

Updates from

PLEASANT VALLEY FARM



SEPTEMBER, 2012

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Hello Friends!

September brings the first day of fall, and the selection of items at the stand is moving toward fall flavors as well. In addition to all the delicious and decorative items we've detailed below, we are also excited to be carrying some of Happy Mug Coffee's fall flavors, like pumpkin espresso! Another fall flavor many folks look for here at Pleasant Valley Farm is lamb, and that will return September 22. We will once again be offering ground lamb, lamb chops, leg of lamb and lamb kielbasa.

The week of September 9-15 has been declared "Forest County Buy Local Week" and we're happy to be a part of this. To show our appreciation, we're offering a special sale on Saturday the 15th. You'll be able to take \$.25/lb off any one meat item! This includes our steaks, roasts, sausage, ham, chicken, ground beef...anything! No coupon necessary, we will just take the discount off of the most expensive meat item you purchase that day!

We will continue to be open every Saturday through the end of November. However, unfortunately we will not be offering Thanksgiving turkeys this year. We wanted to give ample notice to our customers so you have a chance to seek out another farm-raised option. We plan on offering turkeys again next year.

See you at the stand!

-Emily

SEPTEMBER HAPPENINGS:

- ◆ Open for the season!
Visit us every Saturday
from 10 AM-2 PM
- ◆ Lamb arrives
September 22
- ◆ Beef, pork and chicken
now available
- ◆ Fun fall items like
pumpkins and corn
shocks arrive this month!

Fall Favorites

.Once again, as the days get cooler and the leaves begin to change, we'll have a nice array of fall offerings.

Produce: we'll have an assortment of **winter squash**, including some fun heirlooms. We'll also have **pumpkins**, from edible mini pumpkins to jack o' lanterns. Stop by and see the giant pumpkins, too! We'll have storage vegetables like **potatoes** and **onions** as well.

Fall Decorations: We have a nice selection of fall items to brighten up your porch or yard! Look for bundles of **corn shocks**, decorative **Indian corn**, and a fun assort-

ment of **gourds**. We also have **hop vine wreaths** made from vines grown right here on the farm. They look like grapevine wreaths, and if kept out of the elements, will last for many seasons to come. We also offer **sunflower heads** which make great natural birdfeeders, or you can remove the seeds for planting or eating!

Processed items: Fall brings its own flavors. As apples ripen in our area, look for both **Apple Butter** and our unique **Apple Pie in a Jar** jam! New this year, we will be offering **Whole Berry**

Cranberry Sauce, made simply with cranberries and sugar, then slow cooked to perfection. Later in the fall, our naturally fermented **Old Fashioned Sauerkraut** will return as well. Our Indian corn is good for more than just decorating: after being ground and sifted, we'll have **heirloom cornmeal** on sale too!



PLEASANT VALLEY FARM

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Our New Blacksmith Shop

OUR FARM HAS A
LONG HISTORY OF
BLACKSMITHING,
AND WE'RE
EXCITED TO HAVE A
NEW SPACE FOR
THIS OLD CRAFT!.

The next time you visit the farm, you may notice a new building in the barnyard, above the barn and workshop. This year, Dan and I spent our vacation building a brand new workshop! (No, there really is no such thing as a vacation on a farm!) Our new building will be home to Dan's forge, with a space for Emily to do some projects as well.

We call this the blacksmith shop, but it has nothing to do with the horses. While many people think of a blacksmith as the person who puts shoes on horses' feet, that person is actually called a farrier. A blacksmith is someone who works with metal (usually steel), heats it in a forge, traditionally fired by coal, and then shapes the metal on an anvil using a variety of hammers and other tools.

So what does a blacksmith make? Years ago, a smith would make horseshoes, but also many other things needed around a farm; tools like hoes,

shovels, hammers and more; hardware like hinges, hooks and pot racks; fireplace pokers, andirons and tongs; knives, axes and other blades; nails and bolts; plus, many of a smith's own tools would be homemade as well. A smith would also make or repair pieces to keep the farm equipment in running order, or make parts for building new wagons and more. Many farms had amateur smiths who created items solely for use around the farm. Many of these items were not fancy, but serviceable. Those with more interest and/or skill would create ornate items— fancy hinges and doorpulls with twists and scrolls or ornate knives. What most people think of as "wrought iron" is in fact the type of items a true blacksmith can and will create.

Our farm has a long history of smithing. Our workshop, built sometime in the late 1800's (it is older than the barn, which was built in 1894) was a blacksmith shop for the community, with an upstairs shop that built wagons and buggies. Although we would love to use the original stone forge located in the center of the shop, the chimney leans and is no longer safe to use. So, in the interest



The anvil and stone forge

of not burning down the oldest building on the farm, Dan began smithing in a small outbuilding. However, he's outgrown that space, and that brought about the new shop.

Although the shop is new, we're excited to have incorporated some of the old forge and farm history into its construction. The forge is the place where the metal is heated up and can be constructed a variety of ways. We chose to recycle the original metal fire pan from the previous forge. The rest of the structure is made of stone, which we collected from around the farm. We also have an old-time, hand cranked blower for the forge, and some of the tongs are tools that were made here on the farm generations ago. We're excited to be putting them to good use and look forward to spending lots of time in this new shop as the days get cooler!



The new blacksmith shop

FLAVORS OF FALL

So many tasty things are now in season! Here are a few ideas to take advantage of the flavors of fall.

Items in *italics* are available here at the farm!

Emily's Perfect Fall Roast Chicken

1 whole chicken
1 large onion, cut into wedges or rings
1/4 cup white wine or champagne vinegar
1 bunch sage
2 apples, peeled & cut into wedges

Preheat oven to 350. Rinse chicken and pat dry. Place on a rack in a roasting pan. Gently separate skin from breast and insert a few sage leaves. Put about 1/3 of the apples & onion into the bird, along with more sage leaves. Scatter the rest of the apples and onion around the chicken. Add the vinegar and enough water to fill the bottom of the pan about an inch. Season with salt & pepper to taste. Cover the pan and place in the oven. (Use aluminum foil if roaster doesn't have a lid.) Cook for 1 1/2 hours, or until a meat thermometer reads about 200 degrees, adding water to pan if necessary.



Perfect Gravy: Remove chicken, onions and apples from pan, reserving drippings. Add water and stir, scraping up any bits stuck to the pan. Add salt & pepper to taste and heat to boiling. Mix 1/4 cup corn starch and water in a small container, stirring to remove lumps. Add to gravy, stirring well. Continue to boil until gravy thickens.

Lamb & Eggplant Casserole

Preheat oven to 350.

Pare and chop 1 medium sized *eggplant* until fine. Combine with 1 lb of *ground lamb*, 1/2 cup chopped *onions*, 3 Tbsp chopped *parsley*, 1 tsp *salt*, 1/4 tsp *paprika*, and 1 cup chopped drained *tomatoes*.

Pour the mixture into a buttered casserole. Bake, covered, about 45 minutes. Remove the cover and let the top brown.

Beets with Chive Cream

Boil 2 bunches of *beets* (tops removed) in salted water until tender, about 35 minutes. Drain & cool slightly, then rub off the skins. Cut into bite-sized pieces and toss with 2 Tbsp *olive oil*, plus *salt & pepper* to taste. Serve with *Greek yogurt* mixed with chopped *chives* & *salt*.

