availability of our meats when we open each year. If you drive by the farm, don't be surprised to see us in the hayfields with our horses and our antique equipment. Feel free to wave as you go by, but please don't beep the horn—it could startle the horses.

While we opened with beef and lamb kielbasa, this month we will once again have our naturally raised whole chicken. If you're intimidated by cooking a whole bird, or it is simply too much meat for your family, check out page 2. You find a simple, step-by-step description in how to cut your bird into breast and thigh pieces. Trust me, it's easy, and doesn't require fancy equipment! This month also brings the return of our famous pork sausages, in all four flavors: breakfast, sage, hot and mild Italian.

We hope June gets your summer off to a great start. As always, feel free to call or email with any questions about our farm or our products.

**See you at the stand!**

*-Emily*

## *Recycle with Us!*

Here at the farm, we're big on using everything to its full potential. Whether it's using up the bounty of the garden in our canned products, or fertilizing the fields with the natural manures and compost produced on the farm, we do our best to ensure nothing goes in the trash unnecessarily.

You may have noticed that our farm fresh eggs come in cartons from store-bought brands of eggs. While the eggs inside are 100% farm-fresh, reusing these cartons helps us to

keep our prices down and to reuse something that most people simply toss. We are happy to accept cartons, either 12 or 18 count. But please, make sure they are clean before dropping them off. For food safety reasons, we are unable to use any cartons that have dried egg inside, from broken eggs or used shells placed back into the carton.

Another item you can bring back to us for reuse are glass canning jars. For those that don't can them-

selves, it's a great way to reuse the jars, since reusing is far more energy efficient than recycling, when you must melt the glass down and make a new product. We can sterilize the jars for reuse here in a simple boiling water bath, and then refill them with all the delicious goodies you know and love. The metal bands that screw on are reusable, too, although the flat lids are replaced each time to ensure a proper seal. Our vinegar bottles are also returnable!

## **JUNE HAPPENINGS:**

- ◆ Farm Stand open every Saturday from 10 AM-2 PM
- ◆ All varieties of our homemade pork sausage return June 11!
- ◆ Naturally raised chicken available mid to late June.
- ◆ See page 3 for our "What's Growing On?" contest...you could be a winner!



## **PLEASANT VALLEY FARM**

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## *Critter Spotlight: Coturnix Quail*

We have a new variety of bird here at the farm this year. While our visitors are familiar with our assortment of chickens, turkeys, peafowl, geese and ducks, these are birds you haven't seen in the front yard.

Coturnix quail, also known as Japanese quail, are small birds that weight between 10-12 ounces at maturity. They are very fast to mature, as they begin to lay eggs only seven weeks after they hatch!

These small birds are raised for a variety of reasons. They are very



meaty for their size, and being fast to mature, are raised for the table. They are also fairly prolific layers of tiny, speckled eggs which weigh only about 1/3 ounce. A dozen quail eggs would be equal to 2 or 3 chicken eggs.

Coturnix quail have the shortest incubation time of any bird we raise. While a chicken takes 21 days and geese, ducks, turkey and peafowl take 28, a quail egg takes only 17 days to hatch! We raised these first birds from fertile eggs, and already they have started to produce eggs of their own. We anticipate building our quail flock's numbers up over the next month or two. After that, don't be surprised to see quail products for sale at the stand sometime in late summer!

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### *How to Cut Up a Whole Chicken*



Our farm-raised chicken returns this month. Our Cornish-Rock broiler chickens are fed a high protein diet with no steroids, hormones or antibiotics. They are also raised in chicken "tractors", which are moveable pens that have no bottom. When the pens are moved each day, the birds have a clean living space where they can supplement their diet with bugs and grasses. The manure never builds up around them, and naturally enhances the fertility of our soil.

Our chickens are sold as a whole bird only. While they are cleaned and ready to cook, we find that some folks are not familiar with using a whole bird as opposed to the pieces you can buy in grocery stores. Here is how to break down a fresh, whole chicken so you can cook the parts separately.

#### **Cutting a Chicken into Four Pieces\*:**

1. Cut through the skin between one of the legs and the body. Bend the leg back as far as you can, until the tip of the leg bone pops free from the body.
2. Cut the leg away from the backbone, then repeat the whole process with the other leg. You can then cut each leg into thigh and drumstick, if desired.
3. Pull the wing away from the body, then, using kitchen shears or a sharp knife, cut the wing off at the second joint. Repeat with the other wing.
4. Lift the flap of skin from the neck area. Run your finger around until you feel the wishbone. Use a small, sharp knife to clean away the meat so

you can see the wishbone clearly. Run the knife behind the bone to free it, then twist and pull it free with your finger.

5. Grab the lower part of the backbone. Bend it backwards, away from the breast, until it snaps. Then use your shears to cut away the remaining part of the backbone. You can either discard this part or use it to make stock.
6. Cut along the breastbone from neck to tail, and trim away any remaining backbone.

You now have two breast pieces with drumette, and two whole legs. You can now cook the pieces separately, and can freeze some for later use if desired (NOTE- do not re-freeze previously frozen, uncooked meat. It is ok to refreeze if the meat has been cooked since thawing.)

\* Adapted from *The Cook's Book: Techniques and Tips from the World's Master Chefs*, Jill Norman, ed.

# What's Growing On Here?



Mystery Plant #2



Mystery Plant #3. Hint- you don't eat the leaves, they are poisonous!

#1. Name the plant with the purple flowers.

Bonus points if you also correctly identify the tall green leaves in the background in photo #1!

How well do you know your Veggies? Take a look and see if you know what each plant produces!

Email us with a guess ([pleasantvalleyfarmpa@yahoo.com](mailto:pleasantvalleyfarmpa@yahoo.com)), or enter online at [pleasantvalleyfarm.weebly.com/newsletter.html](http://pleasantvalleyfarm.weebly.com/newsletter.html) . All entries, right or wrong, will be in the running for a **\$15 farm gift certificate**. All entries that correctly identify all the plants will automatically get a **certificate for a free jam or mustard!**

For a chance at a prize, entries must be received by 6/30/2011.



Mystery Plant #4



Mystery Plant #5



Mystery Plant #6