

Hi,

I just think it is time to share some news on how the farm is doing this year.

I'm amazed by the beauty and birds and insects on what the farm has been allowing to be here. Also, more children are part of the farm this year. We have welcomed another family Toria and Shawn with their two children Emil, age 4 and Harper, age 1.

The vegetables are just gorgeous this year! We have also put in an intensive garden which produced a lot of our early crops and intensive, more quicker rotating crops. The tree farm land has produced all of our wonderful later crops. Right now we are in the midst of harvesting all the storage crops for the winter to feed ourselves and you!

There is always so much planning and preparing that goes into growing diversified food year round. Stacy and Zach are doing great work with harvesting and putting together every a nice selection of vegetables every week. Shawn, who earlier on in the year was taking care that crops were growing in the intensive garden and then leading the whole crew of people into harvesting, weeding, always with good humor. Sadiqi, who helps with seeding, transplanting and communicating between people from Kenya, Congo, Somalia and the US. He just is amazing in speaking 10 different languages. Greg, who keeps the machinery going and is there if a project needs to be tackled. Jeff, who helps with taking care of all the field crops.

There were moments this summer which I watched from the side with joy. In their summer vacation, the farm kids decided to take their bikes and just go out into the big veggie garden with their baskets and harvest the veggies they like. They came back to the kitchen (which was actually clean) and start washing, prepping, cutting and making a huge salad which they wanted to share with everyone on the farm. On top of it they helped themselves to 3 helpings. Not one single adult or parent told them to do that. It was actually very magical to me (just maybe the kitchen not quite after).

We are also glad about the different variety of people we have on the farm to make it happen that the food gets all the way to the people. There were, and are continuing to be, very challenging moments where the deliveries are getting actually being made. Our truck system is getting very old, swallowing a lot of money and making a lot of headaches. We will definitely have to look at that situation next year. But also here, thank you for our office ladies Jodie and Maria to keep our heads above water who try to make sure to get the orders out to our customers. Also our drivers Adil and Brandy who really work hard with our older trucks and trying to meet the delivery schedules.

In the past 2 weeks, 9 of our 11 sows gave birth outside in a nice pasture. Each of them had 7-11 piglets. It was quite some exciting weeks for our children. David, my 9 year old, had us go check on them before and after school to see if another sow gave birth and where they build their nests. It was amazing and beautiful to see how those sows naturally prepared their nests

with twigs, branches and hay to keep their piglets warm and cozy. The livestock crew of Blythe, Casey, Betsy and Toria did an amazing job with the set up for them. Those pig moms are just enjoying their pasture area and also to be able to be together in a group. Pigs are just naturally a group animal and don't like to be separated.

After the past winter all of our clover died in the pastures on the farm, it did happen to all the farms along the Merrimack River. In general, a lot of our pastures, which were planted 7 years ago, are in bad conditions. At the end of August into September, hard work was done to reseed about 50 acres of land into future pasture and feed again. Thanks to Asad, who suddenly came to us at the right time from Turkmenistan to help with all the hours of tractor work needed. Also Josa, our German friend was able to help out for lots of night hours.

As you probably already know our cows are 100% grass fed and clover is a big protein part of the cows diet. This year will not be able to harvest as much hay to feed all of the cattle through the winter. There is a big decision we have to make with our beef and dairy herd over the next few months before the winter comes. We are looking at reducing the herd a bit. In order to do that we actually need to sell quite some beef in the next 3 months. We will be running some beef sales and asking you to check it out - if you want to consider stocking up on some 100% grass fed beef or let your friends and family know. To us it would feel good if the overflow on beef can be used by our community. The last thing we want to see is to just auction animals off and not know where they are going. Please consider checking out our beef and our pork sales for the next few months.

We also have to say sadly goodbye to Dave and Derek, who with such great care led all the processes in the cheese kitchen and made all the delicious cheese this year.

We are really thankful for the rich harvest the farm has given us this year and now we need to just find a few more people who would like to join in for eating from this harvest. We are also thankful for the people who already have been joining in full or part of the harvest. Also, we have a beautiful 10 week Fall Bounty CSA Share for people coming up.

With warm greetings,
Catarina