



## *Hello Friends!*

Although snow is still in the air and on the ground, we're busy preparing for spring here at the farm! Seed orders for the year have already been arriving in our mailbox, and we can't wait to start growing. In fact, it won't be long before we start some early seedlings. We are anticipating putting some of our greenhouse space back into production this year, which means we will have a jump start on the season for some of your favorite crops, such as peppers, cucumbers and tomatoes. And although we will use the greenhouses to warm the soil for earlier planting, you will still be getting the fresh from the farm taste of plants grown in real organic soil that you expect, not the bland, hothouse-raised imitations that you find in the grocery stores. We are raising lots of old time favorite varieties along with some new additions. Read all about some of the new and colorful additions to our gardens on page two!

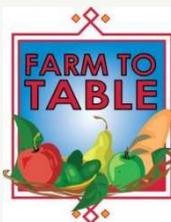
A sure sign that spring is just around the corner is the arrival of farm babies. We already have some adorable spring lambs playing in a warm pen in the barn. Our first litter of piglets has also arrived. We are anticipating our hens will really start laying again next month, and soon thereafter we will again have live chicks for sale. We anticipate offering Barred Rocks, Delawares, Phoenixes, and Blue Cochins. We will also be hatching Toulouse goslings and Pekin ducklings this spring. We also have live rabbits in a variety of colors for sale. Rabbits are available from now until the end of April. Please give us a call or send us an email for more information about purchasing live animals.

*Until next time, think spring!*

*-Emily*

## *See Emily at Farm to Table Expo 2011!*

March will bring a chance for you to visit Pleasant Valley Farm on the road! As mentioned in our last newsletter, we will be at the 6th annual Farm to Table Expo, being held March 25 & 26 at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in downtown Pittsburgh. The conference is open from 10:00 AM– 5:00 PM both days. Attendees will have a chance to see lots of local food producers as well as other tables staffed by publications, restaurants and organizations



that support local food. Our farm will have a selection of our delicious jams, mustards, vinegars and other canned products for sale. Please remember we do not accept credit or debit cards. There will also be a local foods tasting Friday evening, and you'll have a chance to sample some of our products there as well. One or two day passes are available. The price of admission also enables you to see a variety of

speakers and demonstrations. We are excited to be a part of this, as Emily will be presenting at 2:30 PM on Saturday. Her presentation is called "*Heritage Livestock Breeds; What They Are, Why They Matter, and How to Find Them*" and will give an inside view of our experiences with the animals we raise here at the farm, as well as a broader perspective of why livestock conservation is important to farming today.

We hope to see you there!

### **OUR FARM STAND WILL REOPEN SATURDAY, MAY 28, 2011.**

- ◆ Visit with us, see Emily speak and stock up on some of your favorite canned products at **Farm to Table** in March!
- ◆ **Live chicks** will again be available Spring 2011. Contact us for more information.
- ◆ **Live rabbits** will be available for purchase from now until Easter.



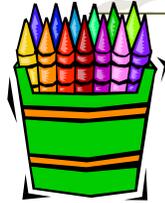
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The seed orders have been arriving in our mailbox and we're so excited to get this year's garden underway! We've got lots of old favorites, plus some really neat new varieties. It looks to be our most colorful garden ever!

**Sweet corn** is such a popular crop, we're planting even more varieties this year! In addition to the three varieties (one yellow, two bicolor/butter & sugar) we had last year, we're also bringing back the late season, old-time flavor and snow white color of *Silver Queen*. We'll also have a third bicolor variety and we'll give a trial run to an all-red kernelled sweet corn, called *Ruby Queen*.

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We have a few new crops we'll be planting this year. While we always try new varieties of plants, these are new veggies that haven't appeared at the stand at all in the past. Many of this year's new additions were selected to expand our late-season offerings. Here are some you can look forward to seeing on sale at the stand!

**Kale:** (Lacinato or Dino-saur, heirloom) This cool weather crop will appear in the fall, after the first frost. It's a hearty, mild tasting green that can be cooked like spinach.

## Colors of the Garden

A returning favorite is **Bright Lights Swiss Chard**. The leaves vary from bright green to deep red, and the stalks are a mix of red, pink, white, yellow and orange! Swiss Chard is a delicious green, great for salads and salad mixes when young. It does not get bitter as it gets larger, and the texture is great for adding to stir fries, soups, or in any recipe in which you would typically use spinach.

While a **tomato** is most commonly a red fruit, we're growing some new varieties in different shades this year too! Look for *Green Emv* cherry tomatoes as well as a yellow striped red slicing tomato called *Red Zebra*.

Other colorful vegetables will include our *All-Blue* fingerling **potatoes** as well as *Mountain Rose*, a variety with red-swirled flesh.

**Chiogga Beets** reveal a red and white striped pattern when sliced. Heirloom **Kalibos cabbage** is green and purple. Our **peppers** will vary from sweet to fiery and come in colors such as green, red, orange, orange, even tinged with purple! In addition to our delicious brown **eggs**, we'll also again be offering blue-green colored eggs from our Ameracauna hens, commonly known as the Easter Egg chicken.

No matter what dish you're cooking up, fresh produce always makes it more flavorful, and this year it's likely to be more colorful as well!

## New Vegetables for 2011

**Leeks:** (Blue Solaise, heirloom) These beautiful, blue-violet members of the onion family are also a late season crop and can grow up to 20" long!

**Popcorn:** We're planting the heirloom Smoke Signals popcorn. It looks great and can be used as a fall decoration, or simply place in a paper bag, microwave, and enjoy as a healthy snack!

**Marrow :** (Boston or Autumnal, heirloom) We're expanding our winter squash offerings to include marrow, a large, red-orange early winter squash that has been grown since 1891.

We're also excited to be planting an asparagus bed this year. **Asparagus** is one of the earliest vegetables of the year. It's a perennial, meaning it will come back year after year. We will get the plants established this year and look forward to offering it in 2012!

