



Hello Friends!

Farm stand season is underway! We're continuing to plant the fields and we'll have more vegetables available as the weeks go by. Our season starts with rhubarb, spring onions, and radishes along with other frost-tolerant veggies such as lettuce, spinach and peas. Green beans, peppers, zucchini & summer squash will quickly follow. If you'd like to know what is available from week to week, we'll post it online under "Products Available Now". In addition to fresh veggies, as things ripen you'll see new additions to our processed foods as well, like our pickled beets, dilly beans, salsas & hot pepper rings. There is usually something new every week!

If you've been a fan of Emily's flavored vinegars, be sure to look for them in the new, easier to use bottles. If you try one of these bottled products and enjoy it, you can bring the empty bottle back for \$.50 off your next farm stand purchase! (While we always gladly accept returns of canning jars as well, we are not currently offering a discount on returned jars.)

We would also like to remind everyone that we are unable to accept debit or credit cards at the stand. However, this year we will be able to accept vouchers for the Farmer's Market Nutrition Program and the Senior Farmer's Market Nutrition Program. Also, Pleasant Valley Farm is a part of the "Kindergarten Ready, Set, Go!" program in Venango County. So if you have a child (or know a child) entering Kindergarten this fall in any of the Venango County school districts, have your child wear his or her tee shirt and bring the punch card and they will be entitled to \$5 towards any farm stand purchase!

Kacee Carr was the winner of our "Name the Lamb" contest for her suggestion of Penelope Mae (Penny for short). While we had lots of suggestions, some with really neat meanings, we had to give it to Kacee for suggesting not only a first and middle name, but a nickname as well! We've got another contest lined up this month, so read below for details on our Farm Fresh Recipe contest.

See you at the stand!

-Emily

Farm Fresh Recipe Contest

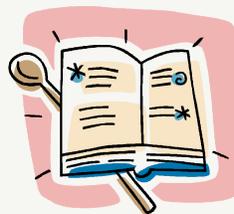
We love to grow food and are always looking for exciting new ways to cook it. We're looking for your help in finding our next great recipe. Main dishes, sides, dessert, anything! The only restriction is that it must contain some of the great food available at our stand. Since that includes all our vegetables and meats, we know you'll have something to share.

We'll happily feature the best ones in our next issue, and all of the winners will receive the choice of any one of our delicious home canned products FREE! We have a wide variety of items from spicy dipping sauces & gourmet mustards, to fabulous jams to satisfy your sweet tooth, and flavored

and specialty vinegars for salad dressings and adventurous cooks!

Recipes must be submitted by Monday, June 21. You can email them to us

or drop them off in person when you visit us at the stand!



JUNE HAPPENINGS:

- ◆ **Stand is open every Saturday from 10:00-2:00**
- ◆ Chicken & Pork available now
- ◆ Recipes will be accepted through June 21 for our contest
- ◆ 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

PLEASANT VALLEY FARM

Dan & Emily Stevenson

4792 Sage Road
Tionesta, PA 16353

(814)755-3911

pleasantvalleyfarmpa@yahoo.com
www.pleasantvalleyfarm.weebly.com

Butcher Shop Makeover

Government regulations state that all our beef, pork & lamb for sale must be sent to a USDA-inspected facility for the initial processing. We are fortunate that Hirsch's Meats in Kossuth is able to do that for us, as lots of small farms don't have a local option. However, the Stevenson family has always done as much of the processing as possible, picking up whole sides of meat and custom cutting them right here at the farm. Dan & Emily have continued that hands-on tradition, and continue to make our sausage here as well, using the same family recipes.

After a long winter, our butchering kitchen was in need of a good cleaning. It's been in use for many years, so we thought



it was time for a new coat of paint as well. We also put down a vinyl floor, which looks great and is easy to clean! Other additions which make it a more user friendly space are more shelving and wall mounted racks for paper towels & butcher paper.

Another project was building a larger permanent table to do the cutting on. A larger space makes the work easier for us, and the homemade wooden top was sealed with a food-grade, beeswax-based sealant, making for quick sanitization and cleanup. Adding the large cutting table didn't leave much

room to put one of our large chest freezers, so you'll notice it has been moved down to the stand. We'll be able to keep plenty of our frozen pork, chicken, lamb and beef on hand when you stop by to visit us!

We've already put our newly remodeled kitchen to good use, as we filled our orders for spring freezer pork and prepared the homemade sausage you find at our stand, as well as during processing of our farm fresh chicken. We feel these improvements were important to maintain the highest standards of food safety, so our family can continue to provide safe, nutritious meats to your family.

WE GOOGLED
 "DONATE WOOL
 FOR GULF OIL
 SPILL" AND FOUND
 THE NONPROFIT
 GROUP MATTER OF
 TRUST.

Gulf Coast Cleanup

We've all heard about the terrible tragedy in the Gulf of Mexico, with oil threatening habitats and wildlife both on shore and at sea. The sheer magnitude is unimaginable, but we wanted to help if possible. Since there were no real plans to contain such a disaster, lots of nonprofits and volunteers are pitching in to help save the environment. Emily had heard that human hair and animal fiber was being stuffed into pantyhose and used to soak up the oil in a nontoxic manner.

We raise our sheep for meat, not wool, but they need to be shorn for their comfort once the weather warms. We generally do not process the wool,

so it hold little value for us.

When we googled "donate wool for Gulf oil spill" we found the nonprofit group Matter Of Trust. They are taking donations of human hair, pet hair, farm animal hair, wool or feathers.



Our first donation

So far, we've boxed up the trimmings from the horses' manes, feathers from our pea-

fowl pen, and Rambo's entire fleece. Additionally, Emily cut 14" of her own hair, as well as Sara's entire mane. As the ewes are shorn, we'll continue to donate their wool as well.

According to the website, the response has been so great, mailings are going to different locations in waves. We're a small part of wave 10! However, every little bit helps.

To follow the progress, go to www.matteroftrust.org for more information. They have YouTube videos and a way to sign up if you would like to contribute as well.

Egg-citing News

If you've passed by the farm this spring, you may have noticed some large, colorful birds in a pen near the road. While peafowl (peacocks & peahens) may not be the most common farm fowl, we've been raising these birds from chicks we bought in 2008. We have two color variations at the farm. The Blue India is the most common color. The males have a blue head and neck and a colorful blue & green tail. The females have a green neck and



brown body. The white hen is a black shouldered bird, and the black shouldered males look very similar to the Blue Indias except for their black wings.

It's taken two years for them to reach the size and vibrant colors you see now, and the males' tails will only get larger over the next few years! Since peafowl can live to be 50 years old, they are slow to mature. We are very excited to have collected out first peafowl eggs this summer, and are looking forward to

hatching chicks.

We are also excited to be incubating eggs for a new variety of quail. We hope to be hatching Tibetan Coturnix quail the first week of June. These 8-10 ounce birds mature quickly, reaching full size in 6 weeks and begin laying small brown and white eggs when just 7 weeks old! We anticipate offering quail products at the stand in late summer.



New Cheese Flavors!

We've picked up our first order of raw milk cheese for the season from Whispering Brook Cheese Haus. While your old favorites have returned, we were excited to try a couple of new flavors as well. Since all of the flavored cheddars are so good, we just couldn't wait to taste the **Italian Cheddar**. Not only is it seasoned with basil and garlic, it also has pieces of sun-dried tomatoes as well!



Another new variety is **Goat Cheddar**. Made with goat's milk, it also comes from animals raised on pasture and milked at the farm. It is a pleasantly tangy white cheddar cheese.

Although technically not new, we have **Dill & Bacon Cheddar** again this year.

We sold out quickly last year, and one bite will tell you why! Bits of real bacon and lots of dill make one of the tastiest cheeses we've had in years.

We are happy to announce that they have kept most of their prices the same, and even lowered the price of Cheddar & Longhorn! All prices are by the pound, and are sold in approximately 1-pound packages.

Cheddar- \$5.99
Dill & Bacon- \$6.99
Goat Cheddar- \$9.99
Horseradish- \$6.49
Italian Cheddar- \$6.99
Jalapeño Cheddar- \$6.49
Longhorn (Colby)-\$5.59
Smoked Sharp Cheddar- \$7.99

WE'RE HAPPY TO
ANNOUNCE THAT
MOST OF THE
CHEESE PRICES ARE
THE SAME AS LAST
YEAR, AND EVEN
LOWER THIS YEAR
FOR CHEDDAR &
LONGHORN!



Herb Spotlight: Chives

One of the first herbs that sprout each spring in our herb garden are chives. They are in the *allium*, or onion, family. The leaves are hollow and can be cut and used fresh in a variety of dishes. They also produce purple blooms, which are also edible and make a neat addition to salads or a colorful,

edible garnish to liven up any dish.

Chives are an easy introduction to using fresh herbs. Just wash the leaves gently under running water, then take a sharp knife or kitchen shears and chop.

While chives are wonderful mixed with sour cream and spooned onto a baked potato, they are tasty in lots of other

dishes, too! [The Complete Book of Herbs](#) suggests using them in soups, salads, chicken, potatoes, cooked vegetables and egg dishes. Here at the farm, we love to sprinkle them into omelets or scrambled eggs. You can add them to a mix of baby greens for a spring salad. We offer other ideas on our recipe page this month as well!

THIS MONTH'S RECIPES FEATURE ITEMS WE CURRENTLY OFFER AT THE STAND: CHIVES, CHAMPAGNE AND FLAVORED VINEGARS, & PORK CHOPS. NEXT MONTH, WE'LL BE FEATURING THE CONTEST WINNERS!

Potato Salad with Dill & Chives

- 4 medium potatoes
 - 1 Tbsp chopped onion
 - 1 Tbsp chopped parsley
 - 1 Tbsp chopped chives
 - 1 flowering head of dill, finely chopped
(or 1 tsp dill seed)
 - 3 Tbsp mayonnaise
 - 1 Tbsp sour cream
 - Salt & pepper
1. Boil the potatoes in their skins until just tender. Cool, peel & slice them.
 2. Sprinkle on the onion, parsley, chives & dill.
 3. Blend the mayonnaise & sour cream, season with salt & pepper. Add to the potato mix and stir gently. Leave to stand a few hours so the flavors mingle.

From *The Complete Book of Herbs* by Lesley Bremness.

Champagne-Honey Glazed Pork Chops

- 4 Pleasant Valley Farm Pork Chops
 - 1/2 cup honey
 - 1/2 cup Champagne vinegar
 - 4 medium sized apples
 - Olive oil
 - Pepper
 - Dried thyme
1. Brush the chops with olive oil. Sprinkle with pepper & thyme. Cook in skillet over medium-high heat for 10 minutes, turning once.
 2. Heat honey & vinegar in another skillet. Core & cut apples into 10 slices. Add to bubbling mixture, turning to coat.
 3. Place browned chops in honey-vinegar mixture, turning every minute to glaze with sauce until desired doneness is reached.

From Emily's kitchen.

Crostini with Chive-Scented Ricotta

- 2 cups fresh cow's or sheep's milk ricotta
 - 2 Tbsp olive oil
 - Sea salt & freshly ground pepper
 - 1/4 cup very finely snipped chives
 - Chive blossoms, cut at the base
 - 20 slices baguette, ciabatta, or a nutty, dense whole wheat bread
- Mix the ricotta, oil, salt & pepper to taste, and chives together. Toast the bread until golden, then spread the cheese on top. Add a tiny bit of additional pepper and a few chive blossoms to each slice.

From *Local Flavors* by Deborah Madison

Homemade Vinaigrette Dressing

- 2 Tbsp flavored vinegar (Blueberry Basil, Dried Herb, Champagne or Mulled Blackberry)
 - 2 Tbsp olive oil
 - 1 tsp sugar
 - 1 tsp mustard
 - Zest of 1/2 lemon
 - 1 clove garlic
- Combine all ingredients in a blender or food processor and drizzle over a bed of farm fresh greens.