

Friends-

This is the first in what we hope will be a once or twice a year newsletter addressing both the personal and business end of things here on Rainbow Farm. Let us start by thanking all of you for your support. We started this operation in 2009 and it is because of all of you that we're excited to both continue and grow.

We are learning a lot about producing high quality products to bring to market in West Virginia. This applies to everything - veggies, meat, eggs, and our value added products. It hasn't been easy, but it seems that worthy pursuits never are. Take a look at some of the products we're going to have available in 2011 and let us know if you have any questions or suggestions.

### **Eggs**

The hens are already starting to lay more as the days get longer and slightly warmer. We are collecting several dozen a day, and that number will only go up. Also, many layers have graduated from pullet eggs to the "jumbo" size, so it's even hard to close the cartons.

Since the market doesn't start until mid-April we will have plenty of eggs to sell on the farm or for bulk deliveries. Eggs are \$3 a dozen for mixed sizes and colors.

### **Pastured Poultry - Chicken**

This is something new for us this year – meat birds. Using the Salatin method from Polyface Farm, we will be raising Cornish X birds for meat. This method involves concentrated pasturing and takes advantage of the birds fast growth without the disadvantages of factory rearing.

We will be processing all the birds on farm and will sell them whole. There will be two sales options. On the day of processing we will be selling birds chilled (but not frozen) for \$2.50/lb. This is the preferred purchasing option. You will need a cooler and ice – we will have bags to use for sale at cost. Any birds not sold on processing day will be sold frozen for \$3/lb both on and off the farm.

The first and/or second week of June is when we will be processing our first batch of 300. Depending on demand we will have two more processing weeks later in the summer. It is very important that you contact us if you are interested in purchasing our chickens. This will give us an idea of how many chicks to order and when to set processing times. Please let us know in the next couple weeks how many chickens you would like (think winter!) and if you are flexible on your pickup dates. Also, referrals are rewarded with free chickens, so spread the word!

## **Veggies**

This year we're going to be trying hard to provide quality loose leaf greens earlier and longer. We expect to start having greens ready for sale in early April. There is a lot of new growing space that we will be utilizing so we hope our volume will be able to increase accordingly.

Potatoes are another crop that we'll be expanding both in volume and variety. An interesting observation we made last year was that the market value for potatoes is in general very low despite quality and longevity of this crop – we hope our growing style and variety will help change that. Of course we'll have all the standard veggies as well; call, email, or come see us at the market to see what is in season.

## **Chevon – Cabrito – Goat Meat**

This is the first year we will have goat meat for sale. All meat will be processed by a state certified facility and the price will depend on the cut. We will sell the frozen meat both on the farm and at the market. Live animals are also available for sale on the farm if desired.

Small goats will be available for Easter, and frozen processed meat should be ready by the summer. Products such as goat sausage, snack sticks, and jerky should also be available starting in the summer.

## **Value Added Products**

Last year was the first time we offered frozen Pesto for sale; it sold very well and we plan to provide more this year. Also, we are still working with the WV Department of Agriculture to approve a salsa recipe for sale.

We will continue to sell gluten free baked goods at the market; our resident Celiac tester is always trying new recipes and there should be a nice variety for 2011.

Rainbow Farm is now on the web at [www.rainbowfarmwv.com](http://www.rainbowfarmwv.com). We will be adding information and photos over the next couple months, and we'll try to share farm updates every week. Check it out!

Please share this letter with anyone you think might be interested in local, sustainable, high quality food. Referrals are the greatest compliment we can receive. Thanks for your continued support.

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