

Jenny-Jack Sun Farm

"good food news"

The toilet at the farm has been uncooperative for the past two years, so today I finally allocated the time and a hundred bucks for a new one. Toilet shopping and installation surely debunks any romantic notion one might project onto organic farming, but it is one of the countless, "insignificant" tasks that accompany this farm. Justin and Janice will now have a closer, lighted option for nighttime urges instead of the uneven trek to the outhouse. I realize I handle your food but rest assured I washed my hands several times upon project completion and I have good intentions of a shower this evening.

Before the toilet party, I taught a 5th grade class about cover cropping, compost, and all the many fruits and veggies we can grow in our state. They were eager to plant their okra and sunflower seed in a 4 inch pot filled with compost. Some of the students refused to touch the compost after I went into detail of its ingredients. Dead chickens, manure, kitchen scraps, and general rot and decay do not appeal to the average pre-teen I suppose. But creation begins with death. The society of active micro-organisms beneath our feet need death in order to feed our harvest. We are forever indebted these little soil-creators find use in our useless. That doesn't mean we have to touch it they say.

Yesterday evening, after seeding ten beds of Okra, Jenny and I transferred 25-8week old hens to the chicken tractor. We placed each chick on a perch alongside the older hens just as darkness dominated. Today they kept to themselves periodically darting territorial pecks from older hens. In less than 4 months these ladies will add to the three dozen eggs I typically collect, hopefully lessening the number of times we must shamelessly mutter, "sorry, no eggs." Along with new forage ground each week, our hens will receive certified organic grain to supplement their diet. In the three years we have kept chickens, the issue of bagged protein has been constant. Should we just buy conventional layer grain from the feed store for \$13? Should we use certified organic feed or maybe just certified naturally grown, whatever that means? Should we make our own? We have settled on a nice ration from a certified organic supplier in Texas. It's \$21.50 a bag and it's not local but, in the end, we feel it will make for a healthier egg, one in which we feel better about eating. So, that means a price hike for you. Our dozen will now sell for \$4.50 and it will increase to \$5 if fuel prices continue to soar. I noticed certified organic eggs in Publix sold for \$4 so I don't feel too bad for our price. Currently I collect about 20 dozen eggs weekly. The hens consume 3 bags of feed during that time equating to about a \$40 profit, which doesn't include the labor of moving chickens, collecting and cleaning eggs, watering, feeding, and general maintenance. I felt it necessary to pass along this information in our effort to operate more transparently.

Spring Dinner on Farm

Saturday, May 14th from 4-8. Make reservations at dinneronthefarm@yahoo.com Check our website for more details, <http://jennyjackfarm.com/events/>.

Picture of the Week



We debate on how much broccoli to grow. As you can see, it takes almost 2 feet to produce a head. With space already limited, the question becomes, "is the space worth the return?" CSA members seem to love it so we will continue to find ways to incorporate this beautiful plant.

Our produce may be found at the downtown Columbus Market on Saturdays from 9-12, the Lagrange Farmers Market on Main Saturdays from 8-10, and our On Farm Market Wednesdays from 9-1. We have a 100-member CSA with drop-off locations in Lagrange, Columbus, and On-farm. You can also find our produce on the menus of the Bakery and Cafe in Pine Mountain and Food Blossoms Catering out of Hamilton.

Take good care,
Chris and Jenny