

Updates from

# PLEASANT VALLEY FARM



APRIL 2013

VOLUME 5, ISSUE 2

## *Hello Friends!*

Spring has been busy, so we apologize that this edition of the newsletter comes a little late! Thanks to all our farm friends who stopped by to see us at Farm to Table this year, and welcome to the folks who signed up for our newsletter there...we're excited to tell you all about the wonderful things going on here at the farm!

March was a busy time, and Emily has wonderful experiences with both the Smart Gardening workshop in Monaca and the Farm to Table Conference in Pittsburgh. Now that April has arrived, though, we're too busy for road trips. So much is going on! Spring baby season is in full swing—we've had lambs born earlier this year, and March brought two adorable, healthy Dexter calves. Both are girls, and we are planning on keeping them and making them permanent part of our wonderful herd of heritage breed cattle. Chick season is upon us as well, we are hatching chicks weekly and will be offering Bared Rock chicks this year. The turkeys have also started laying, and we will also have poulters for sale beginning in early May.

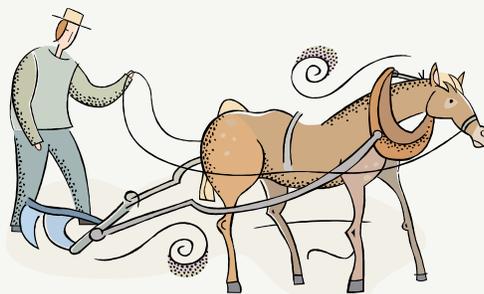
We've also got our seeds ordered and have an awesome assortment of veggies for our 2013 garden! We continue to transition towards more heirlooms each year, as we love the colors, varieties, flavors and histories behind these plants. The seedlings have started to pop through the potting soil, the garlic out in the garden is already off to a great start, and we've already planted salad greens and onions in our greenhouse! The rhubarb is also poking up, so we've covered it with lightweight floating row cover to protect it from chilly nights, and (perhaps more importantly) our free-ranging poultry. We've also begun our field work for the year, and have already plowed the garden, with lots more work to be done as the weather permits.

We're also excited about partnerships with other businesses. We will continue to offer raw milk cheese from Whispering Brook Cheese Haus and organically grown, fairly sourced coffee from Happy Mug. We're also developing a partnership with a local restaurant, Hummingbird Café in Tidioute, to provide fresh, organic produce throughout the growing season. There's nothing better than local food, except possibly local food that an expert chef prepares for you, so this is particularly exciting for us.

With little more than a month before we reopen, we are busy plowing and planting so we'll have lots of great stuff to offer when we reopen. But if you can't wait until then, we hope you'll take a moment to check out our online store! Lots more details are found on page 2.

See you at the stand!

*-Emily*



## **APRIL HAPPENINGS:**

- ◆ We reopen for the season May 25!
- ◆ Chick days are here! Contact us about purchasing live chicks and turkey poulters!
- ◆ Shop our ALL NEW online store anytime! We are now offering jewelry, stained glass, canned edibles, and now hand forged items as well!



## **PLEASANT VALLEY FARM**

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One of the wonderful projects we completed last year was a new blacksmith shop here at the farm. It's a wonderful space where Dan enjoys doing metal work much the same way it was done here over 100 years ago. First, a coal fire is lit and pieces of metal are heated until they glow. Then the metal is shaped using an anvil, hammers, vices, and other tools of the blacksmithing trade. Many of them are antiques, and we believe a few were even made here on the

## *Hand Forged Items*

farm in the original smith's workshop.

Although Dan has been honing his skills for the past few years, it is only recently that he has begun selling them online. We've been amazed at the demand for quality, hand-forged items, and are very excited to be building an inventory of unique, handmade items to offer to our farm stand customers when we reopen for the season, as well as online in our new virtual store!

So, what can you make in a forge? Dan has made wrought iron door handles & gate latches, hooks for mounting on the wall, bottle openers, fire poker, and even a wonderful pot rack to hold Emily's cast iron pans in the kitchen. The most popular item so far, however, has been dinner bells! (You know, the triangle-shaped, cowboy style ones!) Each item is a handmade original, and we're so excited to be offering them to all our farm stand customers!

WE'VE BEEN  
 WORKING HARD TO  
 CREATE A SAFE &  
 FUN ONLINE  
 SHOPPING  
 EXPERIENCE...OUR  
 VIRTUAL FARM  
 STAND!

## *Exciting News~ Our All-New Online Store*

We are so pleased to announce that we have cut the virtual ribbon on our new online store! We know some of our farm friends have visited our previous shop on Etsy, but we had hoped to transition to hosting our own. Recently, we were able to get high speed internet (yes, we'd been doing everything via a dial up connection prior to last month) and Emily has been working hard to create a safe and fun online shopping experience.

We've divided our store into four sections. We have a page devoted to Emily's home-canned products, where you can have favorites like Carrot Cake Jam, Ginger-Garlic Mustard, or Pickled Beets sent directly to your door. Selection will vary depending on the time of year, since we put up these delicious creations only when the ingredients are at the peak of freshness!

Another page is dedicated to Emily's handmade jewelry. She began making jewelry as a way to make use of the peacocks' beautiful feathers. She has since expanded into beaded jewelry, and some of her creations feature vintage elements, like beads recycled from cast off old jewelry, or even vintage keys! Some necklaces also feature handmade glass pendants. These are created by Emily in her stained glass shop, where she takes scraps of beautiful stained glass and sandwiches an image between them. She's done flowers, vegetables and herb, and all the drawings and photos have been taken from old seed catalogs!

There is a separate page devoted just to stained glass as well! Here you'll find things like suncatchers, nightlights, jewelry boxes and candleholders. There is also some wall art

made using old seed catalogs and recycled farmhouse window panes.

Dan has his own page as well, featuring all the wonderful hand forged metal items we described above.

Our online store's checkout is run via PayPal, so you can be sure your payment is secure. Emily designed the shopping pages herself, just like the rest of the site. There is also a form if you'd like to request something custom made! We aim for a site that is easy to navigate and full of photos and information. We sincerely hope that you'll check it out, and please let us know what you think of our new online endeavor...we welcome any feedback!



HERE IS AN ASSORTMENT OF IMAGES SHOWING HOW WE'VE SPENT SPRING SO FAR...



Bent Horseshoe Wall Rack



Hand Forged Triangle Dinner Bell



Unique, Hand Forged Door Handle Pulls



We're Hatching Barred Rock chicks now!



Stained glass items by Emily are available in our online store as well!



We're planting all kinds of new, exciting heirloom vegetable varieties!



Our 2013 Dexter calves, born 3/10 & 3/17



Farm to Table was a great success!



Broiler Chicks have arrived! Chicken will be available when we reopen!